

**SURVEY OF THE  
HISTORICAL PROFESSION  
PUBLIC HISTORIANS**

**1980-81**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

Compiled and Edited  
by  
Lawrence B. de Graaf  
Gregory Graves  
G. Wesley Johnson  
Robert W. Pomeroy III

National Council on Public History  
and  
American Historical Association

## EDITOR'S NOTE

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For the laborious task of encoding 2,347 responses into computers and running tabulations and correlations of the data, credit is due to Gregory Graves and several UCSB students who assisted him: Stephen Payne, Roger Kempler, Michael Lappen, and Laura Manning. The synthesis of the data into this report was performed at CSUF, and thanks go particularly to John Lovett for word processing all drafts, and to Samuel R. Gammon and Page Miller, as well as the other editors, for their thoughtful comments on early drafts. The summary of non-statistical comments in the Supplementary Questionnaire was done by Phillip Smith, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the editors are indebted to him for the insightful final chapter of this report. For final proofing, thanks to Shirley Stephenson.

Most fundamentally, however, thanks must go to all those historians who returned their questionnaires. Such cooperation will enable all segments of the historical profession to become more cognizant of their qualities and conditions and should create the mutual respect and support for the promotion of history in all forms which is the essence of public history.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	v
I. The Sample Population	1
II. Definitions of Historians	2
III. Education and Training	4
IV. Employment Activity	8
V. Skills	11
VI. Professional Accomplishments and Expectations	14
VII. Employment Conditions	16
VIII. Supplementary Questionnaire	21

## INTRODUCTION

From the employment crisis for historians that gathered force in the 1970's has come a concern for looking at the wider spectrum of professional activity involving historians in the United States. A number of universities responded to this crisis by creating new programs in public history in order to train students for "alternative careers". In the meantime, hundreds of historians who are earning a living professionally outside of the university have stepped forward at national and regional meetings, have communicated in talks and articles, and have confirmed what now seems apparent: that increasingly, more historians are seeking bona fide, remunerative, and challenging employment outside of traditional roles.

In order to bring together practicing historians and academic historians interested in the challenge of public history, the National Council on Public History was formed three years ago. Building upon the efforts of the National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History and other professional organizations, the NCPH is committed to helping develop instructional programs so historians who choose careers outside of the university will be prepared for new opportunities that in many instances have not been covered by existing curriculum. For professors in public history training programs, it has been difficult to know how to create a new sequence of courses and seminars that speak to the needs of students with new goals and career opportunities. Few have suggested replacing the traditional history curriculum, but numerous programs have developed new courses building upon that curriculum in fields ranging from such long-time historical pursuits as archives, preservation and museums to applications of history to planning, public policy, and management.

Both the efforts to develop new curriculum and to identify groups of public historians who might be asked to affiliate with the NCPH were hampered by the lack of any comprehensive data on the number of public historians, their areas of activity, or the skills and functions they found most useful. This report is the result of the first national survey of public historians which was undertaken to fill that void. As a pilot effort, it confronted a number of difficulties, and its efforts to resolve them might not bear repeating in all cases. But the most compelling need was for information, and that need has taken precedence over lengthy preoccupations with methodology or definition. Some of these difficulties and the resulting limitations of this report might be seen in a brief review of its origins.

The project was conceived at the end of the 1979 American Historical Association conference in New York. Four sessions on public history had been presented, and they helped to generate a demand for systematic information on this field. After discussing the imperative of providing accurate data, two members of the Steering Committee of the National Council on Public History drew up a working

plan for a survey. Initially, the questionnaire was to focus on the skills needed by public historians. Which of the historian's competencies had furthered their careers? How had their academic backgrounds qualified them for their jobs? A target audience of two thousand was anticipated. The responses would be entered on a computer data base at the University of California, Santa Barbara. As a by-product, a directory of public historians would be created (soon to be published as a separate work).

From this modest beginning, the project expanded both in its content and its target audience. This expansion was greatly facilitated when the American Historical Association was approached to co-sponsor the project and promptly gave its enthusiastic support. As drafts of the proposed questionnaire circulated among AHA and NCPH working groups, the focus of the survey was broadened. A straightforward identification of public historians was built in. The need to construct a profile of historians' employment was recognized, identifying the economic sector in which each worked, specific activities, skills, education and training which may (or may not) have made this employment possible. A career and employee profile was added to parallel the Survey of the Historical Profession (academic) recently concluded by the AHA. Finally, general perceptions and advice on career development were sought in a narrative supplement.

A more difficult task was expanding the recipients of the questionnaire. All recognized that the privately generated lists originally intended to be used were inadequate. They were essentially compilations of personal acquaintances with degrees in history who worked in business or government, and they did not reflect the real number of professionals whose careers depend on the application of historical training outside of teaching. This was one of the most significant challenges of the survey, for until a substantial body of public historians was identified, students seeking to prepare themselves for such employment would lack adequate role models. It was decided to approach several historical organizations for names from their mailing lists outside of academic employment. This approach illustrated vividly the profession's substantial number of non-academic members, and none reached the large and potentially vital area of business employment. The best that could be done in this survey was to combine existing lists, without regard for duplication, and recognizing that the result does not reach the whole core of public historians. The sources and approximate numbers of names involved are set out in Section I.

These limitations notwithstanding, the resultant AHA-NCPH survey of public historians is in many respects a significant development in the historical profession. For the first time it makes available data that may help departments which are interested in developing public history options to base their curricular development on a profile of employment and skills. The response of almost 25 percent of the questionnaires sent out suggests strong interest in helping to define the activities and conditions of persons working in public history. Among other things, this survey revealed that salaries of those at the top of public history jobs are comparable, if

not better than those of colleagues in the academy. Not surprisingly, women do not fare as well as men, yet a substantial percentage of women are working in public history jobs.

The greatest value of this survey may lie less in its specific data than in the courses it suggests for further professional inquiry. The effort to define the activity areas and skills which might constitute the field of public history, incomplete though they may be, represent a foundation for further studies which will refine and expand upon them. The result will hopefully be a much broader concept of both the utility of history and content of its curriculum. This survey should also be helpful in showing more explicitly the types of employment in the public and private sectors that historians have entered and what salaries, benefits, and working conditions await them. Finally, this survey suggests that there are many more persons with training in history who are working in jobs that require historical skills than many had realized. In the past, the historical profession has been defined by most of its members to be a teaching profession. This survey suggests that such a restricted definition is no longer warranted and that all historical organizations should alerted to the significant number of public historians in our midst.

