

Position Classification Standard for History Series, GS-0170

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes positions the duties of which are to advise on, administer, supervise or perform research or other work in the field of history when such work requires a professional knowledge of established methods and techniques of historical research in the collection, evaluation, analysis or presentation of historical facts.

This standard supersedes and is to be substituted for the standard for the History Series GS-0170, which was published in June 1948 under the code P-170-0.

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

Historians in the Federal Government are engaged in one or more of the following major areas of endeavor: (1) planning and conducting special historical studies relating to current problems for use by agency officials and others in developing or modifying policies and programs, (2) planning and conducting continuing or long-range historical studies to record the policies, programs and operations of their particular agencies, (3) planning and preparing scholarly narrative or documentary histories for publication, or (4) planning and conducting historical studies in connection with the establishment, conservation, restoration, reconstruction and interpretation to the public of sites of major significance in the military, political, economic and cultural history of the United States.

Regardless of the area of endeavor involved, historian positions at full performance levels typically include responsibility for project planning and research and presentation functions. These functions are discussed below:

Project planning. -- This function involves: (1) Defining the scope of the project, (2) determining the breadth and/or depth of historical treatment to be undertaken within such limitations of subject, length, and urgency as may be imposed, (3) blocking out the major areas of research if the project is of such scope and magnitude as to make a "team" approach feasible, and (4) determining preliminary approaches and techniques to be employed. Planning of this kind requires the historian to possess (1) a thorough understanding of the objectives of the project, (2) ability to achieve a solid grasp of the subject area involved, (3) considerable familiarity with the kinds of problems which may be anticipated in the accomplishment of the project and the steps necessary for their solution, and (4) a complete grasp of historical method.

Historical research and presentation. -- This function involves:

1. *Obtaining and evaluating historical evidence.* - Historical evidence may take several forms and be obtained by several means. It may consist of (a) written evidence contained in primary or secondary source materials, either published or unpublished, (b) physical evidence such as drawings, models, photographs, architectural or other structural remains, or objects such as pottery, coins and guns, or (c) oral evidence such as unwritten eye-witness accounts of events or statements by participants. It may be obtained through search of the files and records of

Government agencies and major archival and library collections, from records in the hands of private individuals, through the examination of physical objects, or through the conduct of interviews with individuals having knowledge of the events under study. This requires the historian to be familiar with techniques involved in gathering material from records depositories of various kinds, or in conducting personal interviews for fact-gathering purposes.

The historian subjects each piece of evidence obtained to critical evaluation in order to establish its relative value. This includes investigation to establish the reliability of the evidence which may involve such matters as identification of the author, consideration of his personality and reliability, his relationship to the event described (was he an eye-witness? a participant? or is he relating an event described to him by others?), and the elapsed time between the occurrence and the recording of the event. It also includes investigation for genuineness by such methods as comparison with the original if the source is printed, study of the style and content of the printed source, and comparisons of handwriting and paper. In testing the genuineness of physical evidence the historian may consult with experts or rely on chemical or other laboratory analysis of physical remains. In assessing the value of evidence gathered by personal interview the historian must have an understanding of the interviewee's personality and background to recognize personal prejudices and idiosyncrasies, to check the accuracy of memory, and to consider the knowledge and understanding of surrounding circumstances at the time the event took place or the decision was made.

2. *Establishing historical facts.* - Historians determine what items of evidence may be accepted as historical fact by comparing and weighing the various pieces of evidence. They consider the possibility and probability of events in light of reliable human experience, being always aware of the dynamic nature of such experience. The problems involved relate to the extent of agreement existing between the various pieces of evidence or to the quality and quantity of the evidence. If several independent pieces of evidence do not all agree the historian may either suspend judgment until additional evidence can be found, or may accept the evidence of the majority (or the exceptional nature of particular evidence) as no more than a qualified probability, or he may reconcile the discrepancies in the evidence. If there is only one affirmation, the facts and conclusions based thereon require the most careful assessment and may be of limited value. In determining what actually happened the historian must have an understanding of the relative merits of each piece of evidence, and the relative degrees of reliability of historical "facts."

