Preparing the Professional Historian: Connecting Academic Training with the Changing Marketplace
Ann McCleary, University of West Georgia

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

I think there are a couple of issues here, some of which have emerged amongst the case statements thus far. First off, we need to train our students as historians, a point Ivan and others have made. In this regard, we need to work closely with our academic colleagues to be sure that our students gain expertise and knowledge in the practice of historical research, analysis, writing, and presentation. When I say that, I cringe just a bit because some of my colleagues (maybe some of yours as well?) often pigeon-hole us as "public historians" and forget that we also have historical training. So we, too, can and should bring that historical training to our students, especially since we have experience in tailoring that to public history work. But if we work more in partnership with our colleagues, we can only strengthen both the training of our students as well as their professional networking opportunities.

Second, I agree that we must work more closely with practicing professionals so that students truly understand the nature of the field in which they hope to work. Often, colleges and universities do this through the use of adjuncts to teach courses in their field. As practicing public historians, they can speak more clearly to the issues that they face and the preparation that students would need for the field. As Darlene has said, and I have heard this from others as well, the ability to write well cannot be overstated and can be emphasized perhaps more powerfully from a practicing public historian. Still, as public history program directors, we need to be sure we also know what our adjuncts are teaching our students so that we can incorporate some of these skill sets and training needs into our curriculum.

One way that we have been successful about integrating these responsibilities at West Georgia is by team-teaching some of our classes with practicing professionals. We have developed a museum studies program with the Atlanta History Center in which we co-teach our classes with the Atlanta History Center staff. These classes thus bring together both a public history faculty member and one or more professional staff members at the Atlanta History Center. The AHC staff consistently keep us—both our students and faculty—up to date with the issues in the field, allowing us to discuss the best preparation and training for the jobs which these practitioners hold.

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look like? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most

effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

I do worry about this issue. In the twelve years that I have coordinated a public history program, the number of new M.A. programs has grown exponentially. I believe that we need programs around the country so that we can train public historians everywhere. In many cases, aspiring public historians do not have the luxury to move elsewhere for training; some of our students are working in other jobs but trying to retrain for public history work or they are non-traditional students who have families and are unable to attend school too far from home. But I don't think we need, for example, five graduate programs within a two-hour driving radius.

This issue is closely tied, in my mind, with the idea of the generalist versus the specialist programs. When I came to West Georgia, for example, there was already a historic preservation program only an hour away, so I created a focus in museum studies and archives/community history. I don't think we need to be replicating each others' programs, and I have seen that happen. Such replication hurts *both* programs; neither one can grow as successfully as if each program had its own niche. That said, I also agree with an earlier case statement that noted that the skills are increasingly specific in our fields. Specific skill sets are needed for a museum career, for historic preservation, or for archives. What we try to do is to tailor the training to the specific student's needs and career interests, and thus far that has worked. In a few cases, I honestly believed that we could not offer the student the training he or she needed in historic preservation, and I referred that student to a neighboring program.

In terms of working with practicing professionals, we have accomplished that goal through our partnership with the Atlanta History Center. We are now pursuing other such partnerships with our state's only MLIS program and with our growing archives and digital history courses.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here which should be more actively systematized and replicated?

Like some of our colleagues in this working group, I received my graduate degrees in American Civilization, and I know I benefitted greatly by the interdisciplinary training that I received, especially in material culture, anthropology, and art history. I constantly emphasize the importance of being interdisciplinary in my classes, and we welcome opportunities to work with others from such backgrounds.

As important, or perhaps more so, I had worked in the public history field for almost twenty years before I 'returned' to teaching and directing a public history program. That experience has been essential for me; I can teach about this work because I

have actually done it, having worked in museums, historic preservation, consulting, and humanities work.

Last, I still actively participate in public history projects as the director of our Center for Public History. This Center work is my salvation, because I am able to undertake a variety of public history projects and keep honing my skills. Public history work continues to evolve, especially in terms of technology, that I appreciate having the opportunity to actually 'do it' so I can be current in what I teach. Our CPH also employs and engages students in this practice, teaching skills and modeling professional public history work.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been unsuccessful in developing skills and experienced valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures?

I cannot think of any particular aspects of our teaching or training that has been unsuccessful. If anything, I think we could incorporate more technology into our classes, as I know students need this training. We have recently hired someone who will bring greater expertise in this area, and I am excited to see the change already.

Another challenge for us is to get students to attend conferences and meetings. We regularly encourage them to present at professional conferences. While the university has some funds for this purpose, the amounts are not as large as one would like to attend national meetings. However, we have been more successful in helping students attend state and regional meetings and encouraging them to apply for scholarships available through those organizations. I wish we had more funding for student travel.

One of the hallmarks of our program are the Graduate Research Assistantships which provide much of the teaching, training, and mentoring that help our students succeed. Sometimes these funds involve work in historical agencies in the region; sometimes the funds are acquired to work in the Center for Public History doing outreach projects. We know that these experiences are key to the students' success, extending the practical, hands-on learning beyond a one-semester internship or experiential activities in a class. The challenge is for our public history faculty to continue to to find, create, and supervise these positions and funding opportunities. This requires a tremendous amount of time on our part.

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise to a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences?

This is the big question, at the root of what we do. To a certain extent, a student's success will be based on both their knowledge and skills. But I think passion and creativity are also important. I always encourage students to "think outside the box."

Patrick K. Moore, University of West Florida

First, let me begin by expressing my apologies at being the last to submit my statement. Returning from sabbatical may be the cause for my tardiness but is clearly in violation of one of the key skills—timeliness—that I work to impress upon my students. With that being said, I enter this fray with the advantages of reading the other responses and having considered the direction and the complexity of the discussion.

Early on, it appeared that my take on this process was somewhat different from others in the group. The conversation seemed to focus largely on specific work-environment applications and skills tempered with sound perspectives on training and experiences. While I see these as important, at the University of West Florida, my primary goal in professional training is in creating a foundation for historical investigation and cultivating a specific intellectual skill-set around reflective inquiry and interpretation. As this was at the center of my education under Noel Stowe, and aptly articulated in *TPH* Vol. 28, No. 1, Winter 2006 on Reflective Practice, I work with my future professionals to train them in these conceptual approaches of question framing, problem solving, and inquiry modeling.

From the submitted pieces for our working group (and I only have collected six statements so there may be some missing variation), the conversation appears to concentrate far more on the practical skills including research and writing approaches, verbal communication, business and entrepreneurial abilities, internship securing/activities/mentoring, etc. Without question, these are important and significant components of the program at UWF. However, I see these as secondary supporting components to my larger pedagogical goals. As this appeared to be the direction of our working group session, and the submitted pieces were all clear and cogent discussions, (of which I look forward to exploring further), I was not sure what new or beneficial contributions I could provide. After briefly discussing with Jay Price (as we share a common academic background) I considered withdrawing from the panel to avoid any unnecessary redundancy. In reading Darlene Roth's concerns, however, I sense that perhaps there is a value in injecting this dialogue into the conversation. It may not be what our participants are expecting, but it certainly should prove valuable in considering the facets of professional development.