## I. THE SAMPLE POPULATION

The historians sampled in this survey were drawn from several professional organizations. By far, the largest numbers were members of the American Association for State and Local History (7,260). The American Historical Association and the National Council on Public History each contributed 1,400 names, the Organization of American Historians 400. Federal agencies contributed 500, and 70 names came from the National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History. In all cases, the sample was restricted to historians employed outside of academic institutions, except for those in public history training programs.

This sample has unquestionably affected the results of this survey. This is particularly evident in the activity areas, where over one-fourth of the respondents are employed in research and consulting, archives and libraries, publications, or museums. The sex and age distributions are shown below; the representation by activity areas is in IV, by professional organizations in VI.

Table 1 Sample Population  
by Sex and Age

Sex	#	%
Female	826	35.2
Male	1502	64.0
No Response	19	0.8
Total	2347	100.0

  

Age	#	%
25 under	86	3.7
26-35	902	38.4
36-45	711	30.3
46-55	313	13.3
56-65	197	8.4
66-75	51	2.2
75 over	15	0.6
No Response	72	3.1
Total	2347	100.0

Table 2 Male and Female Respondents,  
by Age

	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
25 or under	32	2.2	54	6.7
26-35	559	38.0	343	42.6
36-45	495	33.7	216	26.8
46-55	218	14.8	95	11.8
56-65	122	8.3	75	9.3
66-75	31	2.1	20	2.5
Over 75	13	0.9	2	0.2

## II. DEFINITIONS OF HISTORIANS

A major problem in studying historians outside of academic institutions is defining who they are. Neither the term "public historians" nor any other appellation has been universally acceptable. In an effort to find one or more criteria which might fit most of these historians, questionnaires offered several different definitions of historians. The responses to these are summarized in Table 1 overall, Table 3 by sex. These definitions are correlated with activity groups in Table 2, with some random correlations in Table 4.

Table 1 Number of Public Historians by Various Definitions

	YES		NO	
	N	%	N	%
1. Do you regard yourself as a historian?	1828	78.1	512	21.9
2. Do you regard skills or knowledge of history as important or elemental to your work?	2203	94.0	140	6.0
3. Do you maintain an avocational interest in history?	2089	89.2	254	10.8
4. Do you do historical work?	2049	87.3	293	12.7
5. Are you identified, titled, or classified as an historian in your job?	990	42.3	1353	57.7
6. Do you have an advanced degree in history?	1467	62.6	876	37.4
7. Do you have a BA/BS degree in history?	1498	64.0	841	36.0

Table 2 Are there significant differences in the proportion of public historians in various activity areas in terms of the their self-definition as historians, their doing historical work, or being titled historians?

	Define Historian	Self Historical Work	Titled Historian	Total Number
General Administration	77.2	76.6	38.6	316
Research/Archive/Museum Preservation	75.1	88.6	43.9	1333
Information Science	77.5	90.6	37.2	191
Business/Large Organ.	56.0	68.0	28.0	25
Policy Planning	72.9	73.4	31.8	192
Teaching	67.6	67.6	32.3	34
Other	88.1	90.6	72.3	159
	67.5	72.7	33.8	77



Table 3 Percent of Male & Female Respondents Using Various Definitions of Historians

	Male		Female	
	Y	N	Y	N
1. Do you regard yourself as a historian?	81.6	18.4	71.1	28.9
2. Do you regard skills or knowledge of history as important or elemental to your work?	94.3	5.7	93.5	6.5
3. Do you maintain an avocational interest in history?	89.4	10.6	88.7	11.3
4. Do you do historical work?	88.3	11.7	85.5	14.5
5. Are you identified, titled, or classified as an historian in your job?	44.0	56.0	38.7	61.3
6. Do you have an advanced degree in history?	68.6	31.4	51.3	48.7
7. Do you have a BA/BS degree in history?	66.5	33.5	59.0	41.0

Table 4 Difficulties of Defining "Historians": Some Random Correlations

1. Do respondents who do not regard themselves as historians and are not titled/classified as historians regard history as important to their work?

YES	<u>313</u>
NO	<u>124</u>

3. Number of respondents who do not have advanced or bachelors degree in history.

<u>471</u>
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4. Do respondents who are titled/classified as historians and who regard history as important to their work have an advanced degree in history?

YES	<u>689</u>
NO	<u>277</u>

### III. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The formal preparation of public historians for their current positions was summarized from these perspectives: formal college degrees and majors (Tables 1-4), courses taken in addition to the major which respondents found valuable in their courses (Table 5), and internships and training outside of academic institutions (Tables 6-8). The first and third areas are correlated by sex and activity groups.

#### COLLEGE DEGREES AND MAJORS

Table 1 Distribution of College Degrees by Major

	AA*	BA/BS	MA	Other Masters*	ABD*	PhD	Other Doctors*
None	2230	347	941	1832	2286	1561	2273
History	29	1144	1018	56	40	659	9
Social Sciences	18	102	11	12	1	3	1
Political Science	3	94	16	8	0	2	0
Anthropology	2	48	33	6	2	13	0
Humanities	21	96	28	20	0	10	6
English	1	50	12	3	0	1	1
American Studies	1	52	78	14	8	31	7
Fine/Performing Arts	6	42	16	6	0	3	1
Physical Sciences	3	55	6	10	0	5	0
Other Liberal Arts	6	147	71	41	3	28	10
Education	3	88	31	38	4	10	9
Business	9	22	1	15	0	0	0
Library Science	0	5	15	209	0	4	1
Other Professional Majors	8	34	61	49	0	5	16
Other Majors	4	21	6	14	0	7	1

\* AA is Associated Arts degree; Other Masters and Other Doctors include primarily professional degrees (MPA, MBA, EDD, LLD, MD); ABD is All But Doctorate.