3. *Grouping historical facts and determining their interrelationships (synthesis):* - Historians apply critical judgment and the rules of reason to develop the hypotheses necessary to explain the facts, to visualize and understand their causal relationships, and to explain their significance. The objective of this process is to develop a concept of the complex whole which has logical unity, and which points up the substance and quality of the changes which have occurred, by giving the original condition, the action, and the novelty of the resulting condition. In its final form the historical syntheses, based on careful and thorough investigation of the source materials supported by complete references to the authorities upon which each fact was established, and upon sound deduction, interpretation and judgment, provide the foundation of the historical narrative or other presentation to be made.

4. *Presentation.* - The purpose of the historical project usually determines the form in which it is presented. Historical narrative requires the historian to apply a high degree of skill in organizing the narrative, and in selecting that language which will present the historical synthesis clearly and concisely, and will maintain proper balance and perspective without distortion of the evidence. In some instances, the results of professional historical research may be presented in the form of a selected group of source documents. In this situation, the historian usually writes introductory narrative material. He may interpolate statements to bridge a documentary gap or insert references to additional documents having some bearing on the subject not included in the collection, and may prepare analytical lists of documents, lists of persons, bibliographies and cross references. This form of historical presentation requires the historian to exercise judgment in the choice of documents to be included. Some historical projects may require presentation in such forms as tabular or graphic charts, statistical compilations, chronological summaries, maps, etc. In an educational environment the historian may present the results of his study in lectures, informal talks, or in response to questions raised by students or the general public.

DISTINCTIONS FROM RELATED OCCUPATIONS

The hallmark of professional historical endeavor is the application of the methodology described above in the conduct of historical research and the presentation of the results thereof. Depending upon the subject-matter area for which a history is to be prepared, or the specialized approach to be taken, historians may draw upon one or more other fields of knowledge such as political science, economics, archeology, sociology, law, science, art, or military affairs, and use such tools as statistics or foreign languages. They are required to possess or acquire some knowledge of the location and arrangement of source materials in the various archives or other depositories. They also must be able to write, and, in some cases, speak effectively. For positions classified to this series, these knowledges and skills are subordinate to the requirement for knowledge of historical method and research techniques. Positions for which the reverse is true should be classified to the appropriate subject-matter series.

Relationship to Archivist

In some respects, the work of the historian is fundamentally allied to that of the archivist. Both historians and archivists evaluate records to determine their present or future historical importance and both conduct research in archival collections, but for different purposes. The archivist evaluates records to determine their suitability (based on their historical value) for inclusion in the collection, and to assemble, catalogue, classify and preserve those records selected for archival treatment. The purpose of research conducted by the archivist is usually to bring together all pertinent source material from his own or other archival collections for scholarly study by others, or to prepare indexes, reference guides or similar publications for scholarly or public use. Such positions are classified to the [Archives Series, GS-1420](#). The historian, on the other hand, evaluates records to establish their validity, utility and importance as source material for use in historical study and conducts research to locate all documents germane to his particular study.

Relationship to Museum Curator

Some historian positions are closely allied to museum curator positions. In museums devoted to history, scholarly research may be done by either historians or museum curators. The majority of historians work from written documents in their study of civilization's record, though they may make use of artifacts or archeological evidence. Typically, historians are not concerned with the history of objects, per se, nor with their identification, preservation or display. They may, however, be concerned with the use and importance of objects in relation to such matters as the history of their production or the effect of their manufacture on the general economy or the political situation of a place or era. The key to the distinction between historian and museum curator positions lies in the nature of their concern with objects. Positions in which this concern centers on the significance of objects as historical evidence are to be classified to this series. Positions in which concern with the identification, preservation and display of objects is dominant should be classified to the [Museum Curator Series, GS-1015](#).

TITLE

The title for positions in this series is *Historian*. The core of this occupation is the requirement for a basic knowledge of history and a knowledge of professional historical research methodology. At the full performance level, all positions in this series share this requirement. However, some positions in this series require additional specialized subject-matter knowledges such as (1) one or more periods of United States history or the history of other nations, (2) history of political science, economics, science and technology, agriculture, or other special field, (3) international relations and foreign affairs, (4) military affairs, or (5) one or more foreign languages. These requirements vary significantly from position to position. For example, even when an historian works in a recognized field such as "diplomatic history," other knowledges, such as knowledge of economic history, science and technology, or foreign languages, may dominate the qualifications considerations. In recognition of the range and variety of combinations of specialized subject-matter knowledge which may be required in individual positions, no attempt has been made to establish "fixed" specializations in this series.