Just to share my background in the interest of full disclosure, I have been at the University of West Florida since 1998 using, and constantly refining, this reflective practitioner development approach. Since my first full incoming graduate class in 1999, we have admitted between 15-18 new students into the program each year. Of those, the majority complete their graduate degrees between 2-3 years (including their capstone practicum—e.g. internship—and the defense of a comprehensive practicum report). Currently, our graduates have a 100% in-field placement and/or job offer rate (some have opted not to enter the work field for various personal or family reasons) or have continued onto doctoral programs. While I imagine many of

you have seen them at previous conferences, and will have eighteen in Portland and you obviously cannot miss them next year in Pensacola, I certainly encourage you to ask them about their experiences.

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

I believe that this requires a constant interaction between academe and the marketplace. While much of this can occur as part of the practicum/internship placement and assessment process, there also needs to be ongoing communication between the two entities at a higher level. Engaging in a dialogue about what they need and what we can provide keeps both parties connected and meets the collective needs of academe, student, and marketplace.

One important observation I have is that often the marketplace may have an excellent notion of what it wants, but does not always necessarily know how to get there. In this, the reflective-inquiry approaches can help train practitioners ask the right kinds of questions so as to reach an appropriate set of potential outcomes. This includes comparative modeling, invoking compatible paradigms, incorporating interdisciplinary perspectives, and drawing upon successful—and unsuccessful—previous experiences and examples. All of these, naturally, must work within the existing, and often changing, parameters of the given project or challenge.

While there is a view that no single program can do everything, I only partially agree with this perspective. Certainly yes, when it comes to training of specific skill sets, such as preservation procedures, Section 106 compliance, working with specialized technologies including GIS databasing or digital media production, etc., these require unique instruction. However, most of these can be learned at different levels and in different settings including some on-the-job training. While our students at UWF branch out into different areas, including museum work, historic preservation/CRM, heritage tourism, new media, and others, they all learn the intellectual process of *how* to think and practice as a public historian first. With those skills in hand, *then* they can move onto the next level of training and practice.

My belief, therefore, is that you provide the necessary foundations for professionals to practice the larger craft of Public History. With those fundamental skills, they can then draw upon their existing abilities and knowledge base to learn other specialized approaches as necessary. In this, they will be able to adapt to whatever challenge emerges as well as to a changing marketplace.

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look like? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most

effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

Again, I sense this goes back to the role of "practice" of the public historian. One major concern I see right now in terms of public history education is that many programs still function in the ad-hoc era of training for specific tasks and do not necessarily draw upon the essential aspects of public history as an intellectual pursuit. In many ways, the idea of teaching a specific craft, be it archives or preservation or museum work, etc. is that the training institution can become myopic in its focus. While here at UWF we concentrate on several different areas of specialized training with professionals in both academe and the field, the core training is at the heart of what we do. In this, the generalist vs. specialist argument is too simplistic. Instead, we are training practitioners to *think* like public historians across the specialized boundaries. To invoke a simple math set and subset model: once equipped with necessary public history methodological training, while not all public historians are XYZs (specialization here—preservationists, museum professionals, documentarians, corporate historians, etc.), all XYZs are public historians.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here which should be more actively systematized and replicated?

Central in my view would be the development of a portfolio of professional experiences. At the heart of reflective inquiry and practice exists an ongoing dialogue between whatever current project or challenge exists with cumulative past experiences and insights. Granted, this takes some time and a conscious effort after each subsequent undertaking and can be especially challenging for those that have less than exceptional results. However, the ability to draw upon these as a reference moving forward, as well as an example of existing work to both potential employers/agencies, can be invaluable.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been <u>unsuccessful</u> in developing skills and experience valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures?

I do not necessarily see undesired outcomes as failures, rather, as Dr. Phil might suggest, "opportunities for growth." (Actually, have no idea if Dr. Phil says this or not but it is certainly cliché.) Going back to the first question, at UWF we are constantly revisiting what our potential partners in the marketplace need and how we can best equip our students with the appropriate skill set to meet those needs. In many cases, this stems largely from the practical application side where we learn

from our limitations. As an example, based upon student and partner organization feedback, as part of my basic skills development requirements I now require every student to develop and maintain a project website. While learning the complexities of this process periodically creates consternation with my less "technically savvy" students, I know that should the expectation arise (and it increasingly has), they can each instantly respond to the challenge.

From a broader intellectual standpoint, over the last decade at UWF we have endeavored to expand the existing conceptual boundaries of various interpretive approaches in asking what *haven't* you learned and what can we offer to fix that limitation. As another example, while we train our students with the intricacies of proper oral history preparation, collection, interpretation, and preservation, once completed, the materials typically end up in an archive waiting for some future user to discover their content. As part of our training, we now focus on incorporating Concept Mapping (C-Map™) computer-based tools, developed at the Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, for specialized knowledge elicitation (KE) and management projects. Essentially, we move beyond the traditional oral history processes in incorporating both the interview and all other types of information into a usable, accessible, and cross-referenced database. Using these approaches, we have trained our students to work in all types of KE-intensive markets such as the military, NASA, NOAA, MMS, and across private industry. Simply put, access to knowledge and information is arguably any operation's most valuable asset. Unlike technically-focused personnel, properly trained public historians possess vastly superior inquiry, question framing, and investigative capabilities. With this, we dramatically expand the value and validity of public historians into otherwise untapped fields.

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise in a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences? (I like this wording from your list but I wonder if it duplicates question #3 in some ways. I also considered giving or asking for a specific set of skills: research, writing, giving presentations, budget and management, digital technologies, but I am not sure how specific we should get or just hear what the participants come up with)

I sense this question rests heavily on cultivating professional writing and verbal communication skills. Further, I concur with the responses provided by most. Moving back to my goal of challenging developing practitioners to ask different types of questions, there is always room to consider alternatives to the historic standards of both the traditional and applied disciplines. For example, over the last several years, some of our students have sought to challenge existing approaches by engaging various audiences at different levels. From this, I witnessed the development of early online digital media projects in the years before "podcast" became a household term and YouTube was still in its infancy.

Drawing directly on these early endeavors, and after completing a massive KE project for the federal government on Gulf Coast fishing communities in the days following hurricane Katrina in 2005, we recognized the possibilities of bridging digital media and GPS location-based services in delivering historic content. Applying the reflective-inquiry methods, we worked in tandem with educational and information technology experts (who do not traditionally function on the same wave-patterns as social scientists) in creating the Next Exit History™ program (nextexithistory.com). Thus far, this program has proven remarkably successful in bridging these interpretive gaps between professional historians and diverse audiences. The nexus of its inception, however, came from the fundamental reflective process of reframing the question about what exists, what is needed, and what opportunities exist for improving on the status quo.