Table 2 Proportion of History Degrees Among All Degrees Held

	N	%
History	2952	60.2
Other Liberal Arts	1273	26.0
Professional Degrees	624	12.7
Other	53	1.1
Total	4902	100.0

Table 3 Proportion of Respondents Holding Degrees by History, Major Groups and Sex

<u>Male</u>	AA	BA/BS	MA	Other Masters	ABD	PhD	Other Doctors
None	95.3	16.9	39.0	79.7	97.5	61.5	97.0
History	1.2	49.6	47.9	2.7	1.9	33.1	0.5
Other Liberal Arts	2.4	26.5	9.3	5.2	0.5	4.4	1.2
Professional	0.9	6.2	3.6	11.9	0.1	0.8	1.2
Other	0.2	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.1
<u>Female</u>	AA	BA/BS	MA	Other Masters	ABD	PhD	Other Doctors
None	94.8	10.8	42.3	76.4	97.6	76.2	97.9
History	1.3	47.1	35.3	1.9	1.3	19.0	0.1
Other Liberal Arts	3.0	34.2	15.6	5.1	0.8	3.6	1.0
Professional	0.7	6.7	6.5	15.9	0.2	0.8	1.0
Other	0.1	1.2	0.2	0.7	0.0	0.4	0.0
<u>Total</u>	AA	BA/BS	MA	Other Masters	ABD	PhD	Other Doctors
None	95.2	14.5	40.1	78.5	97.5	66.6	97.3
History	1.2	48.9	43.4	2.4	1.7	28.1	0.4
Other Liberal Arts	2.6	29.3	11.6	5.1	0.6	4.1	1.1
Professional	0.9	6.4	4.6	13.3	0.2	0.8	1.1
Other	0.2	0.9	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.1

Table 4 What Percentage of Public Historians in Different Activity Groups Have/Do Not Have an Advanced Degree in History?

	Have Degree		No Degree	
	N	%	N	%
General Administration	224	70.9	92	29.1
Research, Consult, Publication	352	67.3	171	32.7
Library/Archives	292	64.9	158	35.1
Museums	175	43.5	227	56.5
Park Services	61	40.9	88	59.1
Information Services	12	48.0	13	52.0
Business/Complex Organizations	135	70.3	57	29.7
Policy Planning	28	82.4	6	17.6
Teaching	134	84.3	25	15.7
Other	45	58.4	32	41.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1458</b>	<b>62.7</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>37.3</b>

**ADDITIONAL COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY STUDY**

Table 5 In addition to your major area of study what additional course work have you found valuable in your career?

	N	%		N	%
English	393	10.7	Other Liberal Arts	71	1.9
History	265	7.2	Total Liberal Arts	2589	70.4
Political Science	260	7.1			
Social Sciences	217	5.9	Business	172	4.7
Foreign Languages	190	5.2	Library Science	158	4.3
Economics	161	4.4	Administration	146	4.0
Fine/Performing Arts	161	4.4	Museum Education	126	3.4
Anthropology	148	4.0	Education	123	3.3
Humanities	141	3.8	Computer Sciences	115	3.1
Physical Sciences	110	3.0	Law	40	1.1
American Studies	103	2.8	Architecture	37	1.0
Art History	91	2.5	Other Professional	80	2.2
Archeology	79	2.1	Total Professional	997	27.1
Geography	75	2.0			
Mathematics	68	1.9			
Other Area Studies	56	1.5	Other Courses	93	2.5

**TRAINING OUTSIDE OF THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY SETTING**

Table 6 Non-Curricular/External Training by Type of Training Program

	HAD		DID NOT HAVE	
	N	%	N	%
Degree-Related Internship Program	244	10.4	2095	89.6
Non-Degree-Related Internship Program	224	9.6	2118	90.4
Federal Sponsored Training Program (excluding military)	372	15.9	1972	84.1
Employer-Sponsored Training Program	432	18.4	1912	81.6
Military Training Program	234	10.0	2108	90.0
Privately-Funded Training Program	79	3.4	2265	96.6
Apprenticeship Program	76	3.2	2267	96.8
Professional Workshop	292	12.5	2052	87.5
Volunteer Work	35	1.5	2309	98.5
Other (summer institute, or on job training)	173	7.4	2168	92.6

Table 7 Percentage Taking Non Curricular/External Training by Program Type and Sex

	HAD		DID NOT HAVE	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Degree Related Internship	8.1	14.7	91.9	85.3
Non-Degree Related Internship	7.8	12.9	92.2	87.1
Federally Sponsored Training Program (excluding military)	17.8	12.3	82.8	87.7
Employer Sponsored Training Program	20.2	15.3	79.8	84.7
Military Training Program	14.6	1.6	85.4	98.4
Privately Funded Training Program	3.1	3.9	96.9	96.1
Apprenticeship Program	3.0	3.8	97.0	96.2
Professional Workshop	10.6	15.9	89.4	84.1
Volunteer Work	0.9	2.7	99.1	97.3
Other	7.3	7.6	92.7	92.4

Table 8 Do Public Historians in different activity areas vary significantly in their use of internships and training programs?  
Percent of Activity Groups taking Training Programs

	Degree-Related Internship		Non-Degree Related Internship		Federally Sponsored Training Program	
	DID NOT		DID NOT		DID NOT	
	HAD	HAVE	HAD	HAVE	HAD	HAVE
General Administration	4.8	95.2	9.6	90.4	11.8	88.2
Research/Archive/Museum	12.3	87.7	10.2	89.8	14.2	85.8
Park Service	10.5	89.5	5.8	94.2	45.5	54.5
Information Science	20.0	80.0	16.0	84.0	16.0	84.0
Business/Complex Organs	7.8	92.2	10.4	89.6	14.1	85.3
Policy Planning	6.1	93.9	17.6	82.4	8.8	91.2
Teaching	7.6	92.4	7.0	93.0	7.6	92.4
Other	11.7	88.3	6.5	93.5	15.6	84.4
Total(mode)	10.4	89.6	9.6	90.4	16.0	84.0

  

	Employer Sponsored Training Program		Military Training Program		Professional Workshops	
	DID NOT		DID NOT		DID NOT	
	HAD	HAVE	HAD	HAVE	HAD	HAVE
General Administration	18.2	81.8	11.8	88.2	12.4	87.6
Research/Archive/Museum	16.1	83.9	9.6	90.4	14.6	85.4
Park Service	39.8	60.2	10.5	89.5	8.9	91.1
Information Science	24.0	76.0	20.0	80.0	16.0	84.0
Business/Complex Organs	20.8	79.2	10.9	89.1	9.4	90.6
Policy Planning	8.8	91.2	11.8	88.2	2.9	97.1
Teaching	8.9	91.1	8.9	91.1	7.0	93.0
Other	26.0	74.0	5.2	94.8	7.8	92.2
Total(mode)	18.3	81.7	10.0	90.0	12.5	87.5

#### IV. EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITY

This portion of the questionnaire summarizes the current employment of public historians by economic sector and activity area. The questions contained 24 activity areas; several more were volunteered in the responses. The most frequently cited areas are individually reported in Table 3. Some areas have been merged; the least frequently cited are subsumed under "Other". For convenience in cross-tabulation, these individual areas of employment have been combined into eight activity groups; these are underlined in Table 3.

