



Over Worked, Under Paid, And Expected to Say Thank You

A Cause Based Analysis of Museum Wage Inequity

Molly Wolanski
Department of Museum Studies
University of the Arts
April 2020

Over Worked, Under Paid, And Expected to Say Thank You
A Cause Based Analysis of Museum Wage Inequity

Molly Wolanski
Department of Museum Studies
University of the Arts
April 2020

A thesis submitted to The University of the Arts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Museum Studies, M.A.

© 2020
Molly Wolanski
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

To the Faculty of the University of the Arts:

The members of the committee appointed to examine the thesis of Molly Wolanski find it satisfactory and recommend it be accepted.

Date: 11 May 2020

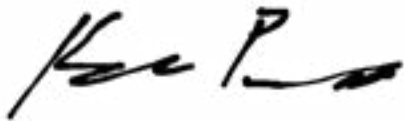


Patrick Wittwer- Thesis Chair
Museum Manager
Wells Fargo Museum

Vince Stango
Chief Operations Officer
National Constitution Center



Amber Emory
Director of Education and Community Partnerships
National Museum of Industrial History



Karen Pollard- Thesis Advisor
Program Lead, Museum Studies M.A.
The University of the Arts

Abstract:

Wage equity is a growing issue in the museum field and part of the much larger issue of fair labor practices within a field where workers are expected to say thank you for the opportunity to work for low wages and long hours. Over the past few years workers have said enough is enough and have started to change this. This thesis aims to look at how the causes behind wage inequity and using salary data collected by the field to illustrate the average compensation for a museum professional. All workers deserve to be paid fairly from interns to upper management. When workers are valued and invested in by management, they are able to be more engaged and provide a return on that investment for their organizations. This change in wage practices can come from all levels within an organization through various movements from unions to board buy in. When museums do not pay a living wage, they limit the type of person who is able to work in that museum, mostly to middle or upper-class white women (put a footnote here). Without wage equity the museum field is unable to fulfill their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Other issues that affect wage equity include the pink-collar and the high emotional labor that comes with working on the front line of a museum.

Dedication

To Stanley Wolanski, my father, who supported me through all my ventures in life. If he were still here he would be beyond proud that I completed this. The grass is green.

Also to Ralph, my cat, who was the best research assistant on this project. He reminded me, through his antics, to take a break and stop him from causing mayhem.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following people for their support through this process:

Pat Wittwer for coming in last minute as my thesis chair, I have really appreciated all of your feedback and comments on my draft.

Karen Pollard, thank you so much for sticking with me through all three thesis topic changes, for being a wonderful thesis advisor, answering all of my questions, leading me through panic attacks, and most of all helping me adjust the typical thesis schedule to make this process easier.

Vince Stango and Amber Emory for taking time to be on my committee and support me through this project.

Mickey Maley and Lily Groot for being the best people to share a workspace with.

Julia Wolanski, thank you so much for being the best roommate, sister, and quarantine buddy as I finished this project. Also for all of the help throughout school, all the dinners cooked, emotional support donuts, and being there for me through all of this.

To all of my colleagues at Eastern State Penitentiary, thank you so much for inspiring me to keep writing and pursuing this topic.

Finally to all of my friends who have stuck with me through this process, thank you so much for being there.

Glossary of Terms

Pink-collar- Predominantly female dominated fields that are undervalued by society.

Frontline staff- Workers within the museum who interact directly with the public

Wage equity- Compensation matches workload

Wage inequity- When compensation is unfair or does not reflect the workload, this can take the form of a gender or racial pay gap.

Diversity- hiring workers from a variety of backgrounds

Equity- treating workers of all backgrounds equally

Inclusion- allowing diverse constituents to have a voice in decision making

Living wage- “the hourly rate needed to pay for typical basic costs in a given location. These costs are food, health care, rent, transportation, childcare, and taxes.”¹

Emotional labor- performing specific emotions while at work and hiding true emotions.²

Small museum- A museum with an operating budget less than \$250,000.³

Collective bargaining- The process of a workforce unionizing to negotiate a fair contract.⁴

Emerging professional- A museum professional who has been in the field for less than 10 years.⁵

1 Kimberly Amadeo, “How Much Do You Need to Live in America?,” The Balance (The Balance, February 13, 2020), <https://www.thebalance.com/living-wage-3305771>.

2 Sophie Wilkinson, “Emotional Labour: What Is It, and Why Is Everyone Talking about It?,” BBC Three (BBC, December 24, 2018), <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/5ea9f140-f722-4214-bb57-8b84f9418a7e>.

3 “Small Museums,” AASLH, April 14, 2020, <https://aaslh.org/resources/affinity-communities/smallmuseums/>

4 “Collective Bargaining: AFL-CIO,” AFL-CIO, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://aflcio.org/what-unions-do/empower-workers/collective-bargaining>.

5 Michael Madeja, Sarah Erdman Ed., The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 24.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Literature Review	4
Introduction	4
Pink-collar	7
History of Museum Labor	11
Professionalization	13
Emotional Labor	15
Management	20
Unpaid Internships and Volunteers	23
Funding	26
Salary Secrecy and Silos	29
Data Analysis	31
Introduction	31
Objectives	32
Methodology	33
General Findings	35
Impact of Job Category	37
Impact of Education	40
Gender and Race Demographics	41
Recommendations for the Field	43
Student	43
Museum Studies Programs	44
Unions	45
Emerging Professional	47
Middle Management	48
Leadership and Board	50
Governing Organizations	51
Small Museums	51
Conclusion	53
Areas for Further Research	54
Bibliography	55

Table of Contents Continued

Appendix	59
Relevant Tables	59
Average Pay Based on Job Category	59
Average Pay Based on Type of Guest Service/ Retail Position	62
Average Pay Based on Education Required	62
Average Pay Based on Race	63
Average Pay Based on Gender Identity	65
Average Pay Based on Gender and Racial Identities	66
Interview Transcripts	70
Michelle Millar Fisher	70
Eli Petzold	77
Michael Madeja	88

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Pizza Party Meme	16
Figure 2: The Cycle of Frontline Workers	17
Figure 3: Hierarchical Management Structure	21
Table 1: N Values	34
Table 2: Job Categories	34
Table 3: Average Pay Based on Type of Guest Service/ Retail Position	39

Introduction:

Wages and fair labor practices are important now more than ever. Much of this research was done before the onset of the national shutdown due to the Novel Coronavirus. The shutdown has caused many museums and cultural institutions to lay off a majority of their workforce with little or no communication beforehand due to a lack of income. Wage equity remains important in this time as now is the time to change the field for the better when museums start to reopen and rehire staff. Wage inequity is the idea that a worker's wages do not reflect the work they do, their qualifications, or encompass fair and living wages. From salary surveys and crowdsourced spreadsheets to the more current union drives in museums nationwide, museum workers are asking for change in the state of museum wages across the field.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze causes behind wage inequity in the museum field and how they are reflected within current salary data. This data and the literature will be used to propose solutions to this issue that workers at all levels from emerging professionals to senior management can enact to solve improve wages, from unions to direct action on the part of professional organizations.

One possible solution to wage inequity that is already gaining momentum is the mobilization of frontline workers through unionization. Unions strive to improve work conditions and act as a communication channel between the workers and upper management. They provide job security and other benefits workers may not have access to otherwise. Recently museum workers nationwide have been unionizing and demanding living wages, set schedules and fringe benefits not available to the bottom

tier of workers. Nationwide museum workers are standing up for their right to be represented to management and asking for the basic needs that they have been denied up to this point.

The museum field is on the cusp of a new labor movement. Labor practices and workflow have changed, placing more of an emphasis on the visitor experience with no regard, in many cases, for the emotional and physical labor the frontline staff must perform to make this possible. Frontline staff needs to be more than just heard by management but consulted and listened to. This consultation could protect them from exploitation by management. Museum workers are often taken advantage of because of their love of the topic and devotion to the mission of the institution. Some museums will encourage their workers to see working there as a privilege as opposed to a job.¹ Change needs to come from all directions and supported at all levels, unions and other efforts have no effect without institutional buy in. This research will come together and answer the questions of **Wage Inequity is an important issue in the museum field currently and how can we as a field fix this issue?**

how has wage inequity impacted the museum field and how can the field come together to raise wages and provide protections for all employees?

The field is at a major tipping point and pressure is coming from all sides to pay their workers and pay them fairly at that. Museum workers are generally over worked,

¹ Tayrn R. Nie, "Far Too Female": Museums as the New Pink-Collar Profession - An Introductory Analysis of Pay Inequity within American Art Museums; Seton Hall Dissertations and Theses (2017), 12.

under paid, and expected to say thank you for the opportunity.² This can lead to exploitation from management because if workers are inspired by the mission they may not notice the differences from the external view of the mission and misalignment of work practices within, often sacrificing on that front to support a highly progressive mission.³ Wage inequity and a lack of rights in the workplace all contribute to this and unions pose a possible solution by allowing workers to stand up for their rights when they are exploited by a field that they love.