Robert B. Townsend

My perspective on these issues is shaped by two interrelated experiences. First, as a member of the staff at the American Historical Association for the past 20 years, I have studied historians and the academic job market while also developing a number of new media history projects. More recently, over the past eight years I have been a doctoral student in the history and new media program at George Mason University, where I finished a dissertation on the separation of academic history from other professional practices in the discipline. Hopefully this provides some perspective on the issues that may be useful here.

The issue here probably starts with a cultural problem—that most history departments do not know how to conceive any practice but research as part of history training. The AHA's Committee on Graduate Education noted this problem five years ago, and called on departments to take a broader view of their responsibilities in preparing their students. As they noted, history doctoral programs do a poor job even of preparing their students for teaching positions—the jobs a majority of their students will enter (and even more seem to aspire to). Five years later, it appears this admonition from the CGE had little effect. This was probably due in part to the relatively limited description of how public history training might work. But it only seems to be in hard economic times such as these that departments take training for other types of employment seriously. The current job crisis may provide an opportunity (however unfortunate) to get faculty and departments to think more broadly about their responsibilities to their students and the discipline.

That said, it will not be easy to reverse decades of narrowing notions about the ends of graduate work in history. But the model of a number of exceptional public history programs suggests some changes in Perspective, and may provide examples for change. Ideally, a wide range of historical practices should be seen as intrinsic to a graduate-level history education—included on a list of subjects with language

training, quantitative research, and teaching skills. Hopefully, the forthcoming report from the Working Group on Evaluating Public History Scholarship will help provide a framework and foundation for thinking through this relationship, while this committee can help fill in practical details about how this might work at the departmental level.

The abysmal job market for historians an opportunity to interest graduate departments in training their students for a wider array of job opportunities. Unfortunately, this opportunity is two-edged, as current hiring freezes limit most departments' ability to hire departmental faculty to teach skills in a wider array of skills. Worse still, as current faculty are pressed to teach heavier class loads, it probably becomes more difficult to get them to participate in rethinking and expanding the curriculum for the departments.

Nevertheless, a couple years of hiring freezes and sustained high levels of students in history classrooms, should create significant opportunities for growth in departments when the finances of higher education improve. Initially, these openings are likely to be for part-time and adjunct faculty, which could provide an opening for local public historians to get a toe into many departments. But to make an effective change in departmental training and culture, departments will need a framework for thinking about how this training might fit into the larger curriculum of the department. I tend to think that all graduate programs should incorporate some aspect of public history training in their curriculum, but in a way that allows some openness to other practices. This need not be imposed on every student, but each department should be encouraged to develop programs drawing on specialized local talent and institutions.

My professional career has been shaped by courses applying technology to historical work. A course on statistics and databases in my first history graduate program (Catholic University, 1988 to 1990) was instrumental in gaining my first job at the AHA. More recent course work on new media at George Mason University (courses in web site theory and design, GIS, and documentary film) revitalized my enthusiasm for history work, and resulted in a number of significant new history projects for the AHA web site.

One of the more interesting findings in our recent survey of public historians was the wide variety of preparation historians in public history jobs had received. Less than a third of the respondents reported some academic training in public history, while almost two-thirds of the respondents reported they had received training on the job. That suggests a significant area of opportunity for departments willing to take on such training.

That said, I am afraid my knowledge on the practicalities of public history training—particularly about skills and work outside of new media—is too limited to be of much assistance on. My experience at George Mason and my study of graduate programs leads me to think that it would be impossible to create one-size-fits-all

"public history" programs. The ideal goal should be to establish a set of expectations among history departments about integrating public history training into their standard set of courses in history graduate programs. This would be in the interest of the discipline (which would benefit from embracing the full diversity of practices), and could be in the interest of departments trying to attract more students to their programs.

Robert M. Weaver. M.A, M. Arch, RPA, The Environmental History Company, Inc.

I appreciate the opportunity participate with you all in addressing this important session topic. Before responding to the guiding questions, I would like to introduce myself and my background. I'm not a pure historian by training. My background comes from historical archaeology and historic preservation, which I have practiced in one way or another for 35 years. In historical archaeology, we receive training in history and historical research; the goal of the discipline is to mesh the archaeological record with the historical record; and develop perspectives on our society that can't be answered exclusively from the written record. On top of that, about 20 years ago, I happened into an opportunity to apply the teachings of archaeology and history within the environmental cleanup arena. This has included researching the uses of properties, developing the histories of industries that occupied properties and their associated technologies, analyzing practices and behavior patterns, and helping others design the scientific programs to find contaminants in the ground. In addition, I have worked with attorneys to prosecute (or defend) claims of liability associated with release of hazardous materials. This has included tracing the corporate lineages, obtaining the historical records (and other information) to support reasoned arguments, and providing insights from history and anthropology that contribute to legal strategies.

Throughout the following observations please keep the following concepts in mind:

- Public History could and should look to broader horizons and applications of the discipline and skills (and argue for creating a broader range of job opportunities). This is the responsibility of both academia and the practicing professionals;
- Needs of specific opportunities (in terms of skills, experiences, and training) need to be identified, communicated to potential professionals, and academic programs should be adjusted to meet these future opportunities;
- Both the academy and the professional community should develop a more systematic process of information exchange (on a more frequent basis) to identify industry trends, technical needs, and whether such needs are best taught in the university or as part of training on the job.

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

From my perspective one goal of the university is to introduce and then train students for a career as a practicing professional. Obviously, academia is much more, but for students who view public history as a primary discipline, they need a range of tools, experiences, and insights that allow them to maximize their opportunities.

But the nature of those academic experiences is not necessarily addressed within one program or one department. I started out in engineering and scientific training; I migrated to anthropology and historical archaeology. I took courses in engineering, history, and architecture and hob-knobbed with urban geographers; I also drilled on statistics and scientific method. I've combined all of these experiences to develop niche specialties in both archaeology and environmental studies; and the broad perspective niche specialty approach has allowed me to respond to changing conditions in the workplace and command a better than average salary…not to mention the job satisfaction that comes from meeting different challenges on a routine basis.

Academia needs to advise their students that look to a public history career about the realm of opportunities (both existing and emerging markets) and the educational requirements to function within those opportunities. Survival in the job market has much to do with breadth of knowledge and ability to see and seize opportunity; it has much to do with abstracting learned skills and applying them to new situations. If I had been "just an archaeologist", I would have been laid off years ago. But I was able to recognize a situation and adapt (actually very easily) my learning to something new.