Table 1 Employment in Economic Sector, by Sex

	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>Private</u>						
Profit	146	8.6	87	9.3	233	8.9
Non-Profit	564	33.4	401	42.6	965	36.7
Total*	710	42.0	488	51.8	1198	45.5
<u>Public</u>						
Local	161	9.5	118	12.5	279	10.6
State	428	25.3	203	21.5	631	24.0
Federal	356	21.1	120	12.7	476	18.1
Military	26	1.5	6	0.6	32	1.2
International	1	0.1	3	0.3	4	0.2
Intergovernmental	8	0.5	4	0.4	12	0.5
Total*	980	58.0	454	48.2	1434	54.5

\* Combined totals exceed respondents, indicating that some public historians work in both sectors.

Table 2. Number of People Employed by Organization or Department

Organization			Department		
#	N	%	#	N	%
10 or less	455	25.6	5 or less	843	43.9
11-25	237	13.3	6-10	395	20.6
26-50	178	10.0	11-15	201	10.5
51-100	177	9.9	16-25	181	9.4
101-200	198	11.1	26-35	77	4.0
201-500	215	12.1	36-50	77	4.0
501-1000	67	3.8	51-70	39	2.0
1001-3000	113	6.4	71-90	27	1.4
over 3000	140	7.9	over 91	82	4.3

Table 3. Employment in Activity and Activity Groups, by Sex

	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>Research/Archive/Museum</u>	815	54.0	518	63.3	1333	57.3
<u>Historical Research,</u>						
Consulting	245	16.2	134	16.4	379	16.3
Publication	65	4.3	37	4.5	102	4.4
Archives/Libraries	267	17.7	183	22.4	450	19.3
Museums	238	15.8	164	20.0	402	17.3
<u>Preservation</u>	138	9.1	48	5.9	186	8.0
Park Service	115	7.6	34	4.2	149	6.4
Construction/Restoration	12	0.8	6	0.7	18	0.8
Cultural Resources Mgmt.	11	0.7	8	1.0	19	0.8
<u>Information Management</u>	14	0.9	11	1.3	25	1.1
Records Mgmt.	12	0.8	7	0.9	19	0.8
Data Processing/ Quantitative Analyses	2	0.1	4	0.5	6	0.8
<u>General Administration</u>	223	14.8	93	11.4	316	13.6
<u>Business/Complex Organ.</u>	110	7.3	54	6.6	164	7.0
Public Relations, Communications	20	1.3	16	2.0	36	1.5
Organization Planning & Development	28	1.8	11	1.3	39	1.7
Research & Development	20	1.3	9	1.1	29	1.2
Training	10	0.7	4	0.5	14	0.6
Other Business Careers	32	2.1	14	1.7	46	2.0
<u>Policy Planning &amp; Evaluation</u>	22	1.5	12	1.5	34	1.5
<u>Teaching</u>	118	7.8	41	5.0	159	6.8
<u>Other Careers</u>	69	4.6	41	5.0	110	4.7
Legal Services	7	0.5	3	0.4	10	0.4
Grant Writing	15	1.0	9	1.1	24	1.0
Other	47	3.1	29	3.5	76	3.3

Table 4. How Many Historians Are Self-employed?

N	%(of 2347)
<u>238</u>	<u>10.1</u>

Table 5 Are there significant differences among activity areas in doing historical work or carrying title or classification of historian?

	Do you do historical work?				Are you titled historian?			
	YES		NO		YES		NO	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
General Administration	255	80.7	61	19.3	119	37.7	197	62.3
Research, Consult, Pub.	500	95.6	23	4.4	367	70.2	156	29.8
Library/Archive	383	85.1	67	14.9	97	21.6	353	78.4
Park Service	134	89.9	15	10.1	51	34.2	98	65.8
Museums	376	93.5	26	6.5	140	34.8	262	65.2
Information Mgmt.	17	68.0	8	32.0	5	20.0	20	80.0
Business/Complex Organ.	143	74.5	49	25.5	55	28.6	137	71.4
Policy Planning	22	64.7	12	35.3	10	29.4	24	70.6
Teaching	145	91.2	14	8.8	114	71.7	45	28.3
Other	56	72.7	21	27.3	24	31.2	53	68.8
Total	2031	87.3	296	12.7	982	42.2	1345	57.8



## V. SKILLS

The employment of historians outside of teaching may often be based as much on their possessing certain skills as upon their command of factual knowledge. Therefore, one section of the questionnaire sought to find out what skills historians currently used or had used in their careers, and where these skills were acquired. The selection of skills was oriented towards correlation with areas of employment rather than the taxonomy of learning skills often sought by educators. Some additional skills were suggested by respondents, and when these drew substantial response they were added to the original list; otherwise they are subsumed under "Other". The original list has been rearranged under skill groups (underlined in Tables 3 & 4). However, no cross-tabulations were done with these groups in this report.

Table 1 Skills Acquired and Skills Used in Last Job, by Skill Group (mean percent of respondents who acquired/used all skills in each group)

<u>Skill Group</u>	Acquired	Used in Last Job
Foreign Language	53.5	13.7
Computer/Quantitative	21.0	8.9
Basic Historical Skills	65.9	40.5
Library & Archival	45.1	26.1
Graphic Arts	26.5	14.6
Business	21.3	13.2
Preservation	8.1	3.9
Other	2.6	1.7

Table 2 Skills Acquired by Over Half of Respondents by Place Acquired.

	Respondents who Acquired Skills		Where Acquired(%)		
	N	%	School/ History	Job/ Elsewhere	Job & School
Historical Writing	1990	85.0	64.9	14.9	20.2
Public Speaking	1837	78.5	28.9	52.4	18.7
Research Methods	1734	74.1	62.7	13.0	24.3
Typing	1561	66.7	61.1	30.9	8.0
Archival Research	1501	64.1	47.3	33.7	19.0
Written Foreign Language	1453	62.1	85.8	3.7	10.5
Historical Editing	1294	55.3	37.4	51.1	11.5
Interviewing	1261	53.9	19.4	71.1	9.4
Bibliography	1225	52.4	63.7	19.3	17.0

Table 3 To What Extent Have Public Historians Used Various Skills in Their Careers (measured by their last significant job)?