As part of the research for this project the data analyzed will be from the Art + Museum Transparency Spreadsheet. The proposed analysis and resulting project have the power to impact museum professionals in all areas and empower frontline and entry level employees to speak out, improve their workplace, and have change come from all directions across the workforce. This will hopefully provide an understanding of the museum workforce and what the museum field needs to do to fix this issue and improve the profession from all levels of organizational hierarchy.

² Tayrn R. Nie, "Far Too Female": Museums as the New Pink-Collar Profession - An Introductory Analysis of Pay Inequity within American Art Museums; Seton Hall Dissertations and Theses (2017), 12.

³ Tayrn R. Nie, "Far Too Female": Museums as the New Pink-Collar Profession - An Introductory Analysis of Pay Inequity within American Art Museums; Seton Hall Dissertations and Theses (2017), 2.

Literature Review

Introduction

When looking at the major issue of wage inequity it is necessary to understand the components that make up this broad topic. Including the history of the museum profession to modern issues facing the field from the Pink-Collar/gender pay gap, emotional labor and the false equivalence of a progressive mission guaranteeing progressive ideals in the workplace. This literature review aims to answer why wages are so low and how the field is working to fix it. There is one thread that ties the possible answers to these questions together which is a major issue that holds the field back on many fronts. That is; the museum workforce is composed of mostly middle- or upper-class white women. Each section introduced below touches on this in a unique way and what it means within the context of the section.

White women make up a majority of the field based on multiple studies. Women were 85% (n=1923) of respondents who volunteered their gender on the Art + Museum Transparency Salary Spreadsheet⁴. Other surveys report numbers of 60%⁵ and 46.7%⁶, while the numbers vary, they do show a majority or near majority of women in the field. Within certain departments, education and development to name two, women are at a higher majority⁷. The role of women in the museum field and the

⁴Michelle Millar Fisher, "Arts + All Museums Salary Transparency 2019", Accessed 9-21-19.

⁵Roger Schonfeld, Mariët Westermann, "The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey", The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2015): 11.

⁶Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 2.

⁷Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 55.

effects on the field are part of every issue relating to wage inequity. This is one aspect of the Pink-Collar. While some may see increasing female presence as a positive it is extremely dangerous in regard to pay. When more women are employed in a field, the work they do is devalued to the point where teachers are seen as glorified babysitter and nurses do nothing more than sit around playing cards⁸. The Pink-Collar is also represented through the fact that most low-level employees are women but at the top the positions are still male dominated.⁹

To better understand the impact of wage equity in the field, it is necessary to look at the history of museum labor. For example, how the staffing structure of the past has affected the current workplace and division between staff. The study of museum history is essential in understanding the current state of the field and how it ended up in the situation that it is currently in and how the field is evolving over time to better serve the public sometimes at the expense of the workers. This section overall aims to answer the question of how the field got to this point and how its history has influenced the Inclusion of more professional practices. In the past few decades the museum workforce has undergone a major change via professionalization of the museum workforce. The museum workforce is made up of museum professionals as opposed to the scholars of the past century. This affects wage equity

⁸ Sandra E. Garcia, "A State Senator Who Said Nurses 'Play Cards' While on the Job May Shadow One," The New York Times (The New York Times, April 23, 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/23/us/nurses-maureen-walsh.html>)

⁹ Roger Schonfeld, Mariët Westermann, "The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey", The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2015): 3.

in that more people are entering the field increasing competition allowing museums to lower salaries.

Many other issues contribute to the problem of wage inequity in the museum field. Funding or the lack thereof is a major issue currently, as we are seeing again the museum field is not recession proof. In the past few decades there has been less government funding to support museums as less emphasis has been placed on the arts and an increase in the number of museums competing for the same funds¹⁰. This has led to an idea to do more with less and take hard measures to cut spending. These measures include hiring freezes, no cost of living increases, no merit-based raises, and other measures that negatively impact workers.

Emotional Labor is another part of work that is often overlooked when it comes to frontline and entry level workers who interact with the public. This type of labor takes a toll on workers when left unaddressed can lead to burnout and high turnover in staff¹¹. New frontline workers start to replace burned out individuals who have left. The cycle continues as the new employees are poorly trained, devalued by management, and move onto better things. Therefore, restarting the cycle with new employees and not investing in the ones they have. This can be corrected through employee engagement and effective management.

¹⁰ Sarah Cascone, "Trump's 2020 Budget Is the Largest in Federal History-and It Would Entirely Eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts," artnet News (artnet News, March 19, 2019), <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/trump-budget-national-endowment-arts-1490917>

¹¹ Amy Tyson, *The Wages of History Emotional Labor on Public History's Front Lines*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013) 5

The traditional museum management structure also hurts wage equity in that decisions come from the top and workers do not really have options to speak up. Many museums are changing this and implementing different structures to increase communication between all levels and to be horizontal, but many still advocate for that traditional structure. The traditional top down management structure also leads to siloing and lack of communication between departments. This lack of communication makes it difficult to form a workplace community and therefore connect on issues. The Pink-Collar and gender in the workplace as a whole plays a significant role within this research and influences much of the following literature review and is the first cause discussed below.

Pink-Collar

In 2015 the Association of Art Museum Directors published a survey of field, and this survey showed a 60% female workforce, other surveys put it around 50% but the number of women in the field is growing. This is not an even growth across all departments and job categories some departments and positions are more female driven than others¹². While the field may be overwhelming female the upper echelons of management are still mostly male. The larger the museum the more likely it is to have a man at the top. To put it simply, the museum field is Pink-Collar, or a female

¹² Roger Schonfeld, Mariët Westermann, "The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey", The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2015): 11.

driven profession where salaries are lower because the work does not seem as important.¹³

Traditional pink-collar workers are nurses, librarians, teachers, and social workers; all jobs that are undervalued by society and not truly seen for the amount of education and work needed to be successful. Pink-Collar workers are consistently undervalued by society which leads to lower salaries and wages¹⁴. When men enter these professions, it is easy for them to rise to the top leadership positions, as is the case with the museum field¹⁵. While women make up about half the workforce, men make up the majority of the upper management positions¹⁶. It may seem good to see more women in the field it is actually detrimental to wage equity because of the pink-collar effect.

The term Pink-Collar is not new but was brought into the modern academic vernacular by Louise Kapp Howe with her book *Pink Collar Workers*. In her book, Howe investigates the pink-collar professions to show the division in the professional world between what are deemed “male” and “female” careers. While her study focuses on hairdressers, retail workers, servers, office and clerical workers, and the homemaker she does start the dialogue on what constitutes a pink-collar profession and the struggles these women face. The book was published in 1977 yet some issues she

¹³ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 19.

¹⁴ “Pink Collar Work,” Policy Matters Ohio, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/fair-economy/work-wages/state-of-working-ohio/pink-collar-work>

¹⁵ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 52.

¹⁶ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 55.

poses still ring true. While the issue in the museum field may not be trying to work in an upscale restaurant as a woman¹⁷, this still reflects the glass ceiling that exists to this day. Some women have broken through, but it is still difficult for all women to break through and its height varies for women of different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. The museum field is predominantly white, highly educated and a middle- or upper-class background.¹⁸ There are so many barriers to diversity in the field stated throughout this paper but the biggest is the wages, followed by the job requirements and dead end of visitor services.

At most museums the face of the museum is female, with many frontline positions being staffed by women. This continues the idea that nonprofit work is women's work and therefore less important.¹⁹ This devaluation is a major component of wage inequity because when less value is placed on women, they feel that they have to prove themselves to advance. Many men, on the other hand, move up through the ranks by knowing a little, often getting the promotion over a woman who has more expertise, because her knowledge is not valued as much as her male counterparts. Men get promoted for potential and women for performance.²⁰

How can museums compete for funding when they are not respected via bias and general lack of respect for female driven fields? This idea is represented in the

¹⁷ Louise Kapp. Howe, *Pink Collar Workers: inside the World of Women's Work* (New York: Avon, 1978), p.93

¹⁸ Michelle Millar Fisher, "Arts + All Museums Salary Transparency 2019", Accessed 9-21-19.

¹⁹ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 52.

²⁰ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017):115.

concept of the “Respect Gap” where female driven fields- the museum field included- where gendered bias lessens the respect of government, media, donors, and other potential funding, has toward the field.²¹ The respect gap is just one of the many obstacles to success that come from gender bias in the workplace, including the wage gap. In 2018 white woman made only 81 cents for every dollar a man makes, it’s even lower for women of color, with Latina women having the largest gap from white non-Hispanic men at 54 cents for every dollar.²² The wage gap hurts the field by limiting the type of new hires entering the profession, keeping the field white and upper/upper-middle class.

The gender bias within the field is also seen in the academic sector of the field through the influx of museum studies and related graduate programs. These programs act as a tool in which women have to use to prove themselves to the field that they belong there. This is done through costly degrees and multiple internships which are only sometimes paid.²³ Men and wealthy individuals are more likely to be able to afford to take unpaid internships which continues the status quo and blocks out more diverse candidates.²⁴

²¹ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 19.