But academics can't do this in a vacuum. We need a better way for professionals to interact with academia, and especially identify emerging job areas. I'm not quite sure how to achieve such, because it needs to anticipate opportunities beyond just local or even regional perspectives. Perhaps an annual National working session of a balanced group of invitees to examine future opportunities in the job world, the skill sets required, and the balance between academic training and OJT efficiencies. This likely should be independent of a conference, but then maybe the observations discussed as a standing conference session.

Identifying work-study opportunities, especially in non-traditional venues, as well as more frequent exposure to those in the marketplace is key. Perhaps devoting a week of classes taught by a workplace professional (or several) would have more impact than spaced out or once a term presentations. And have them include business operations as a topic area. Far too many new employees are totally technical and have no clue about the effect of non-academic aspects (e.g., efficiency, profit objectives, regulatory interaction, etc.) that we find in the business world.

Group projects are great, but need to somehow run on a more realistic model. Companies run on hierarchy and delegation of responsibility. Work with business professionals to structure a new paradigm. Working as a team is integral to business, but we aren't training people to deal with the realities. Think the Donald Trump model from "the Apprentice"; for better or worse, they "chose" a leader right out of the chute; and forced or offered the opportunity for division of labor.

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look like? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

Some people are specialists by nature; some are generalists. The ability to be both (more or less) is an advantage that can't be beat. In historical archaeology, we have people who just love clay pipes; they know everything about them. And when I have to deal with clay pipes, I seek the "experts." I know enough about them to be dangerous…or even do a decent study. But it takes all of us to make a better whole. So we need to identify the particular interests and skills of each individual student (or employee) and then foster an understanding of where their interests fit in to a bigger scene.

Frankly, the job market is what one makes of it. The "traditional" market may be limiting, but we all need to think about selling and leveraging the market of opportunity. Ruth Benedict, an anthropologist, helped define the U.S. approach to the occupation of Japan after WW II (I hope that the same, along with historians, is going on with Iraq and Afghanistan). If public history takes on the challenge of identifying the future opportunities – where the training and perspectives can have an impact – then both programs and jobs may expand (maybe not boundless, but certainly better than the limitations of current perception). It all has to do with the anticipation of markets, transmitting that information to up and coming "students" (in academia or beginning professionals), and developing the necessary awareness and perspicuity to leverage skills into new environments. In a sense, history needs to (and I believe can) sell itself outside its traditional bounds. Even in areas like archival training, I can think of applications (especially within archaeology) where archivally-trained professionals would build a better mouse trap than my colleagues.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here which should be more actively systematized and replicated?

To some extent, this has been covered above. For me, the most valuable experiences have been pushing myself to learn outside of my main discipline (including

hydrogeology, how hazardous "glop" will migrate through different densities of soils, what are the indicators of buried contaminants and can I use a technique to date disposal, etc.). I wish academia could teach curiosity (some students have it; some don't). But how can we improve teaching or encouraging curiosity?; how do we teach the value of learning from other disciplines (and integrating into our own) – thereby subsequently transforming that learning to "how can I contribute from my perspective; where can I fit in and make myself valuable?" Others have mentioned communication skills (both speaking and writing) and that ability has been key in my life. Also, I don't think those of us in practice learn enough about teaching. It doesn't end with academia. I'm always teaching and mentoring. That includes staff and, even more difficult, clients. Would that I had more formal training in this area.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been unsuccessful in developing skills and experience valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures?

I'll leave this more or less alone. Above, I've touched upon the problems of "team projects" in academia; yet understanding one's place in a "project" is key to dealing with the work environment. Some skills are best taught in school; others can only be taught in the work environment, which is something we should discuss as part of this session.. As hinted at above, some of the traditional perspectives of what academic training is or should be don't necessarily prepare students for challenging jobs in the marketplace. More interaction is desirable

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise in a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences?

What can I say here. See all of the above. The terminology is right on. Creative. Engaging. Expertise. Wide ranging. Maybe we should rotate positions. Each of us rotate: business world; academia; and public sector. Every few years or so. I know it isn't going to happen, but the best way to develop creative and engaging professionals is for each and every one of us to put ourselves in each other's shoes. Understanding the difficulties; the challenges; the differences of each job…and more specifically the systems…is key to successful and cooperative interaction. As noted above, teaching doesn't stop with the academy. Both from the perspective of the employee and the (hopefully mentoring) manager, learning is a lifetime objective. If you don't keep learning, then you will go nowhere.

Darlene Roth, PhD, Consultant

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

It strikes me, as a 30+-year veteran of public history practice, that the first thing universities must do is to stop offering their public history programs as a "cure-all" or "one-size-fits-all" program for work outside of teaching. For every area of historical practice outside the academy there is a concomitant requirement for OTHER professional training.

Historians going into archives need to have archival training, be conversant with information technologies, multi-media practices, and records management strategies and equipment.

Historians going into historic preservation and/or cultural resource management need training in architecture, in legal and policy matters, in planning techniques and approaches, and MUST be adept with public records.

Historians going into museum work need curatorial, conservation, registration, general museology and/or exhibit training.

Historians going into historic administration need training in management and leadership, non-profit fund-raising, accounting procedures, and general business practices.

No single public history program can do all this, and programs are well advised to focus at most on one or two of these as preparatory for actual professional training.

Most academically trained historians who work in the "history business" in the public arena do not actually function as historians, that is, they are not researching and writing histories, but they are serving in the ancillary roles as archivists, conservators, administrators, and so on. A history degree is useful and desirable, but by itself will not land a job in these areas of employment.

For those historians who function as public intellectuals and who are active in interpreting history to the public, additional training is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED in anthropology and media, and in writing, writing, writing, and more writing – in a variety of formats. Most modern history training is geared to critical thinking and analysis. What public historians need in order to succeed in the public arena are writing skills associated with brevity (label copy), drama (story-telling), conceptualization (getting to big ideas that matter) and relevance (how something connects to the audience).

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look life? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

Some of what was said under #1 above answers some of what is asked in #2. It is pointless to set an arbitrary number to public programs around the country. It is essential for a public history program (that is, its leadership) to know and be able to serve its own local market – in terms of city, state, and region.

I find it interesting that the thinking here reflects interest in "jobs" rather than start-up businesses. If one is an independent consultant providing conceptual services centered in history, one needs to have entrepreneurial skills. Given the way the Internet "eats" history, there seem to be some opportunities for historians to operate Internet businesses based in history – with or without partners who may have more technical expertise.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here that should be more actively systematized and replicated?

First of all, my PhD is in American Studies, so my background, happily, is interdisciplinary. Second, I came from a program that believed, more than 40 years ago, that the humanities could be put to use in the marketplace to the larger public. This was at a time when the thought of applied history or public history was barely a concept in Academe. Third, most of my training in the public aspects of applying history came as OJT; I learned by doing. However, I was a pioneer in the field, and there was hardly another way to learn what is now regularly being taught. Fourth, since I had a literary background, I have been very successful as close reading of evidentiary documents and good at writing. Above all else, communications skills learned in seminars, on the job, or in self-taught formats, have proved to be the most essential – everything from public speaking, persuasion, writing, and also graphic design as a form of communication. In the process, I have learned not only how to serve my clients, but to coach them as well.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been unsuccessful in developing skills and experience valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures.