Skill & Skill Group	Used		Did Not Use	
	N	%	N	%
<u>Foreign Languages</u>				
Spoken	253	10.8	2088	89.2
Written	390	16.7	1951	83.3
<u>Computer/Quantitative</u>				
Computer Language	215	9.2	2126	90.8
Statistics	243	10.4	2098	89.6
Mathematics	175	7.5	2166	92.5
Computer Science/ Operations Research	205	8.8	2136	91.2
<u>Basic Historical Skills</u>				
Historical Writing	1156	49.4	1185	50.6
Historical Editing	745	31.8	1596	68.2
Copy Editing	689	29.4	1652	70.6
Interviewing	807	34.5	1534	65.5
Public Speaking	1192	50.9	1149	49.1
Research Methods	1105	47.2	1235	52.8
<u>Library/Archival</u>				
Librarianship	441	18.8	1900	81.2
Curatorship	591	25.2	1750	74.8
Bibliography	686	29.3	1654	70.7
Archival Research	878	37.5	1463	62.5
Records Management	549	23.4	1792	76.6
<u>Graphic Arts</u>				
Photography	558	23.8	1783	76.2
Graphics	403	17.2	1938	82.8
Printing	244	10.4	2097	89.6
Typing	890	38.0	1451	62.0
Shorthand	53	2.3	2288	97.7
Drafting	142	6.1	2199	93.9
Illustrating	108	4.6	2233	95.4
<u>Business</u>				
Accounting	343	14.7	1998	85.3
Bookkeeping	322	13.8	2019	86.2
Marketing	309	13.2	1581	67.5
Personnel	760	32.5	1581	67.5
Public Relations	52	2.2	2292	97.8
Management	68	2.9	2276	97.1
<u>Preservation</u>				
Woodworking	107	4.6	2233	95.4
Carpentry/Masonry	119	5.1	2221	94.9
Surveying	155	6.6	2186	93.4
Site and Artifact Preservation	68	2.9	2276	97.1
Museum Training	49	2.1	2295	97.9
Manual Arts	56	2.4	2288	97.6
<u>Other</u>				
Grantsmanship	38	1.6	2305	98.4
Other Skills	165	7.0	2179	93.0

Table 4 Where Were Skills Acquired?

Skills and Skill Group	History Requirement	Other School	History/OtherSchool	Job/Elsewhere	Job & School
<u>Foreign Languages</u>					
Spoken	310	329	136	110	166
Written	597	372	277	54	153
<u>Computer/Quantitative</u>					
Computer Language	47	92	67	194	56
Statistics	65	212	129	129	43
Mathematics	39	264	133	37	27
Computer Sci./Operatns Res.	40	99	62	193	36
<u>Basic Historical Skills</u>					
Historical Writing	563	56	672	296	403
Historical Editing	204	45	235	661	149
Copy Editing	30	33	113	828	92
Interviewing	39	70	136	897	119
Public Speaking	59	176	296	963	343
Research Methods	364	78	545	226	421
<u>Library &amp; Archival</u>					
Librarianship	31	108	175	382	106
Curatorship	25	54	126	606	150
Bibliography	259	120	401	237	208
Archival Research	241	81	338	506	285
Archival Management	34	39	102	606	98
Records Management	39	54	95	641	92
<u>Graphic Arts</u>					
Photography	22	34	105	707	88
Graphics	9	52	83	431	55
Printing	12	46	36	308	36
Typing	75	362	516	483	125
Shorthand	19	52	20	50	12
Drafting	24	86	65	100	38
Illustrated	13	41	28	122	31
<u>Business</u>					
Accounting	12	76	69	415	39
Bookkeeping	16	49	55	427	24
Marketing	6	30	39	399	21
Personnel	16	37	48	989	62
Public Relations	3	2	2	58	6
Management	5	3	6	67	11
<u>Preservation</u>					
Woodworking	2	31	15	217	17
Carpentry/Masonry	3	18	13	242	11
Surveying	15	48	31	210	25
Site & Artifact Pres.	5	2	4	64	12
Museum Training	2	3	5	47	8
Manual Arts	5	5	6	59	14
<u>Other</u>					
Grantsmanship	3	3	2	47	2
Other Skills	10	14	27	149	45
Total Skills Acquired(N)	3263	3426	5363	13,162	3629
Total Skills Acquired(%)	11.3	11.9	18.6	45.6	12.6

## VI. PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

This section summarizes the major portion of the "Careers Profile" section of the questionnaire, specifically the publications and professional affiliations of public historians and any current or past teaching experiences. These tables should be of particular interest to academic historians, since these are the most commonly used criteria for peer evaluation. The various types of publications and presentations suggest the need for a wider definition of "publication" in order to fully evaluate the accomplishments of public historians.

### PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Table 1 Publications and Presentations of Historians  
by Type and Quantity

	None	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-35	36-50	Over 50
Books	1524	736	64	14	5	3	1
Parts of Books	2318	24	2	1	0	1	0
Articles	742	920	256	211	87	56	65
Book Reviews	2231	57	20	16	10	4	8
Bibliographic or Information Guide	1723	532	50	23	9	2	7
Forthcoming Publications	2330	15	1	0	0	0	0
Computer Models	2305	36	5	0	0	0	0
Training Models	1914	403	24	5	1	0	0
Oral or Visual Presentations	1156	667	210	160	53	45	41
Record Albums	2337	8	0	1	0	0	0
Specifications/ Standards	2329	9	4	2	0	1	1
Research Projects	2316	16	5	1	2	3	1
Other (tour books, pamphlets, etc.)	709	1636	2	0	0	0	0

## PROFESSIONAL AND SCHOLARLY AFFILIATION

Table 2 Affiliation of Historians in Scholarly, Professional, and Employee Organizations

	YES		NO	
	N	%	N	%
American Historical Association	660	28.1	1685	71.9
Organization of American Historians	545	23.2	1800	76.8
American Association of State and Local History	1141	48.7	1201	51.3
Other Historical Organizations	1632	69.7	709	30.3
Organizations in Other Disciplines	812	34.6	1532	65.4
Organization of Teachers	230	9.8	2116	90.2
Organization of Business Administrators and Executives	142	6.1	2203	93.9
Labor Union	128	5.5	2218	94.5
Special Interest Group or Lobby	694	29.6	1651	70.4

Note: This pattern is essentially the same for those surveyed who regard themselves as historians.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE & CAREER GOALS

Table 3 Incidence of Teaching Experience and Type of Institution

	No Teaching Experience		Teaching Experience			Total	
	N	%	Full Time	Part Time	Both	N	%
Primary School	2145	91.4	112	77	12	201	8.6
Secondary School	1731	73.8	388	191	34	613	26.2
Postsecondary School	1148	48.9	386	622	190	1198	51.1
Technical School	2281	97.2	18	44	3	65	2.8
Professional Workshop	1816	77.4	59	462	9	530	22.6
In-House Training Program	1737	74.1	63	537	6	606	25.9

Table 4 Career Goals: Expectations and Accomplishments

	YES		NO	
	N	%	N	%
Did You Originally Intend to Pursue an Academic Career?	882	37.2	1463	62.4
Are You Pursuing the Career You Envisioned During Your College Training?	814	34.7	1531	65.3

## VII. EMPLOYMENT CONDITION

This chapter summarizes the "Employee Profile" and "Job Mobility" sections of the questionnaire. It represents an effort to measure the tangible rewards, risks and relative satisfaction of working in public history occupations. The salary data has been cross-tabulated with activity areas as well as with sex, as significant variations were found in both variables. Hours and benefits are also correlated by sex.