Those historian positions which include supervisory responsibilities of such significance as to require supervisory qualifications will be identified by the addition of the prefix *Supervisory* to the basic title. Historian positions charged with "team" leadership in the accomplishment of a research project typically do not include continuing supervisory responsibilities of such magnitude as to influence the basic qualifications requirements. Normally, therefore, a supervisory designation will not be used for such positions.

While supervisory historian positions are included in this series, the guides described herein are confined to the coverage of the nonsupervisory aspects of such positions. The supervisory functions are covered by the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#).

EVALUATION OF NONSUPERVISORY HISTORIAN POSITIONS

There are two fundamental classification criteria (each composed of several elements) which taken together provide a means for measurement of the relative grade value of the work of this series. These are (1) the nature of the assignment, and (2) the degree of responsibility of the position. Discussion of these criteria and their component elements follows:

Nature of the Assignment. - This factor incorporates those elements of scope and complexity inherent in the assignment which make it more difficult or less difficult to accomplish, as distinguished from the nature or extent of the individual's responsibilities for resolving the problems presented by the assignment, the supervision he receives, the nature of his decisions or recommendations or any other performance element. The other components of this factor include the knowledges and skills which the historian must possess to accomplish the work and the mental demands involved.

The scope of historical project planning and research assignments ranges from the extremely narrow and limited to the very broad and comprehensive. It is influenced by such considerations as the breadth and number of topics and sub-topics involved, the period of time to be covered, and the depth to which the subject is to be studied. Similarly, such assignments represent a range in complexity from the simple to the highly involved. Measures of the complexity of the research assignment include (1) the relative availability and reliability of source materials, (2) the difficulties involved in establishing historical facts and in determining their relative importance and relationships, and (3) the difficulties which must be overcome in the presentation of the results of historical study.

Degree of Responsibility. - This factor includes consideration of the nature and extent of the supervisory control exercised over the work, the nature and extent of the historian's responsibility for personal contact work and for making recommendations or decisions, and similar matters. The degree of "authoritativeness" with which the work of an historian is viewed by his agency and by his professional fellows and the extent to which his opinion is sought and given weight within his area of competence also are indicators of the level of his responsibility. These elements are treated in some detail in the grade level discussions which follow.

Note: The classification criteria provided herein relate to the evaluation of historical research work since this function is common to all historian positions and is the grade determining element in most of them. However, some historian positions combine responsibility for historical research with responsibility for the development and administration of operational programs for the interpretation of historical sites. The research aspects of such positions should be evaluated by reference to this standard. The "operational" aspects of such positions should be evaluated by comparison with other appropriate standards and guides and by application of sound classification principles.

NOTES TO USERS OF THIS STANDARD

1. The nature of historical work offers an unusual opportunity for the historian to influence the dimensions of his position. The breadth and the depth of knowledge and experience, and the judgment, perceptiveness and ingenuity which an historian brings to his work may have a material influence on the scope of his assignment. Subject to such limitations as those imposed by the nature and scope of the program within which the position functions, this influence will be directly reflected in the kind and complexity of the assignments which he receives and the "authoritativeness" which attaches to his completed work. The classification criteria in this standard are intended to measure these considerations. In order to insure that the influence of this relationship is considered in its proper perspective, the evaluation of an historian's position should be based on a sufficient span of time to reflect the norm of his *current* assignments rather than be based upon an isolated or atypical project.
2. The organizational echelon at which the position is located cannot be used as an automatic measure of the scope and complexity of the work, or the level of responsibility of the historian. Rather, it must be viewed only as an indicator of the potential range of these factors. It is possible for an employee in a position at the lower ranges of the organizational hierarchy to be engaged in and be held responsible for historical research assignments of great scope and complexity. Conversely, it is possible for an employee in a position located at the upper reaches of the organizational hierarchy to receive historical research assignments of narrow scope and limited complexity, or to be otherwise restricted in the performance of his work.

Similarly, the nature of the end product, e.g., staff paper, historical report, or published history, is not automatically indicative of the scope, complexity, or level of responsibility of the work involved. It is possible for a brief staff paper or historical reference paper to represent a more difficult order of historical endeavor than that required to produce a lengthy volume.