²² “Quantifying America’s Gender Wage Gap by Race/Ethnicity,” [nationalpartnership.org](https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/fair-pay/quantifying-americas-gender-wage-gap.pdf) (National Partnership for Women and Families, March 2020), <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/fair-pay/quantifying-americas-gender-wage-gap.pdf>, p.1-4.

²³ Elizabeth Merritt, “Museum Studies Programs & Tools for Creating More Inclusive Curricula,” *American Alliance of Museums*, October 4, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/03/29/museum-studies-programs-tools-for-creating-more-inclusive-curricula/>.

²⁴ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 174.

It is also thought that museum workers do not need to make a living wage as they are mostly spouses providing a secondary income or they come from wealthy backgrounds.²⁵ These ideas hurt the field by keeping wages down which leads to more issues in diversity and inclusion because the positions are not economically feasible for people outside this specific situation.²⁶ This keeps perpetuating the myth and not allowing change that can come from being more inclusive. To better understand how the field has gotten here it is important to look at the history of labor in the museum.

History of Museum Labor

Museums as we know them really came to be in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Museums started as private collections by and for the wealthy upper class. They were not for the general public. This all changed full force in the nineteenth century with more museums opening to the public with educational missions.²⁷ From the start of museums women played ~~an important role~~ a significant role in funding them and educating the public yet even today women are not treated equitably within the museum field.²⁸ Collectors were initially the founders of the museum field and were the initial staffers of museums. As museums have evolved into the community

²⁵ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 89.

²⁶ Tayrn R. Nie, "Far Too Female": Museums as the New Pink-Collar Profession - An Introductory Analysis of Pay Inequity within American Art Museums; Seton Hall Dissertations and Theses (2017), 12.

²⁷ Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander, *Museums in Motion*, (Lanham: Alta Mira, 2008) 9.

²⁸ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 87-89.

spaces, educational environments, and trusted sources of public knowledge the staffing structure has had to change to support the more complex entities. :

The first museums in the United States were like Peale's Philadelphia Museum which functioned more like a cabinet of curiosity rather than a modern museum. While it did have some educational programming, it was more entertainment than education. Peale was an artist and collector who shared his collection with the public, other scholars started museums for the similar purposes of entertaining and educating the public. Vaguely because labels and item tags were not common in early museums.²⁹ Museums started to take more of an educational approach which lead to the necessity of hiring educators. Museum educators were predominantly female which aligns with the roles of women in the early twentieth century and education being a pink-collar profession. The museums to make this shift first were children's museums.

The first children's museum was established in 1899 in Brooklyn NY, this museum type was a significant shift in the museum field from the collection being the subject to the audience, along with education being the main focus of the museum³⁰. These museums truly represent the shift from collection-focused to audience-focused museum content– a change that happened to all types of museums over the course of the twentieth century– best represented in the phrase that “museums went from being about something to being for someone”³¹. The educational practices first

Commented [MW1]: DEFINITION OR USE A NEW WORD

²⁹ Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander, *Museums in Motion*, (Lanham: Alta Mira, 2008) 62-64.

³⁰ Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander, *Museums in Motion*, (Lanham: Alta Mira, 2008) 167-169.

³¹ Stephen Weil, “From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum,” *Daedalus* 128, no. 3 (1999): 231

developed in these museums influenced the rest of the field and placed a greater emphasis on educational programming, creating the necessity for professional museum educators in addition to curators and scholars.

~~History of museum labor~~

~~Potential sources~~

~~Women in museums-~~

~~Motion-~~

~~Weil about to for-~~

~~Museums started as the collections of the wealthy and not for the general public.-~~

~~Changed in 1800s with the beginning of public museums-~~

Professionalization

Globally there are 244 museum studies graduate programs, and 185 within the United States alone, listed within a database compiled by the American Alliance of Museums.³² Museum Studies as a graduate study has been growing and producing museum professionals which are different from the scholars, curators, and educators of early museums. Students can specialize in various tracks based on interests

³² "Directory of Museum Studies and Related Programs," Museum Studies, accessed April 14, 2020, <http://ww2.aam-us.org/resources/careers/museum-studies>

ranging from administration to exhibit design to conservation and everything in between.³³

These programs are showing a distinct gender bias in the field, with more women enrolled in the graduate programs than men. One reason for this is that women feel the need to prove their worth through a master's degree to show that they belong in the field. Men do not need this, as much, because they are promoted and valued based on potential. Women need to show that they can do the work through lengthy degrees.³⁴ These programs also contribute to the lack of diversity within the field due to high tuition costs. This keeps the field white and middle- to upper-class. Tuition barriers keep the field from becoming diverse which limits diversity in the field³⁵. A lack of diversity with no meaningful steps toward changing it reflects the lack of action in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In addition to limiting the potential diversity of the workforce, Museum Studies programs have the potential to overload the field in regard to new and emerging professionals all looking for the same limited jobs. This in all can drive wages down through the idea of supply and demand– there will always be someone willing to work

³³ Greg Stevens and Wendy Luke, *A Life in Museums: Managing Your Museum Career*, (Washington DC: AAM Press/American Association of Museums, 2012), 23.

³⁴ Tayrn R. Nie, "Far Too Female": Museums as the New Pink-Collar Profession - An Introductory Analysis of Pay Inequity within American Art Museums; Seton Hall Dissertations and Theses (2017), 20.

³⁵ Elizabeth Merritt, "Museum Studies Programs & Tools for Creating More Inclusive Curricula," American Alliance of Museums, October 4, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/03/29/museum-studies-programs-tools-for-creating-more-inclusive-curricula/>

for less than the person ahead of them. This undercuts the field as a whole by driving down wages until they are no longer livable which hurts the field in another way.³⁶

When the field is predominantly middle- or upper-class the type of voices that are allowed to share opinions in the field is limited. This demographic is also that of unpaid internships as this group can afford to not get paid for their work. These³⁷ internships provide the experience required for most entry level positions that are not actually entry level in reality. Many so-called entry-level positions require years of specific experience that is off limits to individuals who cannot work for free; again, locking the working class out of the museum field.³⁸

One possible solution to this lack of diversity is the new museum associate program at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art. The museum associate program combines the frontline work that many museum motivated graduates find themselves doing with back of house work in all departments. This is done through a rotation program over the course of a few years. The goal of this program is to end the practice of visitor services being a dead-end job and the burnout and high turnover that comes with that department. They also do not require graduate level experience to qualify for the program, which also breaks down the barrier caused by

³⁶ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 54.

³⁷ Elizabeth Merritt, "Museum Studies Programs & Tools for Creating More Inclusive Curricula," American Alliance of Museums, October 4, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/03/29/museum-studies-programs-tools-for-creating-more-inclusive-curricula/>

³⁸ C. Andrew Coulomb, "Commentary: Let the Great Experiment Begin! Reforming Visitor Services for the 21st Century," *Theory & Practice* 2 (2019), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57866b6debbd1aedaf92e668/t/5d20ac02ce6c2600018dd282/1562422276551/TP2019_Coulomb.pdf, p.1.

the museum studies master's degree. Museum associates are not just rotating department assistants, they complete projects, get professional development, job resources, and a potential job in the department of their choice upon finishing the program. As this is a new program there are no reports of success yet.³⁹ Programs like this are developing and giving workers a way around the traditional employment route. While programs like this are sometimes a necessity at a smaller institution where all staff have to chip in and do smaller tasks, this program works to break down silos and help create a true entry-level museum position.

Emotional Labor

Many frontline and low-level employees deal with emotional labor on a daily basis. Emotional labor is the normally unpaid extra work that employees do to manage their emotions and remain cheery and positive for visitors and coworkers.⁴⁰ Some people have a customer service voice they use to interact with visitors or other methods of performing emotional labor. Interacting with the public in any form requires a vast amount of emotional labor when it comes to customer service in general, due to the social importance of the customer being the center of attention. This constant façade put up by frontline workers is draining and not properly compensated for, leading to burnout when management does not mitigate this burnout and properly invest in their staff, high turnover in occurs.

³⁹ C. Andrew Coulomb, "Commentary: Let the Great Experiment Begin! Reforming Visitor Services for the 21st Century," *Theory & Practice* 2 (2019), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57866b6debbd1aedaf92e668/t/5d20ac02ce6c2600018dd282/1562422276551/TP2019_Coulomb.pdf.

⁴⁰ Sophie Wilkinson, "Emotional Labour: What Is It, and Why Is Everyone Talking about It?," BBC Three (BBC, December 24, 2018), <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/5ea9f140-f722-4214-bb57-8b84f9418a7e>.

While museums like to view themselves as academic institutions and not part of the tourism and hospitality industry, they are, and the frontline workers take the brunt of the tourism related work. These workers are the first and last people visitors interact with in the museum. Managers will often dictate how staff should interact with the public from how to greet visitors or when it is okay to sit and when they should be standing⁴¹. All of this is done in the name of professionalism, but it can be exhausting work, and often management does not properly mitigate the burnout caused by it seen in the image⁴² above. This leaves employees burnt out by the end of a shift which affects life outside of work. When someone interacts with hundreds if not thousands of visitors a day, it is possible that they do not have any energy left to pursue a social life.⁴³ Combine this emotional labor with low salaries and the expectation to change the world, it is the perfect cocktail for low employee morale and high turnover.