### STATUS, HOURS, AND COMPENSATION

Table 1. Employment Status, by Sex

	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full Time	1374	92.0	638	77.7	2012	86.9
Part Time	59	4.0	118	14.4	177	7.6
Volunteer	9	0.6	22	2.7	31	1.3
Retired	20	1.3	6	0.7	26	1.1
Unemployed	18	1.2	28	3.4	46	2.0
Other	13	0.9	9	1.1	22	1.0

Table 2. Employees in Salary Categories, by Sex

	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less Than \$10,000	81	5.4	178	22.6	259	11.4
10-14,900	213	14.3	186	23.6	399	17.5
15-19,900	327	22.0	198	25.1	525	23.1
20-24,900	281	18.9	109	13.8	390	17.1
25-29,900	205	13.8	51	6.5	256	11.2
30-34,900	149	10.0	26	3.3	175	7.7
35-39,900	67	4.5	16	2.0	83	3.6
40-50,000	89	6.0	14	1.8	103	4.5
More Than \$50,000	76	5.1	11	1.4	87	3.8
Total	1488		789		2277	

Table 3 Salary by Activity Group for Full Time Employees

	General Administration		Research & Publication		Archives/ Libraries	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than \$10,000	9	3.1	25	6.2	20	5.0
10-14,900	27	9.4	76	18.8	82	20.4
15-19,900	46	16.1	101	25.0	119	29.7
20-24,900	50	17.5	70	17.3	77	19.2
25-29,900	38	13.3	41	10.1	48	12.0
30-34,900	39	13.6	36	8.9	25	6.2
35-39,900	25	8.7	11	2.7	10	2.5
40-50,000	20	7.0	25	6.2	14	3.5
More than \$50,000	32	11.2	19	4.7	6	1.5
Total	286	100.0	404	100.0	401	100.0

  

	Museums		Park Services		Information Science	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than \$10,000	23	6.5	2	1.4	0	0.0
10-14,900	94	26.7	31	22.1	2	9.1
15-19,900	120	34.1	36	25.7	7	31.8
20-24,900	60	17.0	33	23.6	2	9.1
25-29,900	30	8.5	18	12.9	5	22.8
30-34,900	13	3.7	11	7.9	2	9.1
35-39,900	4	1.1	2	1.4	1	4.6
40-50,000	5	1.4	5	3.6	2	9.1
More than \$50,000	3	0.9	2	1.4	1	4.6
Total	352	100.0	140	100.0	21	100.0

  

	Business/ Complex Org		Policy Planning		Teaching	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than \$10,000	10	6.3	0	0.0	2	1.5
10-14,900	20	12.5	1	3.2	13	9.8
15-19,900	33	20.6	5	16.1	27	20.3
20-24,900	37	23.1	4	12.9	28	21.1
25-29,900	13	8.1	8	25.8	32	24.1
30-34,900	19	11.9	3	9.7	13	9.8
35-39,900	11	6.9	2	6.5	8	6.0
40-50,000	10	6.3	7	22.6	9	6.8
More than \$50,000	7	4.4	1	3.2	1	0.7
Total						

Table 4. Average Yearly Salary Increase, by Sex

Percentage	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	138	10.4	158	23.8	296	14.8
1-5	230	17.3	112	16.8	342	17.1
6-10	823	61.8	336	50.5	1159	58.0
11-15	102	7.7	40	6.0	142	7.1
16-20	12	0.9	15	2.3	27	1.4
21-30	11	0.8	2	0.3	13	0.7
over 30	16	1.2	2	0.3	18	0.9

Table 5 Number of Employers Worked for, Including Present One

	N	%
None (or self-employed)	72	3.1
One	389	16.6
Two	563	24.0
Three-Five	1061	45.2
Six-Eight	210	8.9
Nine or more	52	2.2

Table 6 Hours Worked By Select Full Time Activity Groups (row %)

	1-40	41-50	51-60	Over 60
General Administration	37.5	32.6	22.8	7.0
Research, Consulting, Publication	61.1	23.9	11.3	3.8
Library/Archives	72.8	22.3	3.8	1.3
Park Service	68.3	25.2	5.8	0.7
Museum	52.9	36.0	9.7	1.4
Business/Complex Organizations	49.4	34.2	10.8	5.7
Teaching	19.2	30.4	34.4	16.0

Table 7 Hours Worked Per Week, By Sex

Hours	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1-10	10	0.7	12	1.6	22	1.0
11-20	19	1.3	54	7.0	73	3.3
21-30	15	1.0	44	5.7	59	2.7
31-40	732	50.8	385	49.9	1117	50.5
41-50	411	28.5	188	24.4	599	27.1
51-60	195	13.5	69	8.9	264	11.9
Over 60	60	4.2	20	2.6	80	3.6



**STABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT AND REASONS FOR LEAVING JOB**

Table 1 Reason for Leaving Last Position

	N	%
None	240	10.4
Better Job Opportunity	1041	45.3
Job Ended	152	6.7
Staff Reduction	77	3.4
Retirement	158	6.6
Training/Education	165	7.2
Changed Field of Employment	27	1.2
Partner Transfer	65	2.8
Job Dissatisfaction	206	9.0
Salary Dissatisfaction	36	1.6
Health/Personal Reasons	107	4.7
Other	26	1.1
Total	2130	100.0

Table 2 Remained at Present Position for Three or More Years

	N	%
YES	1552	66.5
NO	782	33.5

Table 3 Administrative Responsibility: Number of Individuals Directly Responsible to You

None		1-10		11-20		21-30		Over 30	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
820	36.6	1138	50.8	164	7.3	63	2.8	56	2.5