3. This standard does not include grade level guides for positions above the GS-14 level because of the small number and highly individualized nature of such positions. The absence of such guides does not preclude the evaluation of nonsupervisory historian positions to a higher level by extension of the criteria discussed in this standard and by application of general classification principles.
4. The grade level guides do not describe criteria for the evaluation of historian positions that operate in a staff capacity in planning or in providing policy direction, guidance and review of historical programs. Criteria covering these types of positions are not included because of their relatively small number and the diversified nature of the historical programs in which they are found. The criteria provided in this standard can be used as a general classification guide for the "professional historian" aspects of such positions.

HISTORIAN, GS-0170-05

Nature of the assignment

Work assignments are very narrow in scope and limited in complexity. Typically, they consist of such tasks as (1) searching the organization's files and records, or other record collections or libraries to obtain specific and readily accessible information relating to an assigned topic, (2) preparing bibliographies or listings of source materials located, (3) summarizing or abstracting information from pre-assigned source materials, or (4) drafting letters or memoranda setting forth factual information in response to specific inquiries.

Level of responsibility

This is the basic trainee level. Work assignments are preselected to provide orientation and training in the location of source materials and in the methodology involved in historical research. The supervisory historian, or an historian of higher grade, provides specific and detailed guidance in, and definitive review of, all aspects of the work. Typically, personal work contacts are closely restricted and are usually confined to obtaining information and receiving instructions.

HISTORIAN, GS-0170-07

Nature of the assignment

Assignments are narrow in scope and typically are restricted to one clearly defined topic, such as: (1) "outline the recent lineage of a designated military unit," (2) "identify and determine the facts regarding the acquisition of the statutes in Washington, D.C., which were done by 19th century French artists," (3) "trace the chain of ownership of a group of historic houses," or (4) "assemble and organize by subject the published statements by the incumbent Secretary of State on major foreign policy issues."

At this level, source materials are relatively readily available in agency files and records or in other records depositories or libraries. However, the historian must possess a working familiarity with the content and organization of these records in order to determine which records to consult. Research problems center on the location of all the pertinent historical evidence although some questions regarding the reliability of the evidence may be encountered -- requiring the historian to expand or modify his field of search in order to establish the historical "facts involved. As a rule, the relationships between the facts developed are self-evident, although, depending upon the purposes of the study, the historian may be required to exercise judgment in determining the relative importance of the facts developed, and selectivity in confining the presentation to those facts which represent "highlights" of events.

Historians at this level are expected to be familiar with and apply standard practices in citing the sources on which their studies are based, and to possess some skill in expository writing.

Level of responsibility

This is the advanced trainee level. Work assignments are selected to provide training in the judgment aspects of professional historical research methodology, and become progressively more difficult as the incumbent's knowledge and experience advance. Typically, assignments are accompanied by a full discussion of the purpose and scope of the work and any problems which may be anticipated. The incumbent selects the sources, plans the approach, and lays out the method for the accomplishment of the assignment. These sources, approaches and methods are discussed in detail with the supervisor, or an historian of higher grade, before the incumbent proceeds with the work. The supervisor or other historian of higher grade is available to provide guidance as questions are encountered in the course of the work, and may, depending upon the nature of the assignment, review the judgment aspects of the work through discussions at various stages of completion. Completed work is presented in draft form and is reviewed in detail for adherence to instructions; completeness; thoroughness of research and accuracy in citation; soundness of judgment and selectivity in the treatment of historical facts; adequacy and appropriateness of presentation; and evidence of understanding of the requirements, concepts and techniques of historical research.

Personal work contacts may include contacts with archivists and others responsible for the maintenance of files and records, or with individuals having knowledge of the events involved in the study. Such contacts are for the purpose of obtaining factual information.

HISTORIAN, GS-0170-09

Nature of the assignment

Assignments at this level usually are restricted to one topic, but may involve consideration and inclusion of several related sub-topics. The following are illustrative: (1) a detailed study of an historic house including a thorough treatment of the physical history of the structure and its furnishings; (2) a detailed study of the events and personalities associated with a particular "historic" site; (3) the determination of an official statement of lineage and battle honors for a military unit or organization from its inception to the present; or (4) a study of the highlights in the history of a specified Foreign Service post.