Figure 1 A popular meme showing a worker "drowning" and management not providing a meaningful solution. This reflects the burnout felt by workers and an ineffective engagement strategy.

⁴¹ Amy Tyson, *The Wages of History Emotional Labor on Public History's Front Lines*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013) 13.

⁴² Image Credit: "Pizza - Manager and employees having a pizza party," *Know Your Meme*, n.d <https://knowyourmeme.com/photos/1484832-pizza>

⁴³ Amy Tyson, *The Wages of History Emotional Labor on Public History's Front Lines*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013) 100.

Museums cannot function without these staff members and yet they are treated as second class workers. Management does not expect these workers to stick around for a long time in many cases. Not recognizing emotional labor and overworked employees is not just an issue unique to museums. As workers move up in the field, they move away from the museum floor. It is even sometimes discouraged by upper management for back of house to spend time on the floor because they are “wasting their salary.”⁴⁴

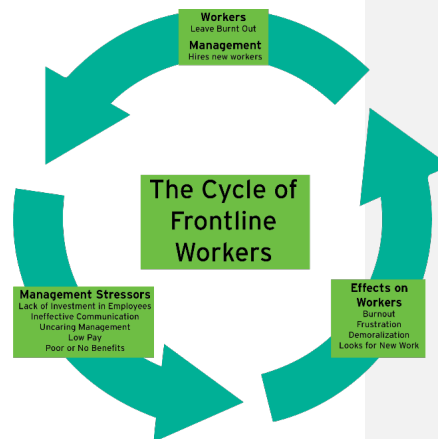


Figure 2 The Cycle created by a lack of engagement and investment in staff which promotes \ high turnover in frontline staff

The cycle above shows the effects of not investing in staff through the eyes of frontline workers. When managers do not properly engage their staff and attempt to mitigate the burnout felt by frontline staff, it has a negative affect on workers where they get so frustrated, they eventually leave their positions burnt out⁴⁵. This cycle in the long run costs employers more money, due to the high cost of onboarding new employees to replace the ones who have left.⁴⁶

High staff turnover is an issue affecting all fields and has led to memes and more attention on the issue. Systems and structures break down when managers are

⁴⁴ Nina Simon, “Should Everyone Work on the Front Line as Part of Their Career?,” Museum 2.0, accessed May 11, 2020, <http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/2010/03/should-everyone-work-on-front-line-as.html>

⁴⁵ Jesse R. Lentz, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 53.

⁴⁶ Parth Misra, “Investing in Your Employees Is the Smartest Business Decision You Can Make,” Entrepreneur.com, Entrepreneur, 29 June 2018, <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/315095>.

out of touch with the frontline staff because they see what is going on in the building on a day-to-day basis and know more intimately what visitors need and how they interact with the institution. All levels of staff need to be able to communicate effectively and openly. If these communication channels are not in place or broken staff may not feel safe speaking up and will just start looking for new jobs when issues arise. Thus, increasing staff turnover rather than management being able to fix an issue.

Emerging museum professionals often find themselves locked out of entry level positions that require three to five years of experience and take jobs in visitor services or other frontline positions. While they see this as a foot in the door it often is not, in reality visitor services can be a dead end where emerging professionals get trapped and shut out from advancing into other positions.⁴⁷ Some museums are good at hiring from within, but most are not, leaving these emerging professionals either trapped in visitor services, or forced to look at a different museum to try to break into the field via a diagonal move. This all contributes to high turnover and lack of investment.

When employers do not invest in their employees it costs them more in the long run. It can cost twice as much as the worker's base salary to train new workers, rather

⁴⁷ C. Andrew Coulomb, "Commentary: Let the Great Experiment Begin! Reforming Visitor Services for the 21st Century," *Theory & Practice* 2 (2019), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57866b6debbd1aedaf92e668/t/5d20ac02ce6c2600018dd282/1562422276551/TP2019_Coulomb.pdf, 4.

than investing in the employee and trying to retain employees⁴⁸. Investing also helps engage workers in the mission of the institution to support and empower employees within the organization. Supporting and investing in employees is important in preventing burnout and not investing in workers and trying to patch up issues after the fact through pizza parties does not actually fix anything- it just lets the workers drown and burnout.

When workers are properly engaged, they are less likely to feel burnt out and disengaged. Highly engaged workers are more productive than their disengaged colleagues and are more connected to their work.⁴⁹ Employee engagement is comprised of more than just fair wages, but engagement should start there. Workers like to feel secure in their work environment and fair wages, and a decent benefits package is a good place to start.⁵⁰ Employees also want to feel valued and heard within the workplace and that what they do matters in the grander scheme of the organization. Much of employee engagement boils down to good management and communication. Some examples of engagement include, listening to and acting on employee feedback, supporting workers instead of undermining them, allowing the chance to grow and develop their skills, and keep them informed.⁵¹ Good employee engagement starts with proper management.

⁴⁸ Parth Misra, "Investing in Your Employees Is the Smartest Business Decision You Can Make," Entrepreneur.com, Entrepreneur, 29 June 2018, <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/315095>.

⁴⁹ "How to Engage Employees; A Complete Guide for Managers," Nutcache, May 28, 2019, <https://www.nutcache.com/blog/how-to-engage-employees/>.

⁵⁰ "How to Engage Employees; A Complete Guide for Managers," Nutcache, May 28, 2019, <https://www.nutcache.com/blog/how-to-engage-employees/>.

⁵¹ "How to Engage Employees; A Complete Guide for Managers," Nutcache, May 28, 2019, <https://www.nutcache.com/blog/how-to-engage-employees/>.

Management

Management and Leadership within the institution play a key role in wage equity. They set the wages and benefits. When management is not transparent and open it harms workers and contributes to lack of engagement. Managers serve a very distinct role within the organizational structure, which depends on the management structure in place, in a traditional structure a manager is expected to inspire, lead, communicate, control, and evaluate. These five traits are put in relation to communicating what the museum wants out of its employees and leading their employees toward the goals of the museum or organization.⁵² These roles are not always present in management which leads to the breakdown and burnout discussed earlier. These ideals of management come from Gail Dexter Lord and Barry Lord, two advocates for the hierarchical management structure that many museums are moving away from in favor of more cooperative structures.

The traditional structure is also referred to as a hierarchical management structure. This format is the most popular among museums. The structure consists of a vertical management system where every employee reports to someone above them. Managers are responsible for the decision making. When managers do not rely on input from those they oversee, it can lead to demoralization and a feeling of lack of

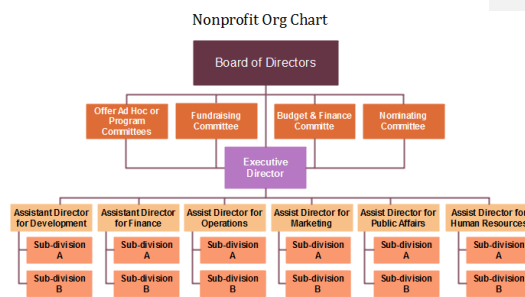


Figure 3 An example of a Hierarchical Management Structure:
<https://www.orgcharting.com/nonprofit-org-chart/>

⁵² Gail Dexter Lord and Barry Lord, *Manual of Museum Management*, 2nd ed. (Lanham: Alta Mira, 2009) 5.

respect.⁵³ This structure feeds off a lack of communication which leads to siloing and competition between departments. These characteristics ultimately lead to a bureaucratic slowdown due to the layers of management a decision must pass through⁵⁴.

While many museums are moving away from the hierarchical management system, many are not. Management structures can either open an organization, encouraging collaboration and interdepartmental communication or shut it down forcing employees into their silos where varying levels of competition between departments can occur. These differences come from the organizational structure and the culture it creates.⁵⁵

Nontraditional structures rely on more staff involvement on all levels and encourage staff input and autonomy. These structures also call the role of the manager into question as to whether they should act as a manager or merely a communicator⁵⁶. Nontraditional and horizontal management structures come about from an institution investing in change and modernizing their workflow structure. Nontraditional structures and change belong together. Museums need to work harder to make change within the structures possible or staff will find a way to enact change

⁵³ Jesse R. Lentz, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 53.

⁵⁴ Hugh H. Genoways, Lynne M. Ireland. *Museum Administration 2.0* (New York: Rowman Littlefield, 2016) 142.

⁵⁵ Corinne Flax, Kathleen Holko, and Laura Stricker, 2017, "Clear Expectations, Communication, and Flexibility: Unlocking the Potential of an Education Department Through a Nontraditional Staffing Structure," *Journal of Museum Education* 42 (4): 317. doi:10.1080/10598650.2017.1371518.

⁵⁶ Corinne Flax, Kathleen Holko, and Laura Stricker, 2017, "Clear Expectations, Communication, and Flexibility: Unlocking the Potential of an Education Department Through a Nontraditional Staffing Structure," *Journal of Museum Education* 42 (4): 317. doi:10.1080/10598650.2017.1371518.

without management buy in, this can take different forms but the most common is unionization.