**BENEFITS, VACATION, AND LEAVE TIME**

Table 1 Days of Paid Vacation Allowed Per Year (if variable use current year)

	N	%
0	327	14.9
1-10	255	11.7
11-20	990	45.4
21-30	403	18.5
31 or more	208	10.5

Table 2 Total "Unrestricted" Days of Leave Time Allowed

	N	%
0	2032	94.6
1-10	19	0.9
11-20	15	0.7
21-30	30	1.4
31 or more	52	2.4

Table 3 Days of Sick Leave allowed per year (if variable use current year)

	N	%
0	579	27.1
1-10	274	12.8
11-20	1088	50.9
21-30	89	4.2
31 or more	109	5.1

Table 4 Does your organization have a program of Paid Leave for Professional Improvement

	N	%
YES	679	29.1
NO	1655	70.9

Table 5 Benefits in addition to salary which Public Historians receive, by sex (includes all benefits whether paid in part or in total) (% of respondents)

Benefits	Total		Male		Female	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Life Insurance	61.2	38.8	67.9	32.1	48.8	51.2
Health Ins. for you only	29.2	70.8	24.5	75.5	37.7	62.3
Health Ins. for you and family	50.9	49.1	62.5	37.5	29.6	70.4
Dental Insurance	25.1	74.9	28.5	71.5	18.9	81.1
Tuition	19.6	80.4	18.6	81.4	21.4	78.6
Maternity Leave						
Pension Plan	69.0	31.0	75.5	24.5	57.0	43.0
*Profit Plan	1.3	98.7	1.3	98.7	1.2	98.8
Travel/Expense Acct.	2.4	97.6	2.4	97.6	2.4	97.6
Bonuses	0.4	99.6	0.3	99.7	0.5	99.5
Leave Time	1.6	98.4	1.5	98.5	1.7	98.3
Other(Housing, Library, Privileges)	9.5	90.5	9.6	90.4	9.2	90.8

\* Benefits from here on were not listed on questionnaires, so the returns may not be complete.

## VIII. SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONNAIRE: BUSINESS AND HISTORIANS

The last two pages of the questionnaire carried this heading and consisted of six questions, most with several parts, for which specific and in some cases very subjective responses were sought rather than the categorized responses built into earlier parts of the questionnaire. The title was an effort to obtain from respondents suggestions on how historians might best penetrate the private sector of employment. This purpose was motivated by the fact that this is by far the larger area of jobs and that comparatively few historians have secured professional-level positions in business. Unfortunately, however, the title also must have conveyed the impression that only historians who felt familiar with business should respond, for 54 percent of the questionnaires received contain no answers to any parts of this section; 34 percent had only a limited response; only 12 percent answered all or most of these questions. The subjective and open-ended nature of the questions also made it impossible to reduce the responses to numerical data. Hence, the summary of this final portion of the survey will consist of select excerpts and overall summaries of the responses of the 12 percent who made significant comments. This is obviously a less valid sample of public historians than that in the remainder of this summary, but the ideas should be insightful to those both in history and in business who had contemplated the possibilities of greater liaison between these two areas.

The most important finding of the subjective material was a significant split between (1) those historians employed in public agencies, and (2) those employed in private enterprise. The two groups approach the issues of historical training quite distinctly, and those distinctions will be covered in this report.

For historians employed outside of the academic community, careers have been hard wrought. Those who wrote at length offered negative advice, criticizing university history programs and discouraging students from studying history except as a second subject. Most who answered have had frustrating or hard career experiences themselves. Two reasons for this were repeatedly mentioned in the replies.

- (1) Those in government or other non-profit agencies deal with large or well-entrenched bureaucracies and limited, slow-paced career paths.
- (2) Those in private industry have most often had to make dramatic shifts somewhere along the way, shifts which usually take them completely out of the historian category. Of course, there are corporate historians and archivists, but their careers are usually blunted because they are not in the traditional mainstream of management.

There was a noticeable level of anxiety and restlessness. Perhaps those who offered significant comments were particularly eager to express these feelings because of their own adversity in the job market. Among those who are in areas already open to the employment of historians (government, agencies, museums) there was criticism of conventional university history training. This criticism was summarized in the comment that, "University history departments only prepare students to become history professors." These responders wished for more academic programs and practicums in public history and for more encouragement of history students to take business courses.

Among those who have found careers in private industry, criticism took a much different form. This group largely recommended the dissolution of university public history programs altogether and in their place concentrate on academic historical training for undergraduates combined with an MBA in graduate school. Their emphasis was on the development of the student's cognitive skills through historical training. In this group there was discomfort with the idea of coupling the study of history with a notion that one can use it by itself as a serious prelude for a career outside academia.

The following is a list of the subjective questions along with some commentary and a sampling of replies.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND ANY PUBLICATIONS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO HISTORIANS CONSIDERING BUSINESS CAREERS?

By far the most frequently mentioned category was the periodical, particularly the myriad specific journals for various museum work, national park service work, local history, historic preservation, and so on -- periodicals that deal with that aspect of public history which concentrates on curatorial and collections management issues.

Of those who are now in profit-making businesses, most frequently mentioned were The Wall Street Journal and books by Peter Drucker.

HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE A 'GOOD JOB APPLICANT'?

This question drew the least creative responses. There was some confusion about its intent. Some assumed this was for their own job, others for jobs in general. The following was a typical response.

"A person who fulfills all the criteria listed in the position description; who has flexibility and willingness to learn; communicates well (writing and speaking); exhibits enthusiasm and brings to the job good imaginative ideas."

This type of reply was repeated frequently, but it is not distinctive enough to offer any substance for those interested in public history per se. The practical bent of our audience showed up in this reply to the question, "Someone who can work with his hands and carries a pocket knife."

CONCERNING STUDENTS WITH HISTORY BACKGROUNDS, WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THEIR POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES?

This question did not elicit particularly creative comments. There were those who replied positively and those who replied negatively to the question. Some examples:

"Persistence in seeking answers and/or evidence; exposure to cultural trends and backgrounds; tendency to see events and people in context."

"They like to read books, a quality which is no longer of much value in this society."

"I am not qualified to answer this question, not having discovered any (positive attributes) that result from a student's history education."

"The history background has no positive attributes. Only the person has positive attributes and those are what determines a positive or negative use of his/her history background."

This was the pattern of many of the responses and represents the general tenor of those who replied. There were no other significant types of responses.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THEIR NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES?