In addition to the problems described at the GS-7 level, assignments at this level typically involve some problems of organization and analysis or some difficulties in the critical evaluation of the evidence and in the establishment of "historical fact." The latter problems may arise from gaps in evidence, from conflicting evidence or from questions of reliability of evidence. Resolution of these problems requires the historian to employ persistence and imagination in seeking out additional sources, and critical judgment and analytical thought in the evaluation of the evidence uncovered. Relationships among historical facts are not always clear, thus requiring the historian to possess a good grasp of the subject matter involved and to employ logic and critical judgment in the syntheses of historical facts. The foregoing considerations tend to complicate the presentation of the results of the research effort, thus requiring the historian to

possess some skill in the organization and presentation of his material in order to present the facts in their proper perspective.

Level of responsibility

Work assignments representing complexities of the type described above are accompanied by a definition of the scope and objectives of the study but are not accompanied by detailed preliminary instructions regarding sources or the methodology to be employed. Incumbents of GS-9 positions are expected to plan their field of search and follow recognized professional techniques in the accomplishment of the work. However, the supervisor or other historian of higher grade is available to provide guidance should problems not previously encountered by the incumbent arise in the course of the work. Typically, completed work is presented in draft form and is reviewed in detail for completeness, adequacy of planning, soundness of judgment in the establishment and organization of historical facts, and conformance to professional standards in the presentation of the study.

Historians engaged in studies of historic sites may offer opinions as to whether the site appears to be historically worthy of preservation or restoration.

Personal work contacts typical of this level are similar to those at preceding levels. However, at this level the historian's relationships with his fellow historians outside of the supervisory chain begin to take on the color of professional consultation in that they may involve conferring on closely related studies, and include giving, as well as receiving, information.

HISTORIAN, GS-0170-11

Nature of the assignment

Assignments usually involve one or more major topics or themes of history and require consideration and treatment of several related topics in order to place the study in its proper context. Illustrative of this type of assignment is (1) study of a military exercise including the planning and organizational phases, the operational and logistical problems involved, their causes and solutions; (2) a study of United States policy regarding trade relationships with another country during a specified time period, taking into account the economic, military and political considerations which influenced policy decisions, or (3) a study of one or more functions or operations such as logistics or manpower of a Government department or agency, or a major organizational component thereof, taking into account the problems involved, the programs affected, the objectives to be achieved, the planning and implementation of the function or operation and the extent to which objectives were realized. Such assignments may be undertaken either as a part of the continuing historical program of the agency, as "special" studies for use by agency officials in current program planning, or as a part of a broader project under the direction of an historian of higher grade.

Another type of assignment typical of this level involves planning and carrying out a series of historical research projects for a national historical park which centers around a single major

historical theme and time period, e.g., a major Civil War battle, but which requires a variety of definitive special studies to establish boundaries, determine location of events, and provide historical data for use in the reconstruction or restoration of the area.

Assignments typically involve problems of the type and complexity described at the preceding level in several or all phases of their accomplishment. GS-11 historians are expected to exercise a good understanding of the purposes of the project and to consider such matters as the accessibility of source material and the time or other limitations involved in independently planning the details of project accomplishment. In resolving the problems presented by the assignment, GS-11 historians must employ (1) a good knowledge of available research sources, (2) a good grasp of the primary subject matter involved and of related subject-matter fields (in order to achieve complete coverage of significant sources), (3) sound critical judgment in the evaluation of sources and the establishment of historical "fact", and in the development of hypotheses to account for causal relationships, and (4) substantial skill in organizing and writing a narrative that sets forth a balanced and realistic picture of the subject under consideration.

Level of responsibility

Within the limitations imposed by the scope and objectives of the assignment, which are clearly defined by the supervisor or an historian of higher grade, or established by specific directives from higher echelons, GS-11 historians typically function with professional independence. They are responsible for developing working plans and blocking out the major areas of research for the accomplishment of the assignment, for determining the approaches and techniques to be employed, and for modifying working plans and approaches as necessary in the course of the study. Typically, only modifications to working plans which would have the effect of changing the scope or coverage of the assignment are discussed with the superior prior to implementation. Supervisory historians or other historians of higher grade may, or may not, be available for consultation as the work progresses, though arrangements for such consultation are possible if significant problems are encountered.