Unions provide means for lower level employees to speak up in their workplace without threat of firing or repercussions by bringing workers together and one voice becomes the voice of many through collective bargaining. The worst-case scenario associated with unionization can be seen in the Marciano Art Foundation's effort to unionize which resulted in an unlawful layoff and legal action on the part of the laid off workers. This is where the union did not succeed due to a fear of change and poor management- and the anti-union stance of the Marciano brothers⁵⁷. The Marciano is just one bad union story among a sea of more positive union processes that have been happening over the past year. More museum workers are taking the steps to unionize and stand up for their rights and basic necessities in the workplace, whether it is wage motivated, or they just want a voice in something they feel connected to, unions provide that platform.

Change needs to be anchored in organizational culture less it be feared.⁵⁸ Museums and organizations tend to fear change rather than embrace it keeping themselves in rigid traditional structures and discouraging low level and entry level workers from giving input on how to fix an issue. Change is important in the museum sector in regard to management practices. Whether it comes from the workers in the

⁵⁷ Colin Moynihan, "Marciano Art Foundation Is Accused of Unfair Labor Practices," nytimes.com, The New York Times, 8 November 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/08/arts/design/marciano-art-foundation-union.html>.

⁵⁸ Yuha Jung, "Micro Examination of Museum Workplace Culture: How Institutional Changes Influence the Culture of a Real-World Art Museum", *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 31, no.2 (2015), 170.

form of unions or from above. When institutions embrace change, amazing things can happen. Museums can affect change through taking a closer look at unpaid work.

Unpaid internships and Volunteers

Volunteers outnumber paid employees in the museum field six to one and in small museums eighteen to one⁵⁹. Volunteers and interns deserve proper recognition for their work, and effective management strategies to ensure that this work group be treated fairly and equitably. When museums rely on volunteers it should be done in a way where all parties benefit from the relationship, if not, volunteer and intern programs can be exploitative and hurt the institution.

Currently the Department of Labor does not have regulations in place for unpaid internships within the non-profit sector, the current regulations under the Fair Labor Standards Act only refer to unpaid internships within the for-profit sector.⁶⁰ The American Association for Museum Volunteers' Standard and Best Practices for Museum Volunteer Programs includes stipulations for both proper volunteer management and unpaid intern programs. First and foremost an intern or volunteer position should not replace a paid employee. Volunteers and interns should not be seen as a cost saving measure. Volunteers should be engaged and given the trainings that they need to be successful and effectively managed which includes evaluation.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Elizabeth Merritt, "Volunteers and Museum Labor," American Alliance of Museums, September 12, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/10/18/volunteers-and-museum-labor/>.

⁶⁰ "Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act," US Bureau of Labor Wage and Hour Division, 2018.

⁶¹ "Standards and Best Practices for Museum Volunteer Programs," American Association for Museum Volunteers - Best Practices, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://aamv.wildapricot.org/Standards-and-Best-Practices>.

Internships are educational experiences at their core and should benefit the student more than the institution, an internship is an educational experience and they should be evaluated by those measures.⁶²

Many academic programs require students to intern- sometimes more than once- in order to get their degree. Schools represent this internship requirement through course credit so in reality students pay to work. This leads to a lack of diversity and equity in the field as students who cannot afford to work for free are stuck and unable to advance through the field where internships are a vital part of the hiring system. This creates a glass ceiling where students from disadvantaged backgrounds can see others progressing through the system and they are stuck because they cannot afford the internships.⁶³ Paying people for their work is important.

While the predatory nature of unpaid internships is coming to light, many museums still offer these opportunities. Michelle Millar Fisher and the Art and Museum Transparency group, the group behind the Salary Spreadsheet created a follow up survey on unpaid internships to bring to light how many unpaid internships are out there. Currently the spreadsheet is closed with over 400 responses showing the range of paid and unpaid internships with an overwhelming number of zeros in the

⁶²Position Statement: U.S. Internships, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://www.nacweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/>.

⁶³ Hakim Bishara et al., "The Growing Tide Against Unpaid Internships," Hyperallergic, July 19, 2019, <https://hyperallergic.com/507441/unpaid-internships/>.

compensation column⁶⁴. She advises that emerging professionals should not take an unpaid internship and that museums need to end unpaid internships.⁶⁵ The Association of Art Museum Directors is also taking steps to reduce the number of unpaid internships a new program provides stipends for internships at ten of its member museums to support more diversity and inclusion in the field⁶⁶. While this program is a start, it is nowhere near a solution for the burgeoning wage inequity and unpaid internships that still plague the field.

Volunteers and interns play a vital role in this field that should not be taken lightly. When these unpaid workers are not treated fairly or given the resources they need to succeed, it hurts both the worker and the institution. Volunteers should never be seen as a way to save money within an institution, they should be seen as a way to supplement the work of paid employees, not replace them when the budget is tight.⁶⁷

Funding

Where museums get their money and how those funds are designated affects what is left to pay workers. When a museum does not allocate the budget to pay staff well or at all it hurts staff morale, and drives workers out because they do not feel

⁶⁴ Sarah Cascone, "A New Campaign to End Unpaid Internships in the Art World Exposes a Problematic Reliance on Free Labor," *artnet News*, July 19, 2019, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/a-call-to-end-unpaid-internships-in-the-art-world-1603792>.

⁶⁵ Michelle Millar Fisher (Curator) in discussion with the Author, February 2020.

⁶⁶ Sarah Cascone, "In an Effort to Diversify Museum Staffs, a New Program Offers Paid Internships at Museums Across the US," *artnet News* (*artnet News*, July 12, 2018), <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/paid-college-internship-aamd-1316771>.

⁶⁷ "Standards and Best Practices for Museum Volunteer Programs," American Association for Museum Volunteers - Best Practices, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://aamv.wildapricot.org/Standards-and-Best-Practices>.

valued.⁶⁸ Museum funding comes from four sources: government funding, donations, earned revenue, and investments.⁶⁹ These funding streams allow a museum to build its budget. When funding is not done with employees in mind it contributes to wage inequity.

There has been less money coming from the government over the years as arts funding has been cut on the national level, with the current administration trying to cut funding entirely through the National Endowment for the Arts⁷⁰. The lack of government funds and more museums competing for the same money makes it harder to get the requisite funds that the budget had relied on in the past. In the 1990s the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) estimated that there were over 17,000 museums in the country and in 2014 that estimate was reevaluated to be over 35,000 museums nationwide.⁷¹ Not all museums rely on government funding directly, but it hurts all museums when there is less to go around. A museum may rely on donors more which then affects the donor pool. If one museum requires more from a donor then the donor may cut funding to other institutions it supports.⁷² This leads to budget cuts, sometimes extreme, as was the case with Robert Janes and Glenbow

⁶⁸ Amy Tyson, *The Wages of History Emotional Labor on Public History's Front Lines*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013) 2.

⁶⁹ Ford W. Bell, "How Are Museums Supported Financially in the U.S.?", Embassy of the United States of America, 2012.

⁷⁰ Sarah Cascone, "Trump's 2020 Budget Is the Largest in Federal History-and It Would Entirely Eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts," artnet News (artnet News, March 19, 2019), <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/trump-budget-national-endowment-arts-1490917>

⁷¹ "Government Doubles Official Estimate: There Are 35,000 Active Museums in the U.S.," *the Institute of Museum and Library Services*, May 19, 2014, <https://www.ims.gov/news/government-doubles-official-estimate-there-are-35000-active-museums-us>.

⁷² In this case donor refers to an individual or grantmaking organization.

in the 1990s the museum lost almost all of its government funding and had to drastically restructure to remain open, including mass layoffs and shifting staffing structures. While the museum ended up being stable in the long run it did suffer consequences from relying on one stream of income and when that dried up, they had to change to remain open.⁷³

Funding is integral to wages and the excuse given quite often as to why museums and nonprofits in general do not pay their workers enough is that they cannot afford to and that because it is a nonprofit, budgets are tight. The same argument is made toward the individuals advocating for fair wages, that they chose a field with low pay and they should expect low wages. This argument is seen as valid outside the field, but a low wage is different from an unlivable wage, or no wage at all, and advocating for fair pay is not a terrible thing.⁷⁴

When the budget is too tight, extreme measures from hiring freezes to consolidation of positions to a higher reliance on part time workers– management does not need to provide benefits to part time workers– and other cost saving measures in between occur.⁷⁵ All of these measures harm staff morale and wages. In the case of many part-time and some full-time workers, there is a need to take on multiple part time jobs to equate a full time or more than full time job, none of them with benefits or set schedules in many cases. Benefits and set schedules are two

⁷³ Robert R. Janes, *Museums and the Paradox of Change*, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 8-9.

⁷⁴ Tayrn R. Nie, "Far Too Female": Museums as the New Pink-Collar Profession - An Introductory Analysis of Pay Inequity within American Art Museums; Seton Hall Dissertations and Theses (2017), 12.