This question drew the most lengthy responses; far more detailed and specific comments were made here than in any other area. Among the more insightful replies:

"They are probably even less fitted to deal with the commercial world than students of other branches of the liberal arts."

"(They have a) bias against business, arrogance, lack of team experience."

"They tend to want to stay with data collection too long before writing."

"Belief that knowledge is more important than experience in finding a job."

"They are taught to write in the passive voice and usually in the third person." (Presumably this means they tend to think in this way.)

"In most cases, historians are not comfortable making quick decisions. They want to do exhaustive research before jumping one way or another. The academy and the real world work at different speeds with different priorities. Historians must adapt to the change with aggression."

"Not materialistic enough."

"Most historians are word people. They have far too little background in anthropology, art history, and architectural history." (One of the many comments on historians general lack of appreciation for material culture.)

"Perhaps not enough knowledge of how to translate their history knowledge into the business and management skills that jobs require."

In general, negative attributes were in four categories:

- (1) the slower speed at which historians work compared to the business world
- (2) academic tunnel vision restricting career imagination
- (3) disdain and condescension toward the business world
- (4) tendency to prefer work as loners, unwillingness to endure the processes of teamwork

The final category was an open one introduced simply by the words OTHER SUGGESTIONS? Aside from general comments, there were two clear types of replies. One deals with history and the other with money.

On history programs:

"Reduce the number of students specializing in history and cut the history programs beyond the MA by half."

"I cannot encourage others to major in history. The job market is bleak and will remain so in the foreseeable future. If I could start all over again, I would do an undergraduate history course and then get an MBA or a CPA and go to work for a corporation or a stock brokerage firm. I would use history as an avocation, not as a vocation."

"History + Graduate Trade School = Job"

"Study history only as a minor or as electives only."

"A wildly unrelated minor field or study could help history major a lot."

"I do not encourage anyone to major in history and know of several employees in my section alone who are currently taking other courses to be able to leave the history field, myself included."

"I do not support encouraging people to go into history with the idea that it is a route to business employment."

"This is not so much a suggestion as it is a question. I cannot for the life of me understand what the graduate program in public history at UCSB or any similar program could possibly be teaching. Are their students getting jobs? What are they learning? Pray tell! I also think that this survey probably misses a number of people that do what 'public historians' do by limiting the survey to (academically trained) historians. I suspect that an awful lot of this 'public history' is being done by non-historians such as architects, archeologists and planners. I certainly see this in the National Park Service."

"Shift focus away from archival/museum/historical agency employment which is an even smaller universe than academic history departments"

On money:

"To ride the history horse to make money is the height of folly."

"History as a field can be very satisfying, but I don't recommend it to someone who wants to earn a large salary, receive rapid promotions, and needs a lot of job recognition to feel he's accomplished something."

"It would be interesting to know to what extent practicing historians, employed or not, depend on the productivity of a spouse, etc. (whether or not expressed in extra monetary income) to be able to function. To what extent do historians married to historians inhibit each other's historical work when marginally employed?"

Some general comments:

"As a former college history professor who made the transition to public history when one job market dissipated, I know far better than most the realities of our age, and know that one has to love history to stay in it in any meaningful capacity. Public history, especially funded directly by government, requires a 'marriage of convenience' with bureaucracy that most 'pure' historians may not be willing to make."

"Applicants who enter the business world or government will be sadly disappointed if they are looking for an alternative academic environment."

"I consider history an art, not a business, not a trade, not a formal discipline. Students of history may never be historians."

"The profession needs to recognize something between the Masters Degree and the completed PhD as a significant achievement."

"Be enthusiastic, dig in, and expect to work late."

"Set up some sort of old boy/old girl network to make it easier for those looking for positions or changing positions will have access to the information on a more readily available basis."

On the questionnaire itself:

"I'd suggest that you revise this questionnaire so that it permits public historians to better explain what they are doing and why they are doing it."

Included in the answers to the subjective questions were occasional recommendations for additional training to add value to the historian's background. Those recommendations, unranked were:

Journalism -- writing concisely for deadline  
Library Science  
Computer Science  
Business  
Public Speaking  
Sociology  
Practicum -- on the job training  
Anthropology  
Archeology  
Natural Science

The most often used expression was the "real world". It was used as a rallying cry, as a term carrying the implications that through current efforts in the area of public history the "real world" can be squarely faced by history students. This is not a unique problem, since all phases of the liberal arts face challenges of so-called real world life versus academic life. It is difficult to analyze the use of this term, but it was so frequently used that it gives good evidence that those answering the questionnaire have deep concerns about history education.

These concerns did not necessarily extend to discouraging future students from majoring in history, however. The quantitative section of the survey contained one question not yet reported to which 2,345 responded: Would You Advise a High School Student to Major in History? A small majority, 1,285 (54.8%), responded YES; 1,060 (45.2%) answered NO. Like several parts of this survey, this result can be interpreted in several ways. Advocates of public history should take caution in the fact that such a substantial number of its practitioners would discourage others from following this path. But the fact that a small majority would advise majoring in history can be regarded as offsetting to some extent the generally gloomy assessments of the future for public historians quoted from a much smaller sample in the preceding paragraphs.



Beyond differences of interpretation, clear and repeated contradictions were found in the narrative responses, and these fall into several groups:

- (1) Historians work well with people versus historians don't work well as team members.
- (2) Historians are lacking in intuitive business skills, an "inability to seize the moment", versus historians are good at unstructured tasks.
- (3) Historians are good data gatherers and concluders versus historians are good data gatherers but cannot conclude.
- (4) Historians have broader perspectives than their rivals versus historians are too narrow in their focus. Specifically, some answers were that historians "cannot see the forest for the trees" whereas others claimed that historians can better "see the overall forest".
- (5) Historians can prevent businesses from "rediscovering the wheel", repeating past mistakes, versus historians themselves are always rediscovering the wheel, going over the same ground too often.
- (6) Historians have a good sense of humor versus historians have a poor sense of humor.

The fact that contrasts, variations, and outright opposite views are more characteristic of the replies than a sense of agreement suggests two conclusions -- one simple and the other almost metaphysical.

The first is that life as an historian is a hardship, wrought out on one's own.

The second is a question: Does history itself have an identity? That is to say, do history and historical training have value or is it only individual initiative on the part of historians in business or in public service jobs that has value? Obviously, individual initiative is always important. But the question remains whether the serious study of history does something unique for the human mind. Does the study of history orient or even force us in certain cognitive directions which if identified and consciously pursued would contribute to or even create new opportunities for historians outside of the academic community?