Typically, the completed work of GS-11 historians is reviewed for completeness of coverage, soundness of conclusions, adequacy of presentation and conformance to professional standards and agency policy, rather than for the adequacy of the research or the methodology employed.

Historians engaged in research programs for national historical parks are responsible for making recommendations as to the historic significance of the sites involved, and the desirability or feasibility of land acquisition or building restoration or reconstruction projects. Such recommendations are carefully reviewed at higher organizational echelons, both for their soundness in light of the supporting historical evidence and in light of overall program considerations.

In addition to personal work contacts of the type described at preceding levels, GS-11 historians establish and maintain continuing consultative relationships with fellow historians and others both within and outside the Federal Government, including individuals in such related professional fields as architecture, archeology, political science, and economics. These contacts are for the purpose of maintaining current information regarding other historical work being

done in their area of interest or for consultation or collaboration with subject-matter specialists in other professional disciplines.

HISTORIAN, GS-0170-12

Nature of the assignment

GS-12 assignments are distinguished from those at preceding levels by their broader scope, relatively greater depth of treatment, more varied subject matter, greater need for sound critical judgment, and the increasing number of considerations which must be taken into account, as illustrated by the following: (1) a study of the development of a special weapons system including all major aspects of planning, programming, funding, research, development, testing, production and deployment, with special emphasis on the problems involved and the solutions developed, (2) a study of the bilateral foreign relations of the United States with another country for a specified time period, taking into account the nature of those relationships at the beginning of the period involved and the international economic, political, military and other considerations which influenced the evolution of foreign policy and shaped the nature of the relationships existing at the end of the time period represented by the study, (3) an history of military assistance to Latin American countries, taking into account the what, where, when, and why of the establishment of military assistance programs, and the economic, diplomatic, political, and military considerations involved, (4) planning and carrying out a series of historical research projects for the purposes described at the GS-11 level, for a national historical park which centers around two or more major historical themes and represents more than one time period, e.g., the area may have been the scene of important military engagements in both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, as well as the scene of one or more other nationally significant events in the political, economic, or cultural history of the United States; or (5) within a specified geographical area (usually a number of States), planning and carrying out a series of definitive studies of historic sites, representing a broad range of historic events and time periods in the political, military, economic, and cultural developments of the United States to make recommendations regarding the inclusion of sites in the park system or the designation of sites as national historic landmarks.

These assignments present substantial planning problems. The magnitude of some (but not all) of the assignments requires the historian to "segment" the research, either for accomplishment as a team effort, or to reduce the assignment to component parts of manageable proportions. This requires the historian to employ a good knowledge of the subject-matter fields involved and potential sources of historical evidence, to anticipate the major difficulties to be overcome and to develop tentative approaches to the solution of those difficulties as a part of the planning process. In those cases where the project is to be accomplished by team effort, planning is further complicated by the necessity to define precisely the scope and purpose of each segment in order to preserve the emphasis and perspective demanded of the whole.

GS-12 historians engaged in studies which are to become parts of a long-range study of greater magnitude, or a part of the overall history of the agency, must possess a thorough understanding of the objectives of their portions of the study and their relationship to the broader whole.

Historians engaged in special historical studies must possess a good understanding of the purposes of the studies and the planning or operational needs of the agency officials who have requested them. Similarly, historians engaged in studies in connection with the identification, recognition, preservation, restoration, reconstruction or interpretation of historic sites of importance to the national historical heritage must be fully familiar with both the purposes to be served by their work and the place of their recommendations in the context of the nationwide program.

In addition to problems of the type described at lower levels in research, evaluation of evidence and establishment of historical fact, GS-12 assignments present substantial difficulties in the analysis of the facts developed. They require the historian to evolve and test hypotheses, to clarify causal relationships, and to develop a reasonable, well balanced, and factually accurate synthesis.

Problems in presentation are also characteristic of assignments at this level. These arise out of the necessity to present (either in narrative form, through the medium of selected official documents, or in other appropriate form) an objective and complete picture of the subject under consideration which clearly establishes the relative values and importance of the historical facts involved.