Since I am not at a university, I cannot answer from the perspective of training in the academy. However, having used and trained interns throughout my career, I can say that I have seen some real failures, for example:

Writing a critical historical analysis of a corporate situation when what was requested was a history (a chronological narrative, i.e.. aSTORY),;

Not being able to judge the value of source material and therefore getting lost in accumulating source material that were of little benefit to the project and caused delays in its completion;

Being unable to detach from scholarship long enough to get to meaning-making for the audience; and

Reading papers to non-academic audiences.

Academic habits do not translate directly to non-academic situations and few academies teach the difference.

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise in a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences?

Admit creative, entrepreneurial, expressive people to public history programs. Allow some non-academic success training into the programs and offer it to students (things like goal-setting, visioning, problem solving, working in teams, and so on). Encourage as much contact with professionals and professional situations as possible in the training. Be open to new ideas and theories, including, especially, new ideas about history. Realize that history in the public arena is ALWAYS attached to some future outcome, so it is not limited strictly to understanding the past. "Future-think" is a must, however much it might shock academic historians.

William S. Walker, Cooperstown Graduate Program (SUNY Oneonta)

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

Faculty at the Cooperstown Graduate Program share professional development responsibilities with practicing professionals in a variety of ways. First and foremost, we have maintained a longstanding partnership with the New York State Historical Association, which includes the Fenimore Art Museum and the Farmer's Museum (a living history site). Senior staff from these museums work as adjunct faculty within the program, teaching, or helping to teach, courses in museum education, administration, art history, development, leadership, and marketing. They also mentor students through internships and other less formal relationships. Our students work in a variety of capacities in the museums as their interests and ambitions dictate. Many of these tasks are not required or monitored but develop organically as students discover the particular career paths they would like to pursue. Having this partnership with NYSHA allows students to get as much practical, hands-on experience as they desire and enables them to explore a range of career paths while refining particular skill sets. For some, it even leads to a job with NYSHA after graduation.

The only drawback to such a close partnership is that the instruction and training offered by practicing professionals cannot be assessed and improved (if necessary) in the same way that the instruction of an academic faculty member would be. This is not a concern when the instructor is good, but it could be an issue if the instruction does not meet academic standards. The dynamics of the partnership can limit an academic program's options for recourse when an instructor is not satisfying students' needs.
Beyond our partnership with NYSHA, another way that we have tapped practicing professionals to instruct our students is through a course called "Professional Seminar." Meeting periodically on Fridays throughout the semester, "Professional Seminar" allows faculty to invite professionals to offer daylong workshops. A networking opportunity, it also serves as a forum for students to see how practicing professionals are addressing key areas of interest to the field. Recent presenters include a creative lead from the Center for History and New Media, an education professor who specializes in creativity training, the director of a not-for-profit theater in Schenectady, NY, and a financial consultant who helped students understand the basics of retirement and investment portfolios.

Finally, perhaps our most powerful means of connecting the academy and the marketplace has been, and continues to be, through our alumni network. CGP alumni mentor students formally and informally and stay connected through our alumni association and an alumni listserv, which current students have access to. Most importantly, they often help students to find internships and alert them to job openings. Through this tight-knit network, many students are able to make the connections that lead to careers in the field.

These are only a few of the ways CGP attempts to connect the academy and the marketplace, but I think they point up the central features of our approach to professional development: partnerships with community institutions, adaptability of the curriculum to meet the changing demands of the market, and a strong alumni network.

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look like? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

Although I am not sure that we should be dictating how many public history programs there should be, my sense is that the number is increasing rapidly and that there will not be nearly enough jobs in the field for all of the graduates of these programs. Selfishly, I would love to limit the number of programs thereby increasing the probability of my students getting jobs. Practically, I understand why developing a select few new programs makes sense, especially in historically underserved communities. My understanding is that many universities have

developed public history programs, particularly at the undergraduate level, as an alternate track for history majors who do not want to be secondary educators. I wonder if this approach may, in some cases, amount to false advertising. After all, jobs in secondary schools are far more abundant and well paying than most entry-level positions in museums, and to get anywhere in the field of public history one needs at least a master's degree.

My preference is for generalist programs that cover the broad scope of public history practice but also allow students to develop a depth of knowledge in one or two key areas. Narrow specialization seems ill suited to the dynamic and constantly changing job market of today. Although it makes sense for training in conservation and archives, I do not think that it is the best approach for the majority of public history students. How many public historians work only with collections, or exhibitions, or advocacy, or fundraising? Most people do a little bit of everything at some point in their careers. Having a generalist education also serves graduates well as they move into the management ranks, because they are able to understand the work that many different kinds of public history professionals do.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here which should be more actively systematized and replicated?

It may seem obvious but communication skills – writing and speaking – have been, by far, the most valuable skills I have developed in my professional life. Teaching these skills is a constant challenge, as it is for all humanities educators. It is particularly difficult in public history, however, because a good public historian must be able to write and speak fluidly in many different contexts. An exhibit label, for example, is different from a consultant's report, which is different from a scholarly article for *The Public Historian*. Just as a paper delivered at NCPH is different from a public lecture at a local historical society, which is different from an interpreter's tour at a historic house. Recently, H-Public had an interesting discussion on training students in public speaking, the idea being that if communicating with broad audiences is such an important aspect of our work we ought to know how to talk to people so they will understand us.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been <u>unsuccessful</u> in developing skills and experience valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures?

All of CGP's efforts at professional development are, I think, immensely beneficial to our students and alumni as they seek career opportunities. I would be remiss, however, if I did not express one reservation regarding such a career-oriented approach. As the instructor who is primarily responsible for CGP's history curriculum, I am concerned that some, but by no means all, of our students will not receive a strong enough foundation in the academic content of history and material

culture due to our changing curriculum. Although CGP has full-time faculty in these areas, and a full spate of courses in both history and material culture, a focus on professional development has the potential to crowd out other, equally important modes of instruction. As a generalist program, CGP has always balanced curricula in history and material culture with more "practical" museum studies courses. The demands of the job market being what they are, however, this is becoming increasingly difficult.

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise in a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences?

This is a great question! Creativity really seems to be the key to a successful public history career in the twenty-first century. At CGP, creativity is part of our mission statement: we train "creative, entrepreneurial museum leaders." Actually living up to this mission, however, is often rather difficult. Recently, the faculty have been discussing how exactly one trains people to be creative and entrepreneurial. My sense is that we (as a society) often see these attributes as innate and, therefore, unlearnable. You've either got it, or you don't. Obviously, CGP faculty do not agree with this idea, but we also struggle to cultivate creative thinking in a field that has been, and in many ways continues to be, rather staid and conservative. Leaders of museums and other public historical institutions are often afraid to fail, and this fear stifles both creativity and entrepreneurship.