⁷⁵ Robert R. Janes, *Museums and the Paradox of Change*, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 15.

topics most seen in union drives nationwide, they provide security and ease of planning multiple jobs.⁷⁶

When museums are not flexible with part-time hours this also hurts workers. If a supervisor wants a few hours every day of the week as opposed to a few full days this prevents many people from taking the job as it is more difficult to schedule around half days as opposed to whole days.⁷⁷ A similar issue to this is the idea of open availability and short notice schedules. Basically, workers are unable get constant shifts unless they do not have any restrictions on days or times that they cannot be scheduled. Short notice schedules happen when there is little turnaround time from when a schedule is made to when it starts.⁷⁸ Scheduling practices like this do not allow workers to find childcare, schedule appointments, and have a life in general. Set scheduling when workers are not paid a living wage allows workers to sustain multiple jobs and cobble together a living wage from multiple jobs.⁷⁹

Investing in employees saves money for an organization by helping to mitigate burnout and turnover, which in the museum field is high⁸⁰. The key is to find stable funding and spend some of it on employees at all levels from the often-exploited

⁷⁶ Libby Jones, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 44.

⁷⁷ Libby Jones, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 45-46.

⁷⁸ Libby Jones, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 44.

⁷⁹ Libby Jones, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 44.

⁸⁰ Amy Tyson, *The Wages of History Emotional Labor on Public History's Front Lines*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013) 14.

frontline staff and all the way up the staffing structure. Investing in and supporting employees leads to a more engaged and efficient workforce.⁸¹

Salary secrecy and Silos

Salary Secrecy is a major issue inside and outside the museum field. While it is not illegal to discuss what you get paid with your coworkers it is highly discouraged by management⁸². Salary secrecy allows for management to continue unfair salaries and perpetuate the gender and racial pay gaps.⁸³ The Art + Museum Transparency Salary Spreadsheet among other salary surveys helps bring salary discussion out of the shadows.

Salary confidentiality on the part of management is legal and part of human resources, much like the rest of an employee's file. A worker cannot go to their human resources department and request the salary of their coworker, that is a breach of confidentiality, but that employee can go to their colleague and ask them directly what their salary is. Talking about pay with colleagues is completely legal and protected by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), more specifically this protects employees from potential retaliation from their managers for discussing salary. If the employer retaliates against the employees for discussing salary, then they can lodge a

⁸¹ Parth Misra, "Investing in Your Employees Is the Smartest Business Decision You Can Make," Entrepreneur.com, Entrepreneur, 29 June 2018, <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/315095>.

⁸² "The NLRA & Pay Secrecy - Do You Know the Law?" Labor Relations Stories from Union Proof, April 10, 2020, <https://blog.unionproof.com/nlra-pay-secrecy-laws/>.

⁸³ Tim Herrera, "Why You Should Tell Your Co-Workers How Much Money You Make," The New York Times (The New York Times, August 31, 2018), <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/31/smarter-living/pay-secrecy-national-labor-rights-act.html>.

formal complaint with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) who may then open a case against the employer and make them issue backpay, rehire those fired, and rescind pay secrecy rules, if they are found guilty.⁸⁴

Workers may not realize that they are protected in this capacity and have a right to discuss their salary with their coworkers helps negotiate fair salaries. When workers come together and confront management in regard to unfair salaries change can happen. Finances and sharing financial information are a taboo topic in the workplace and one that should not be as such.⁸⁵ With more transparency in salary comes better negotiations and more fair wages.

⁸⁴ "The NLRA & Pay Secrecy - Do You Know the Law?" Labor Relations Stories from Union Proof, April 10, 2020, <https://blog.unionproof.com/nlra-pay-secrecy-laws/>.

⁸⁵ Need source here

Data Analysis

Introduction

In a car during the AAM National Convention in May 2019, Philadelphia Museum of Art Curator Michelle Millar Fisher created a simple spreadsheet that would eventually go viral in the museum field sparking a conversation on wages and the value of museum work when employees are not compensated fairly for their workload⁸⁶. The spreadsheet asked for information relating to the salary including, museum name or type and location, job title, department, benefits, type of position, and demographic information of the respondent. All of this data was self-reported and while not all categories were filled out for every entry it is still a wealth of data collected on the field as a whole. When the sheet closed at the end of 2019 there were 3,323 entries from all over the world and in all areas of the arts and culture sector.⁸⁷

This data analysis will focus specifically on the museum related data and entries in the United States to avoid currency conversions which allows for more accurate data due to the differences in cost of living globally. What can be considered a living wage in France or Mexico is a different living wage from that in United States. While cost of living varies from region to region within the United States it is more consistent and there is no need for currency conversions that vary from day to day and would not remain accurate over time.⁸⁸ There is also inherent bias in the salary

⁸⁶ Alex Greenberger, "It's Helpful to Know All Scales': Online Spreadsheet Discloses Museum Workers' Salaries," ARTnews.com, November 18, 2019, <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/google-spreadsheet-museum-workers-disclose-salaries-12670/>.

⁸⁷ Michelle Millar Fisher, "Arts + All Museums Salary Transparency 2019", Accessed 9-21-19.

⁸⁸ Especially in the current economic climate in which this research is being done.

reporting, which comes from it being self-reported, only the individuals who wanted to share the data did, therefore some categories have a higher response rate than others and some populations may be overrepresented within the data.

The mission of this data analysis is to utilize a viral resource compiled by the museum field to better understand the issue of wage equity within the museum field. By using this data set it will be possible to uncover the state of museum wages and how they compare to the average pay nationally to better understand the monetary value of museum work. This analysis hopes to ascertain what the average salary is based on distinctive characteristics reported in the data set. The current hypothesis of the analysis is that museum salaries fall below the national average but mirror the trends of salary reporting in the form of the gender and racial pay gap.

Objectives

The main goals and objectives for this research are:

- Determine what is the average starting and current or end salary based on demographic and job-based characteristics.
- Determine if museum workers are making a fair market wage.⁸⁹
- Determine if there are any disparities in pay based on demographic data.

⁸⁹ “USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS FOURTH QUARTER 2019” (News Release, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020), 1-15.

Methodology

The raw data was supplied in the form of a PDF file of the public spreadsheet and reflected the data as of September 9th, 2019, thus excluding later entries to the sheet and capping potential rows at approximately 3,200 responses. The spreadsheet then had to be reconverted back into an Excel file to make the later analysis and manipulation possible. In this process any international, irrelevant, or duplicate entries were removed to further limit the data set to specifically the United States museum field. Irrelevant entries included for profit ventures, higher education positions, entries from other nonprofit ventures, independent artist studios, and tech firms; this brought useable entries to just over 2,600.

Once the data was narrowed down and made useable, it was then necessary to standardize answers in the demographic section. As the data was self-entered the answers were not standardized and it was necessary to make the data uniform. Examples of this process include taking f, female, woman, she/her/hers, and other variations and making them all female. The same had to be done for race and education. This was necessary to sort the data and allow for more concise analysis. As all respondents did not provide data for all categories it was also necessary to calculate the n value for each category. The n values reflect the self-responses with the least number of people completing the education field. Below, each value is listed and they were used to calculate the averages and aided in looking deeper into the data based on specific characteristics.

N VALUES	
GENDER	1923
RACE	1683
EDUCATION	1592
JOB CATEGORIES	2509

The next step was to standardize the job types based on the Art Museum Staff Demographic survey with a few changes to better suit a more general museum typography⁹⁰. The “retail and store” category was converted to Guest Services/Retail which better encompasses the frontline sector and the back of house support that fulfills these roles from Guest Services Associates and Visitor Services to Museum Store buyers and Retail Managers. It was also necessary to further categorize the Guest Services/Retail category due to the disparity in wages between managers and the workers in this category. The other major change came in the addition of the Library/Archives category which encompasses the librarians and archivists who work within museums as these roles differ from Curators, Conservators, and Registrars. This categorization allows for easier analysis of wages by limiting the number of categories which will provide more targeted results.

Job Categories		
Conservator	Curatorial ⁹¹	Education
Exhibition design and construction	Facilities	Finance and HR
IT and Web Development	Marketing and PR	Membership, Development and Events
Museum leadership	Preparators and handlers	Publication and editorial
Registrar	Guest Services/ Retail	Rights and reproductions
Security	Support/administrator	Library/archives

⁹⁰ Roger Schonfeld, Mariët Westermann, “The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey”, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2015): 5.

⁹¹ The curatorial category also includes collections staff that did not list their department as registration.

Once the data was sorted based on the principles listed above it was possible to sort the entries by wage or salary to gather the average for starting and current/end in each category. These distinctions made it possible to have minimal outliers and more regular datasets as it is difficult to calculate the yearly salary when only an hourly rate is given with minimal indication of hours per week.⁹² This data sorting and categorizing has made it possible to analyze the major trends in compensation.

General Findings

Many of the comments left with the spreadsheet left a sense of anger and general feelings of discontent within the field in regard to pay and benefits, from “MISERABLE PLACE TO WORK” [sic]⁹³ and other general complaints about working in the field. Most notes were direct thoughts and issues within the given institution showing the disparities in wages and monetary value of work. A preparator at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art shared that their pay had not increased in ten years while every year the curatorial staff and director have received 2% to 15% raises annually on six figure salaries.⁹⁴ Other notes discuss unfair labor practices like firings while on maternity leave or while pregnant. The writers of these notes believe to be because of the pregnancy and missed time on family leave. Others report being over worked and underpaid, often reported that their role was formerly done by two people

⁹² Full time is vague for some places it is 40 hours and others 35 with many falling between.