Level of responsibility

At this level, work assignments are usually expressed in terms of the subject areas to be covered or the objectives to be served by the study. Within this framework, and the availability of time, GS-12 historians are allowed considerable latitude in setting the perimeters of their assignments. They are responsible for developing and modifying working plans as necessary to meet the objectives of their assignments. The nature of the review of their completed work is essentially the same as that described at the GS-11 level. Some historians at this and succeeding levels may be called upon for critical review and evaluation of the work of professional colleagues. Typically, this review relates to the methodology, all aspects of the subject matter of the work and the effectiveness of presentation, and includes responsibility for exercising skill and judgment in offering criticisms and suggestions for improvements.

Recommendations made by GS-12 historians engaged in studies of historic sites, or studies for the development of national historical parks, are accepted as being sound in light of the available historical evidence, but are reviewed in the context of nationwide program considerations.

In addition to personal work contacts of the type described at preceding levels, GS-12 historians engaged in special historical studies for use by management officials are required to establish and maintain continuing working relationships with such officials in order that they may keep abreast of current policy, planning and operational problems, and make known to such officials the background resources available to them through the medium of historical research studies.

HISTORIAN, GS-0170-13

Nature of assignment

Assignments embrace broad and varied subject matters and involve a substantial number of considerations, as illustrated by the following: (1) a study of all significant aspects of a major program such as a ballistic missile program, or a program to develop nuclear-powered flight, taking into account the inter- and intra-agency relationships involved and their influence on policy, planning, programming, research, development and similar matters, the problems encountered in the development of the program, the alternatives considered in the development of solutions, the basis for the selection of one solution as opposed to the alternatives, and the impact of such decisions on the program; (2) a study of the multilateral foreign relations of the United States during a specified time period, taking into account the nature of the relationships existing among the countries involved at the beginning of the time period, the intra- and inter-national economic, political and military situations and other considerations which influenced the evolution of foreign policy and shaped the nature of the multilateral relationships existing at the end of the time period represented by the study; (3) a study of the bilateral foreign relations of the United States with another country in a case where those regulations were unusually complex or difficult, with particular emphasis on the reasons for the position taken by the United States with respect to the problems under study or negotiation; (4) the planning and carrying out of a series of definitive historical studies relating to historic sites and the providing of historical judgments of a high order as to which sites are of national historical significance and eligible for National Historic Landmark status or for inclusion (or proposed inclusion) within the National Park System in a major geographic area. Such studies typically include a variety of fields of history, e.g., military, political, economic, cultural, and a range of historical periods, e.g., colonial, Federal, Civil War, etc., and are to be used as the basis for the planning and development of the regional program for the acquisition, preservation, restoration, reconstruction and interpretation to the public of those physical evidences of major significance to the national historical heritage which are located within the confines of the region; or (5) the planning and conducting of a series of studies of the type described in (4) preceding, to be used as the basis for both the near-term and the long-range development of a national historical park of outstanding historical significance.

In addition to problems of the kind described at the GS-12 level, GS-13 assignments present major planning problems. Assignments frequently are defined only in terms of broad topics or areas to be covered. Within this framework, GS-13 historians employ a highly specialized knowledge of the subject-matter areas involved and a thorough understanding of the purposes to be served in developing definitions of the perimeters of the study, and in making determinations regarding those aspects of the assignment to be given particular emphasis. They develop all phases of the working plan, taking into account the time available for the accomplishment of the project and the number and experience level of the historians available for service as "team" members if the project is susceptible to a "team" approach. (Special studies requested for use in policy and program planning activities frequently must be completed within stringent deadlines, thus requiring the historian to tailor the project plan accordingly, but without sacrifice of depth of coverage of essential elements, or quality of historical synthesis and presentation.)

Typically, assignments of the type described above require the historian to employ a high degree of imagination and ingenuity in the location of obscure source materials. Problems of the kinds described at lower levels in the evaluation of evidence and the establishment of historical fact are common. The range of subject matter involved and the involved interrelationships of historical facts present major problems and require substantial critical judgment in the development and presentation of the historical study. In addition to the knowledges described at GS-12, GS-13 historians are required to employ substantial breadth and depth of knowledge of the specialized subject areas involved, in evolving and testing hypotheses to clarify complex and often obscure casual relationships. Problems in presentation are heightened by the necessity to present (either in narrative form or through the medium of selected official documents) an objective, comprehensive picture of the subject under consideration which clearly establishes the relative values and importance of the many and varied historical facts involved.