Ivan D. Steen, Associate Professor, Director, Program in Public History, Department of History

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

One model, which is the one adopted by my program, is to have traditional history Academic courses taught by academic historians, while professionals who work at museums, historical societies, etc. teach our public history professional courses. Students in our Program in Public History take their traditional history courses along with graduate students who are not in the program, which works to the advantage of both groups; and the academic faculty come to realize that the Public History Program students are as good—or better—than their more traditional students. The practicing professionals have the opportunity to share their knowledge with graduate students who are preparing to enter fields such as theirs. The students in those courses learn skills from people who apply them everyday on their jobs. Further, our students work very closely with these and other professionals during their required full-time internship. The result of all this is that students are made constantly aware of the marketplace throughout their course of

study, while at the same time they receive strong academic training in the discipline of history.

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look like? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

Obviously, the job market for public historians is limited, but graduates of our Public History Program are more likely to find jobs in their field than those who graduate our traditional MA and Ph.D. programs. Nonetheless, there are more people seeking jobs in public history fields than there are positions to be filled. Adding more public history programs will increase the demand for people to teach public history in the academy, but it will not increase the market for practitioners of public history. I would like to see fewer new public history programs developed, but I would like to see more teaching of public history courses as part of both graduate and undergraduate curricula. Public history programs should exist only on the graduate level, and they should contain a mix of both traditional academic history courses and public history courses. Central to any program should be a significant internship experience, preferably full time. The coursework should be aimed at producing a generalist, but the internship is where a specialty might be developed. Producing highly specialized graduates might severely limit their employment prospects. The best way for training programs to collaborate with professionals in the field is to give them a role in the training of students through teaching courses and supervising interns. Other than exchanging ideas through organizations such as NCPH, training programs might work on projects and skill exchanges with other nearby programs, when there are any.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here which should be more actively systematized and replicated?

I am not sure how relevant this question is to me, since my background is from the academic world, not the public history world; however, I have always interacted with public history professionals. Perhaps my conviction that the practice of history is not limited solely to members of college and university history departments has aided me in that interaction. I judge historians by the quality of their work, not where they are employed, and not by the degrees they have acquired. I think I have been successful in instilling that in my students, but I have been less successful in indoctrinating my departmental colleagues, many of whom tend to be very tradition bound. My networking with public history professionals has contributed markedly to the success of our program. Anyone who directs or teaches in a public history program should do this, although it usually is both time consuming and costly

(membership dues, board of director assessments, contributions, luncheons, dinners, etc.). I constantly urge my students to attend conferences, events, and social gatherings to expand their networks of professional acquaintances.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been unsuccessful in in developing skills and experience valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures?

In all honesty, I cannot think of any of these areas in which we have been unsuccessful. Over the years, we have made changes in our program, but not because we found we were doing things that did not work well, but rather to make things work even better. One area in which I believe our program might do better is in keeping track of our alumni. There are a good number of them with whom we maintain contact, but others appear to have vanished. We have been publishing a newsletter for several years as a way of trying to maintain contact, but some of those we mail are invariably returned to us as undeliverable. It would help if we had someone, other than the program director, who would have the responsibility of maintaining alumni relations, but budgetary constraints make this unlikely.

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise in a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences?

Public history students should be encouraged to make oral presentations before professional groups and public audiences, as well as to write for both professional and more popular publications. Working as a tour guide or docent is often a good way to develop communication skills. Being a frequent "consumer" of the work done by others helps in evaluating techniques that are successful and those that are not.

Seeing the Elephant

Jay M. Price, Wichita State University

Traditionally, public history's definition entails a sense of work outside of the academic realm. The result is a diverse array of activities including museum work, archives, records management, consulting, historic preservation, and, more recently, documentary work and Internet activities. While they all share a target audience that is non-academic, these activities are also quite distinct from one another, each with their own professional standards, networks, skill sets, and organizations that don't always interact with each other, let alone the larger history profession.

In a sense, the challenge is akin to dividing the United States into two groups, Southerners and non-Southerners. While one could make a plausible argument that the South has a distinct cultural, historical, and social dynamic that is different from the rest of the nation, it does not follow that a New York cab driver, a Washington

lobbyist, a Kansas farmer, a Mormon businessman from Utah, and a Korean-American artist from Seattle are all going to feel a mutual affinity to one other based purely on the fact that they are "non-Southerners." So, too, is there a danger of lumping historic preservationists together into a single category with museum interpreters or policy consultants based purely on the fact that they reach non-academic audiences. A joint conference between the National Trust for Historic Preservation and, say, the American Association of Museums or the National Council on Public History or AASLH is not likely to happen, if for no other reason than that their conferences do not generally take place at the same time. Even on state and local levels, state museum, preservation, history, and archives organizations often do not take place at the same time, do not exist as "joint" conferences," and often consist of groups of people who do similar projects but don't necessarily interact with—or even know of--their colleagues in other related fields. Archivists may or may not think of themselves as "public historians," depending on the area of specialization, a sentiment that parallels that of museum professionals and others. We in the public history realm have spent so much effort defending our value to our academic colleagues that we assume we have legitimacy among our peers in archives, preservation, museums, and the like. I am not sure that is a safe assumption.

Training public historians, then, is complicated because there is no single type of public history practice. Thirty years ago, when public history was new, a generalist perspective worked. Today, however, potential public history program graduates are finding themselves competing in a world with those who come from museum studies programs or other specialty programs. Increasingly, being a successful practitioner requires more than just an intro course, some specialty classes, and an internship. Preservation is really a branch of architecture and urban planning. Archives is a branch of library science and an MLS is the "coin of the realm" for many entry level jobs. The requirements are becoming such that a potential practitioner is looking at acquiring two separate master's degrees, one in history and one in another field, in order to be competitive. The alternative is to make a public history master's program so big that it takes 60 credit hours to complete. Given limitations on how many electives a student can take for many master's level programs, and the limitations of department budgets for adjuncts, balancing the needs for specialized classes with the realities of resources will remain a daunting challenge.

A related facet is that public history programs are only as strong as the related fields and opportunities that the college/university/community offers. Historic preservation is going to be difficult to provide at an institution with no architecture program and few architectural history classes. Museum studies needs a college or community museum to provide internship opportunities. Students who want to do documentaries need the resources of a film studies program. So many facets of public history connect with state and local government that a program that is not near a state capital is probably either going to struggle or else be tailored to rely on a unique local feature such as a strong tourist industry.

