Information Interview Assignment
HIS390
Filene

The Preparation
- Read about your interviewee’s institution online.
- Read about his/her job in Museum Careers: A Practical Guide for Students and Novices. Contact them by email and follow up by phone.

The Interview
You are free to ask your interviewee whatever questions truly interest you. I encourage you, though, to ask a mix of “big picture” questions—

  o “What are the main issues that face the field today?”
  o ”Are you hopeful or pessimistic about the future?”
  o “How well did your training prepare you for the work?”
  o ”What is the path that took you here and where could it take you next?”—

and more detailed questions about everyday life

  o “Do you mostly end up working alone or with others?”
  o “Do you work a lot of overtime hours?”
  o “Can one pay one’s rent while working in this field?”

Don’t be shy! Generally you’ll find that people welcome the chance to reflect on their careers and share their experiences with others.

Reflection
Write 2-3 pages reflecting on what you learned. Do not attempt to give a blow-by-blow account of your entire interview. Instead, focus on the big-picture lessons you gained from the conversation that you will carry forward as you continue to explore the field. What surprised you the most? Did your interviewee’s descriptions match what Schlatter describes in Museum Careers? How did his/her reflections change the way you understand the field and, perhaps, shape how you see yourself fitting into it?