Level of responsibility

At this level, work assignments typically are expressed in terms of the objectives to be served by the study. GS-13 historians are responsible for determining the coverage of the subject and the emphasis to be given to certain subject-matter areas, and for developing and carrying out all phases of the working plan. In the case of studies conducted on a "team" basis, they may be responsible for the direction of team efforts and the integration of supporting studies into a cohesive and meaningful whole.

Recommendations made by GS-13 historians regarding the acquisition, preservation, restoration or reconstruction of historic sites are given substantial weight by historians at higher organizational echelons in planning and making recommendations concerning nationwide programs.

Personal work contacts are of the same type as described at preceding levels, but assume particular importance at the GS-13 level because of the recognized standing of the historian as a specialist in his field. GS-13 historians may be called upon to provide advice and counsel to their professional fellows both within and outside the Federal Government in their particular areas of competence. Contacts with agency management officials assume additional importance since in addition to the purposes described at the GS-12 level, GS-13 historians may use these contacts as a means of identifying areas in which historical research should be undertaken in anticipation of future management needs either personally undertaking such projects or recommending and justifying them to their superiors.

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Nature of the assignment

The scope and importance of GS-14 assignments are illustrated by the following: (1) a study to be used as background material for high-level military policy deliberations on a subject of international significance involving such considerations as the strategic determinations and

policy recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the deliberations of the National Security Council, the foreign aid and military assistance operations of various agencies of the Department of Defense and their representatives in the field, the negotiating activities of the Secretary of State, and the internal political situations and foreign and military policies of other nations; (2) a study of similar scope to be used as background material for foreign policy deliberations on matters of major international importance; (3) a history of the significant aspects of the overall operations of a major component of the Departments of the Army, Navy or Air Force such as a history of a Naval Bureau, a major Air Command or an Army Technical Service for a specified time period; (4) definitive studies for official publication, when such studies represent the scope and complexity described in (1) through (3) above; or (5) the planning and carrying out of a series of definitive historical studies relating to sites of major national historical significance included (or proposed for inclusion) within the National Historical Park system. Such studies typically include a variety of fields of history, e.g., military, political, economic and cultural within one or more major historical periods, e.g., colonial, Federal, Civil War, etc., and serve as the basis for planning, developing and carrying out a nationwide program for the acquisition, preservation, restoration, reconstruction and interpretation to the public of sites and events of major significance to the national historical heritage.

GS-14 historians may be assigned individual or collaborative projects, or may function as "team" leaders. Their assignments present the full range of planning, research, analysis, and synthesis and presentation problems described at the GS-13 level. However, at this level such problems are intensified by the broader scope or greater complexity of the subject matter involved. In addition to an authoritative knowledge of specialized subject-matter areas and a broad historical outlook based on wide knowledge of various historical fields, GS-14 historians frequently are required to visualize and anticipate management's requirements for historical information for both current and long-range program planning and policy deliberations and to tailor the scope and emphasis of their studies for most effective use by management in making important program and policy decisions.

Level of responsibility

At this level, work assignments typically arise out of the continuing requirements of the agency historical program or out of the special needs of agency officials at the highest policy and program planning echelons. Within the broad frame-work of agency policy, or the expressed needs of agency officials, GS-14 historians are responsible for determining the scope, coverage, and emphasis of their studies, developing and carrying out their working plans, and producing a completed product which is accepted as authoritative.

GS-14 historians concerned with the acquisition, preservation, restoration, reconstruction and interpretation to the public of sites and events of major significance to the national historical heritage are considered as the agency authorities within their areas of specialization. Their recommendations regarding legislative proposals and similar matters relating to national historical parks have a major impact on the nationwide program.

In addition to the personal work contacts described at lower grade levels, GS-14 historians (in recognition of the authoritative nature of their knowledge within their special areas of competence)

may be called upon to provide "on the spot" background historical data to agency officials at top management and policy levels in connection with urgent problems, or to attend interagency or international conferences for the same purpose. For example, GS-14 historians could be expected to serve as expert witnesses before committees of Congress during hearings on legislation relating to National Historical Parks.