A final elephant in the proverbial living room is that many public history programs were not created to train a cohort of future practitioners. They were created to boost enrollments in history departments. So long as enrollments continue, the programs look successful. However, the prospects of training individuals for jobs that may or may not be there raises professional, even ethical issues. I continue to say that there are unlimited public history opportunities. There are not, however, unlimited public history jobs. We do NOT function like nursing or social work or veterinary programs, which grow and shrink in response to the needs of a given profession. We attempt to train people to enter a job market that is in a high degree of flux, is heavily dependent (and also very vulnerable) on government budgets, and which is really an amalgam of several different fields.

It may be time for us to consider, for example how the public history program might best serve its goal by providing perspective for individuals who may go on to teach or work in a host of areas totally unconnected to history. Perhaps the public history program of the future will look more like an extension program, training the general public instead of turning out practitioners to do history on their behalf. Perhaps the program will exist to enrich students in public administration or communications programs instead of merely creating more history students with a particular specialization.

These challenges do not mean the end of public history or of public history programs. Rather, they require an honest assessment of both national and local dynamics. It is actually an exciting time to be involved in public history. It also requires us to go back to the very roots of who we are as public historians, what we provide, and what we offer. The comments above are sharp, perhaps even exaggerated. Their goal, however, is to get us to define our role and our mission to the history profession and the larger society.

Seth C. Bruggeman, Temple University

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

Temple's MA public history program has long relied on three common modes of instructional collaboration between faculty and regional practitioners. First, we've built a strong archives track by entrusting supervision and coordination of all archives training to a leading professional. The History Department extends to this individual a special title and enhanced pay in recognition of the extent to which his responsibilities exceed what is typically expected of an adjunct. Second, all public history degree candidates must serve an internship supervised jointly by a Temple faculty member and a practicing professional. Third, public history graduate courses culminate in group projects that are designed together with cultural

institutions whose directors and staff become active course partners.

Beyond these three modes, thesis mentoring by regional practitioners and informal networking facilitated by the program provide occasional opportunities for shared professional development. Ideally, however, Temple would benefit from several more appointments akin to our archives coordinator, though with different specialties (*e.g.* museum and historic site management, digital history and new media, preservation advocacy). Budget shortfalls and an indefinite hiring freeze make this option unlikely in the foreseeable future.

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look like? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

The job market is certainly abysmal, but we must also keep in mind that public history programs do more than train practitioners. We also provide community services, inspire students to value public culture, and, hopefully, we challenge our university colleagues to think more broadly about their own scholarship and teaching. From that perspective, I'm not worried about public history saturation.

Training new public historians is, of course, a key priority for many programs. And, despite how poor the market appears, I've met a number of employers who've complained about not being able to fill positions with qualified hires. Specifically, they cite a lack of management know-how and an inability to trust young people to work independently. This tells me that, in addition to providing broad training in historical knowledge and skills, wise public history programs should be thinking about how to acquaint students with non-profit management, fundraising, and perhaps even staffing and financial planning. What's more, public historical organizations in my region have hired a lot of consultants in recent years to develop digital projects (and very few of them are trained historians or even familiar with the field). It's becoming very clear that electives in material culture and oral history are no longer preparing our students to hit the ground running.

I've often thought that in a place like Philadelphia that hosts several public history programs, it would be exciting to create something like a regional public history postgraduate cooperative. Unaffiliated with any particular institution, the cooperative would employ graduates from local programs and join them together into a general-purpose public history consulting firm. The idea would be to create guaranteed short-term employment opportunities for graduates who can't or don't choose to find immediate employment. This organization might be led by an advisory group with revolving membership composed of public history faculty and practitioners from throughout the area. This is all to say that, when the job market

is slim, perhaps public history programs can collaborate to create employment opportunities.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here which should be more actively systematized and replicated?

If pressed, I'd say the factors most responsible for my professional success are, in reverse order of significance: 1) interdisciplinary graduate training; 2) effective writing skills and a good publication record; and, 3) being in the right place at the right time. I've also benefited tremendously from taking advantage early on of internship and work opportunities that, though low paying and in strange places, provided me with hands-on experience I wouldn't have otherwise received.

With few exceptions, those among my peers and students who find success do so by actively looking for it or, when all else fails, by creating new opportunities for themselves. My students are incredibly reluctant to serve internships without pay or to leave the region, even if briefly, to gain experience elsewhere. It's only by taking these risks, however, that we gain the breadth of experience necessary to succeed in this field. What's more, the hard work and determination necessary to develop new skills in unfamiliar environments speaks to employers who are looking for precisely those qualities. And there is absolutely no substitute for relentless determination. I'm humbled by a recent graduate of our program who, though restricted to Philadelphia and without any full-time job leads, has managed to stay regularly employed by creating short-term consulting positions for herself. She, and others like her, tend to be determined, creative, and powerful communicators. A willingness to take risks is essential.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been <u>unsuccessful</u> in developing skills and experience valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures?

I haven't been at this long enough to know exactly what is and what isn't working well of late. I can say, however, that our program would not be successful today if it still operated as it did a decade ago. In the past, our public history students did not necessarily receive advising particular to their career goals nor did public history courses stress civic engagement in any significant way. More recently, we've overhauled our curriculum, redesigned key courses, and clarified standards. Now, our MA students participate in some kind of cooperative project each semester while carrying the usual load of history courses. Revised courses are theoretically sophisticated, yet emphasize practical skills including public speaking. The oral exam option for graduation has been dropped and replaced with a reinvigorated thesis requirement. Finally, graduate transcripts include a notation indicating success in the public history concentration. At every step, we think about how to shape our requirements toward effectively articulating to potential employers what

it is that public historians do. This too was missing in early versions of our program. I think we forgot that good advising and student advocacy must continue well beyond graduation.

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise in a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences?

Again, I can't claim that I've been doing this long enough to know the secret to success. I do, however, think that five particular aspects of my courses and our program promote creativity and professionalism:

Competitive group projects
Working in teams is essential in public history programs. I encourage friendly yet serious competition between groups charged with developing interpretive plans and policy tools for our project partners.

Embracing new media
It is essential in today's technosocial landscape that all public history students develop at least some facility with new media and social networking technologies. Although all of our students must produce a scholarly thesis approaching publication quality, they are all also required to augment theses and final course projects with audiovisual materials suitable for the Web.

Careful, but not too careful advising
Although all students must learn to act and think independently, public history students carry an extra burden since their professional success may rely on creating employment opportunities where there appear to be none. I am very cautious then about not providing too much guidance for course projects or theses. I want our students, equipped with basic toolkits and relying upon one another, to become willing innovators.

Constant contact with professionals
I don't think there can be enough opportunities for students to speak with and learn from active public history professionals. We make this happen during class visits, cooperative projects, internships, and a regular speaker series, but I'm always looking for new ways to encourage networking between our students and our regional partners.

