

# Occupations go down in history

By Charles Flowerday

Undergraduate history majors seeking employment as high school teachers frequently find a job placement depends on their willingness to move to a smaller town, said Patrice Berger, chief adviser in the UNL history department.

"What is a person prepared to do?" Berger said. "It's a question of trade-offs."

Some find living in small towns very desirable, Berger said. But he said he wanted those graduating with a certification to teach history to realize that the market is highly competitive. The job prospects for graduates willing to leave Lincoln or Omaha to teach are "decent," he said.

A dual enrollment in the College of Arts and Sciences and Teachers College has become an increasingly popular route for many history majors, Berger said.

He encourages students to study history.

"It provides them with a vital perspective on the past, on their own culture and history," Berger said. "It equips them to better appreciate their position in society."

However, students with more than a bachelor's degree will probably find that a Ph.D. in history is not a rewarding avenue, he said. There are not many jobs for college professors of history.

"We continue to run a graduate program, but it's a very difficult employment situation," Berger said. "I'm very reluctant to encourage people to get a Ph.D. If the big schools - Harvard, Columbia, Stanford - are cutting back, we are in a bind, an even more difficult situation."

### Other fields

The history discipline is not as specifically job-related as other disciplines, Berger said. Many history majors go on to graduate school in law, business administration or journalism, he said.

History majors preparing for law school generally feel their training was adequate and helpful, Berger said.

Two remaining areas in which history areas are likely to find employment are museum work and general administrative work, Berger said.

Historians interested in preservation or archival work might find themselves employed by the State Historical Society, for example, he said. Unfortunately, these jobs are also relatively limited.

"Archival work is as competitive as the (high school) teaching market, and it might become more competitive depending on what happens to public money," Berger said.

The key to opening up this field may lie with President Ronald Reagan's new emphasis on volunteerism, Berger said. If private contributions can keep public historical institutions financed, then job opportunities will continue. If not, the picture probably will become more bleak, he said.

### Administrative positions

The liberal arts training history majors receive makes them particularly well-suited to deal with administrative tasks, Berger said. The largest number of departmental graduates not in law school are in administrative positions, he explained.

"Quite a few are in various media," he said. These people usually supplement their journalism training with another major in history, he said.

The department has recently started an internship program which allows seniors to get credit for work done in approved settings, such as the State Historical Society or the Nebraska Legislature, Berger said. By supplementing the work with an individual reading program, the department hopes to provide seniors with the information they need to make a career decision, he said.

Berger said college has increasingly become a professional training ground, all the more reason to stress the importance of a liberal arts education.

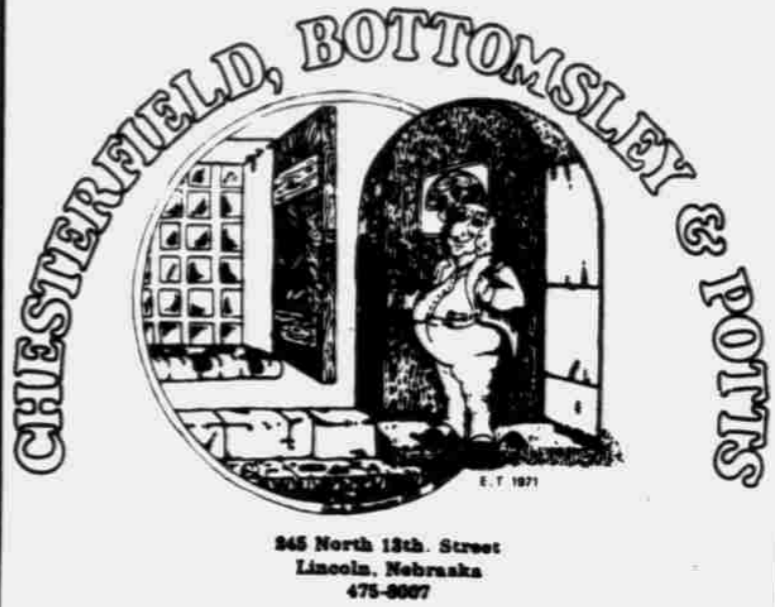
"The humanities and arts form an integral part of our lives," Berger said. He said students should acquaint themselves with the skills and abilities needed to appreciate as many different parts of human knowledge as possible.

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Operations committee Chairman LaVern Heggem said all ideas are being accepted. The person creating the design will receive \$25, and the design will be permanently displayed on Memorial Plaza.

Ideas and questions about the contest should be directed to either Frank Kuhn or Heggem through the Nebraska Union Office. The contest ends Nov. 6.

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