⁹³ Michelle Millar Fisher, “Arts + All Museums Salary Transparency 2019”, Accessed 9-21-19. Cell S3243.

⁹⁴ Michelle Millar Fisher, “Arts + All Museums Salary Transparency 2019”, Accessed 9-21-19. Cell S3160.

or that the salaries at the top were inflated with workers at the bottom not being paid fairly.

When analyzing this data, it was compared to the “Usual and Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers Fourth Quarter 2019” as published by the National Bureau of Labor and Statistics. It is important to note that when this data will be compared to the salaries of the museum data set the numbers will be multiplied by 52 weeks in a year to get the annual earnings. When comparing to wages the number will be divided by 35, the minimum number of hours necessary in the national data set to be considered full time.⁹⁵

The overall average starting salary for museum workers is \$43,769.09 with the average starting wage being \$17.82. The lowest wage or salary paid to workers falls at \$0.00 with the highest starting salary being paid to a director at an unnamed gallery in New York City being \$250,000. The highest starting hourly wage paid was to an education contractor at the Morgan Library and Museum at \$135.00. The average current or end salaries and wages are slightly higher at \$52,079.52 and \$19.81 respectively. The highest paid individuals for this category are Chief Curator of Prints and Illustrated Books at the Museum of Modern art in New York City at \$330,000 a year. The highest wage recorded was \$150 an hour paid to the same education contractor at the Morgan Library and Museum. When compared to the overall National

⁹⁵ “USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS FOURTH QUARTER 2019” (News Release, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020), 3.

average pay (\$48,516.00)⁹⁶ the starting wages recording are slightly below but the current wages are slightly higher. While the pay overall might look good compared to the national average there is disparity in some departments and parts of the data.

Impact of Job Category

The type of job performed within the museum has an impact on the amount the worker gets paid with some categories seeing much higher wages than others. Some categories needed further refinement and subcategorization to show the true wages associated with the positions. When looking at these categories it is important to realize that they contain multiple various positions at different levels which encapsulates all salary data for that position type, for example within education there are public program managers alongside entry level educators. This categorization aids in analysis by reducing the number of distinct groups thereby increasing sample sizes and allowing for more analysis.

The response numbers reflect what type of workers responded to the spreadsheet with the majority of responses being from curators and curatorial staff, 582 responses out of 2588 or 22.49% of respondents fall within this category. The next largest category was education with 18.16% or 470 of responses. The smallest category was facilities with 1 response followed by finance and human resources with

⁹⁶ Calculated from: "USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS FOURTH QUARTER 2019" (News Release, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020).

7 responses. Overall the responses favored those in education and curatorial departments.

The majority of curatorial coded responses which included their education, required at least a master's degree, with 216 responses or 37.11% of curators listed a masters and once doctorate level responses are added it comes to 44.5% of curators being highly educated. The average curatorial starting salary falls in the middle of the pack at \$44,315.27 when compared to the national average for Professional and related occupations, \$64,792.00, it falls well below average. This category was chosen as a comparison as it encompasses all professional occupations within the data. The average current salary for curatorial coded responses is \$55,965.60 which is closer to the national average but still below market average. The disparity between museum wages and the rest of wages is very evident, and more disparaging when the education costs to get these positions are considered.

When looking at the data within the Guest Services/Retail category it was necessary to divide this data into two categories– worker and manager– to show the differences and true wages of those on the frontline of museum work. While other categories could have been divided in this manner, it is more difficult to determine managerial or supervisory positions based on title alone. For example, associate and coordinator can mean different things in different organizations and guest service-related positions are a bit clearer cut in title distinctions. Out of the 146 responses in this category 45 were classified as manager with 101 classified as workers. Through

this separation it was possible to see the true value placed on frontline work within the field.

Average Pay Based on Type of Guest Service/Retail Position (n=146)				
Type of Position		Average	Minimum	Maximum
Manager	Starting Salary	36,015.33	21,000.00	68,000.00
	Starting Wage	14.10	10.00	20.00
	Current or End Salary	40,373.06	26,000.00	68,000.00
	Current or End Wage	15.08	11.25	20.66
worker	Starting Salary	25,446.78	0.00	40,000.00
	Starting Wage	12.31	7.25	23.77
	Current or End Salary	29,339.67	0.00	50,000.00
	Current or End Wage	12.81	8.00	28.08

The average starting pay for a Guest Services or Retail worker is \$12.31 per hour or \$25,446.78 if paid a salary. Neither of these are considered living wages in most places within the United States,

the poverty line for a family of 4 comes to \$26,200 annually and when converted to an hourly wage \$12.60 per hour for one full time worker⁹⁷. Both starting wages fall below this line with the lowest wages paid falling far below that line. The current or end wage averages fall above this line at \$12.81 and \$29,339.67 respectively. While the poverty indicator is for a family of four and this does not represent the single worker, or variance in cost of living nationwide.

Management is paid slightly better on average but still when they are paid as an hourly employee, the wages are quite low for management positions. The average starting wage for a Guest Service or Retail manager level position is \$14.10 with the current or end wage being \$15.08. Both groups of wages fall below the national

⁹⁷ Kimberly Amadeo, "How Much Do You Need to Live in America?," The Balance (The Balance, February 13, 2020), <https://www.thebalance.com/living-wage-3305771>.

average for their position type. When compared to the average pay of service occupation workers nationwide, both workers and managers made much below the national average of \$31,252 if calculated per year or \$17.17 per hour based on the methodology described above.

Impact of Education

When looking at the breakdown of pay based on the codification of jobs, it did not take experience or qualifications into account and education requirements for positions falls into that category. When looking at the education required for positions, the majority of respondents had a bachelor's degree (751), followed by a master's degree (657). Overall the museum field is highly educated, more so than the average population of the United States. According to data published by the Census Bureau in 2019, 34.99% of the population has at least a bachelor's degree⁹⁸, whereas, 56.42% of respondents reported their positions requiring at least a bachelor's degree.

The average starting pay for a position requiring a bachelor's degree reported is \$40,579.35 per year or \$15.60 per hour for wage workers. The current or end pay for these positions is \$46,112.97 and \$17.62 per hour. When comparing to the national average it is necessary to compare to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Education Pays Report from 2018, as the 2019 data set utilized for the rest of this analysis has the educational attainment data in quartile averages and that does not align with the

⁹⁸ US Census Bureau, "Educational Attainment in the United States: 2018," The United States Census Bureau, February 21, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2018/demo/education-attainment/cps-detailed-tables.html>.

averages used elsewhere. The 2018 national average pay for a person having a bachelor's degree over the age of 25 is \$62,269 annually or \$34.23 per hour. This is over double the hourly wage for bachelor's degree workers reported in the museum field. The national salary is 153% that of the museum worker salary.⁹⁹

It is important to note that the average amount of time a worker has been in the field reported in the spreadsheet is 8 years out of 1611 responses. This shows that the average worker who reported their data is still considered an emerging professional within the field.¹⁰⁰ This can be used to explain some of the low wages whereas experience is not given as a modifier in the national data.

Gender and Race Demographics

The gender and racial pay gaps are still a major issue nationwide and somewhat reflected in the museum field. The majority of respondents, 43.85%,¹⁰¹ self-identified as a white woman. This reflects other statistics in the field regarding the role of woman in the field and the consequences of the feminization of the workforce defined within the Pink-Collar. White woman while they make up a substantial proportion of the responses 55.11% of respondents self-identified as white, with 35% of respondents not responding to the race field. When adjusted for this percentage, 84.80% of those who responded to this self-identified as White. A similar shift in numbers happens

⁹⁹ Calculated from: "Education Pays : Career Outlook," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), accessed May 11, 2020, https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2019/data-on-display/education_pays.htm?view_full.

¹⁰⁰ Michael Madeja, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 24.

¹⁰¹ 1141 responses

when looking at the gender field. Women make up 62.83% of total responses but when the entries that did not respond to the gender field are removed, women represent 84.80% of responses.

This bias is on par with other surveys and this data reports less diversity than the Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey. They report only 72% of staff as white¹⁰² compared to the 84.8% of respondents who answered the race question self-identifying as white. The same disparity is seen in the responses to the gender portion with the Art Museum data set reflecting a 60% female field, and the data above reflecting an 84.8% female field. The only spot where the data aligns is when looking at the Curatorial, Conservator, Educator, and Leadership category, all categories that were highly represented in the spreadsheet data. The Art Museum Data reports 70% of the staff in these areas as female compared to the responses of the spreadsheet which come to 86.65% of the responses for these categories being female. The spreadsheet data skews more female in all areas due to only 13.33% of respondents who filled out the gender field answering male. With the issues stated above it would not be fair analysis to look at pay based on race and gender.