Healthy mix of theory and practice
There is nothing new about this, but it bears repeating that public history students must be able to understand their work within a broad intellectual framework. Developing a theoretical sophistication is not simply about satisfying academic standards. Rather, theorizing practice is the first step toward learning how to explain why what we do is so important.

Brian W. Martin, President, History Associates Incorporated

1) How can we share professional development responsibilities most effectively between teaching professionals (the academy) and practicing professionals (the marketplace)?

We need to begin by defining what those professional development responsibilities are over the arc of a professional career. It might be very useful to develop a matrix indicating what professional skills and experiences we expect at various professional levels. In doing this we should carefully examine the various career paths open to practicing historians over their entire professional lives, and what types of professional development experiences are appropriate at different stages of career development. We should also recognize that such professional development responsibilities must be shared between the individual professional and their sponsoring institution—this is particularly true in the marketplace where the organization reasonably expects some return on its investment in the professional development of its staff.

Perhaps most critical to effectively sharing these responsibilities, is determining which professional development activities are best done in an academic setting, and which are better experienced on the job. For example, at History Associates we do a terrific job teaching historians how to conduct research in archives. We do this using an apprenticeship model refined over years of performing similar work for a steady stream of clients. We have had less success developing the writing skills necessary to present engaging stories in a variety of presentation formats. In most cases we cannot afford to subsidize the repetitive practice necessary to achieve a marketable level of writing skill. In making these determinations we should not forgot the possible role of the professional organizations in bringing together teachers and practitioners to conduct various continuing education activities.

2) Given an honest appraisal of the job market as well as an acknowledgment of the constraints currently faced by many colleges and universities, how many public history programs do we really need? And what should they look like? Should they produce generalists or specialists? How can training programs most effectively collaborate with professionals in the field as well as with one another?

First of all do we have an honest appraisal of the job market? Robert Townsend's most recent report on the academic job market is particularly grim, but makes important points about the over supply of history Ph.Ds, the continuing strong interest in history at the BA level, and the satisfying prospects for work outside the academy.[1] There is a jarring contrast between Townsend's report and the

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[1] Robert B. Townsend, "A Grim Year on the Academic Job Market for Historians," Perspectives on History 48:1 (January 2010): 5-9.

optimistic ranking of historians as the 5th best job in a recent on-line report, based in part on a "very good" hiring outlook linked to anticipated opportunities in the defense and federal sectors.[2] What seems obviously missing from both analyses is solid data on the non-academic job market for historians. More than that, our profession needs to understand and communicate the wide range of opportunities open to historians with various levels of training. [3]

In addition to knowing the scope of the potential job market for historians, we also need a better understanding of the skills and experiences which the market requires from graduates at various levels. For example, History Associates has rarely hired entry level (BAs) historians from public history programs, relying instead on top history graduates from liberal arts programs with basic training in historical method, research, and writing. For entry level archivists, we look for MLS graduates with a concentration in archives and increasingly exposure to digital archives. Our rare hires at the Ph.D level have extensive and varied work experience outside the academy, and typically demonstrate an ability to sell and service clients. We also occasionally engage Ph.Ds as consultants to address infrequent needs for subject matter or language expertise. We have a definite preference for generalists who can efficiently develop specialized knowledge as dictated by project requirements.

At History Associates we have some experience supporting staff efforts to go back to school for additional training, but competing expectations from the company, the school, and the student have complicated these arrangements. We've had some success with short-term training sessions like NARA's Modern Archives Institute, but such focused offerings are few and far between. I am particularly nterested in exploring ways to integrate our ability to offer on-the-job experience with academic training as part of a continuing education model that will result in a real return on our investment in professional development.

3) What skills or experiences have proved most valuable to you in your professional life, and how have you acquired or developed them? What about your colleagues, employees, or students? Are there patterns here which should be more actively systematized and replicated?

My most valuable skills include writing to tell stories or communicate ideas or recommend actions; conceptualizing and planning projects to address client requirements; listening to understand clients and colleagues; and the ability to select and use appropriate tools. My most valuable experiences include interdisciplinary learning; marketing and selling our services; business management; and defending my scholarship (both methodology and conclusions).

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[2] Andrew Strieber, "The 10 Best Jobs of 2010," http://www.careercast.com/jobs/content/ten-best-jobs-2010-jobs-rated (accessed 1/18/2010).

[3] Perhaps a good starting point would be to update the poster "Careers for Graduates in History", prepared in 1984 by the National Center for the Study of History, for a copy of the poster see http://www.sfasu.edu/history/docs/history_careers.pdf

My liberal arts education honed my writing skills, but I learned more about telling stories and writing proposals on the job. That same liberal arts experience developed my confidence to fearlessly and eagerly tackle new topics or tasks. My graduate education in applied history gave me deeper exposure to other disciplines, mastery of specialized historiography, and the experience of writing an extended academic work, but my greatest scholarly challenges have come as an expert witness. I learned how to plan and conduct research through an apprenticeship model on the job. While my business education has come largely on the job, I learned the basics of customer service and cash flow on my paper route. In our virtual world, the ability to select and use appropriate tools is increasingly important and developing and applying standards of digital fluency across the profession is critical.

It is difficult to extrapolate personal experience to general application; however, my best learning experiences have come in interdisciplinary environments, where I have been focused on understanding and meeting the requirements of others rather than my own interests, and where there was a balance between attention to efficient process and creative execution.

4) What approaches to teaching, training, and mentoring have been <u>unsuccessful</u> in developing skills and experience valued by the marketplace? What factors led to such failures?

Our greatest difficulties have come in teaching aspects of historical writing—especially creative conceptualization of the story and its themes, and telling those stories in an engaging, concise, and readable style. Of course learning these aspects of writing requires some talent, mastery of the fundamentals of the English language, an individual commitment to improve these skills, and practice. Some of the factors leading to these difficulties have been limited or no experience writing for a general audience, writing for various presentation formats, and receiving or responding to extensive constructive criticism. These factors are compounded by client budgets that support very little rewrite and practice time. We have had some success teaching highly structured and repetitive writing skills such as abstracting documents, writing chronologies, and drafting label text for exhibits where the projects are large enough to require a coordinated effort including formal quality control processes.

5) What are the best ways to develop creative and engaging professionals who can express their historical expertise in a wide range of formats aimed at various audiences?

At the outset we should reach some consensus that this is the objective. Since Michelle and I wrote this, I do not have much to add, but others might. Beyond refining the objective, I believe that our preparation of professional historians should:

- Focus on long term, life-long learning that integrates classroom and on-the-job experiences.
- Emphasize the collaboration and teamwork that characterizes most work experiences outside the academy,
- Encourage interdisciplinary experiences that offer new perspectives and capitalize on our discipline's broad coverage and generalist strengths.
- Include rigorous peer/customer review and criticism.
- Involve intentional mentor/apprentice relationships where elements of the craft are transferred and transformed.