¹⁰² Roger Schonfeld, Mariët Westermann, "The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey", The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2015): 7.

Recommendations

The literature review and data analyzed above show a field on the verge of change. Wage equity is a big issue but one we can fix at all levels of the field. The data from the Art + Museum Salary Transparency Spreadsheet shows an overwhelmingly female and white field. These two issues affect the overall issue of wage equity, and diversity in the field. The museum field has struggled with both of these issues in the past and is working to come to terms with them. The field continues now to work to overcome them. Museums nationwide are facing a tough economic situation due to the current lack of income due to the Novel Coronavirus. This section provides potential steps and solutions that the field can implement at all levels, from the student interested in the field to the board members at the largest institutions and everyone in between.

Student

The student looking at entering the field is where change can start. A majority of museum studies programs are white woman, which does not provide a diverse pipeline for the field.¹⁰³ The students most drawn to Museum Studies are passionate for museums and see the degree as a foot in the door, when it is not and this needs to change¹⁰⁴. Students need to stand up for themselves and advocate for their needs within the academic environment.

¹⁰³ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 54.

¹⁰⁴ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 174.

Students need to know their value and how to advocate for themselves. Negotiation is a skill that can be taught and coached by existing professionals through workshops and other opportunities.¹⁰⁵ The best thing a student can do to advocate for wage equity is to not accept unpaid internships and to learn how to advocate for their needs and themselves.

Another need is funding. Museum Studies graduate programs are expensive with limited funding opportunities compared to other fields. This puts students into a high amount of debt, and they come out of the program with a low paying entry level position.¹⁰⁶ One source of this financial strain is the necessity of internships. The first possible solution involves unpaid internships. By students not accepting these internships hopefully institutions will realize that they need to start paying their interns if they want the quality graduates.¹⁰⁷ Unpaid internships perpetuate the cycle of white middle to upper-class women gaining an advantage in the field and shutting out potential candidates who were unable to work for free.

Museum Studies Programs

Museum studies programs supply unique skills to emerging professionals and a chance to network with others in the field. These programs need to set their students up for success and support them in their learning and growth as an up and coming

¹⁰⁵ Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 201.

¹⁰⁶ W Joan H. Baldwin, and Anne W. Ackerson, *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*, Routledge (2017): 174.

¹⁰⁷ Michelle Millar Fisher (Curator) in discussion with the Author, February 2020.

museum professional. To make programs stand out they need to offer as much hands-on museum experience as possible to aid in students getting a job right out of the program, which has become increasingly difficult as the field has become saturated with new aspiring professionals with a museum studies degree. These professionals should be able to enter the field and through their education make it a more inclusive learning and work environment.¹⁰⁸

With the increase of museum studies programs, they need to find a way to stand out and make their students stand out in the job market. Whether this takes the form of specific skills highlighted in the program or the type of experience students gain, they need skills that will make them more marketable and interface with more museums. This interfacing can take the form of internships, only if they are paid opportunities. Programs need to promote paid opportunities and help students connect with and find these opportunities¹⁰⁹.

Unions

For the worker on the frontline of the museum, the entry level professionals, the educators, and all other staff on the bottom level of the staffing structure, unions provide the potential to connect more with their institution while having more benefits and job protections. Often these positions are seen as a revolving door with workers

¹⁰⁸ Elizabeth Merritt, "Museum Studies Programs & Tools for Creating More Inclusive Curricula," American Alliance of Museums, October 4, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/03/29/museum-studies-programs-tools-for-creating-more-inclusive-curricula/>.

¹⁰⁹ Elizabeth Merritt, "Museum Studies Programs & Tools for Creating More Inclusive Curricula," American Alliance of Museums, October 4, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/03/29/museum-studies-programs-tools-for-creating-more-inclusive-curricula/>.

burning out and leaving due to the high workload and extremely low pay associated with these positions. To break this cycle workers can come together through a union to work with management to secure rights and a seat at the table. Unions are able to do this through the process of collective bargaining where workers organize to bring issues to management and work together to fix workplace issues.¹¹⁰

Most often management is actively against unions taking steps to devalue their employees; from closing due to “low attendance”¹¹¹, hiring union avoidance consultants— Legal firms that specialize in dissuading workers from unionizing¹¹², or ignoring the union in general.¹¹³ Regardless of these efforts from management workers are still unionizing nationwide, in almost every major city, across museum disciplines. When workers unionize they do it out of love and desire to be heard and represented in a field that they love and want to feel appreciated in.¹¹⁴ Unions in museums are not new, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City unionized back in the 1970s and they are considered one of the first to have organized.

Unions provide workers with protections that are not often available to entry- and low-level employees; job security, scheduling transparency, a contract, and a seat

¹¹⁰ “Collective Bargaining: AFL-CIO,” AFL-CIO, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://aflcio.org/what-unions-do/empower-workers/collective-bargaining>.

¹¹¹ Colin Moynihan, “Marciano Art Foundation Is Accused of Unfair Labor Practices,” *nytimes.com*, The New York Times, 8 November 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/08/arts/design/marciano-art-foundation-union.html>.

¹¹² Sarah Resnick, “Issues & Commentary: Organizing the Museum,” *ARTnews.com*, April 8, 2019, <https://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazines/museum-unions-issues-commentary-organizing-the-museum/>.

¹¹³ Spencer Buell, “Hear Ye! The Freedom Trail’s Tour Guides Have Had Enough,” *Boston Magazine* (Boston Magazine, November 11, 2019), <https://www.bostonmagazine.com/news/2019/11/05/freedom-trail-tour-guides-union-bellringers-guild/>.

¹¹⁴ Eli Petzold in discussion with the Author, March 2020.

at the table. Current museum union demands range from uniform allowance¹¹⁵ and workplace comfort measures like chairs and easy access to water¹¹⁶, to set schedules and fair pay. Unions provide a chance for museum workers to engage more with the work of their institution while still being given workplace protections and greater wage equity.

Emerging Professional

The emerging museum professional is a museum worker in their first ten years within the field.¹¹⁷ This group of workers plays a significant role in the field as providing fresh ideas and ways of doing things. Emerging professionals have to be careful when presenting new ideas and techniques to the field many individuals higher up are still stuck in the “this is how we have always done it” that does not allow for change. Emerging professionals who want to make change are advised to take small steps, take it slow and account for the audience who does not want to change¹¹⁸. There are whole books devoted to advising emerging professionals, networks, and organizations all made to help the emerging professional connect with the field and advocate for themselves.

¹¹⁵ Spencer Buell, “Hear Ye! The Freedom Trail’s Tour Guides Have Had Enough,” Boston Magazine (Boston Magazine, November 11, 2019), <https://www.bostonmagazine.com/news/2019/11/05/freedom-trail-tour-guides-union-bellringers-guild/>.

¹¹⁶ Colin Moynihan, “Marciano Art Foundation Is Accused of Unfair Labor Practices,” nytimes.com, The New York Times, 8 November 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/08/arts/design/marciano-art-foundation-union.html>.

¹¹⁷ Michael Madeja, Sarah Erdman Ed., *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*, (Sarah Erdman, 2019), 24.

¹¹⁸ Michael Madeja (Board Member Philadelphia Museum Council) in discussion with the Author, March 2020

Emerging professionals have power in the field and need to use that power to advocate for fair and equitable wages. While it may help to joke about never making money in the field¹¹⁹, this should not be a given. Workers should advocate for their right to fair pay, whether they join or support a union effort within their organization or look to outside organizations to enact change. Emerging professionals should not be complacent in making low and unfair wages for the work that they do. When emerging professionals speak up, they can create change internally and within the entire field.

Middle Management

Middle Managers have more opportunities to implement change than the entry level workers and emerging professionals due to their place within the organization. They have the power to implement small changes that can make a stark difference. When building an internship program within their institution they can work with the budget to ensure that all interns at all levels are paid fairly for their work. When museums pay their interns, it uplifts the field because the lowest salary in the museum is no longer zero. This can have profound change on who is entering the field and how.

Individuals at this level may also have some control in job postings and hiring practices. Salary transparency and unbiased job descriptions work to level the field. Salary transparency within the job listing allows potential employees to know if they

¹¹⁹ Greg Stevens and Wendy Luke, *A Life in Museums: Managing Your Museum Career*, (Washington DC: AAM Press/American Association of Museums, 2012), 126.

will be able to support themselves in the position up front¹²⁰. This is even more important in part time positions as if the number of hours and salary are not listed potential workers may be less likely to apply or the potential hire may back down because of schedule restrictions.

Middle managers also have the opportunity to reduce worker burnout through proper employee engagement. Engagement can take many forms from monetary recognition of work to worker empowerment and good management practices. Effective and open communication plays a vital role in helping workers feel engaged and heard within an organization.¹²¹

Workers who are engaged are less likely to leave and more productive than disengaged workers.¹²² Employee engagement saves money in the long run through retaining high performing workers and not having to rehire as often, also engaged employees work smarter and provide insights into how to improve the workplace. When employees are more productive, they can increase profits.¹²³ Increased profits in the non-profit sector can mean better donor stewardship, more member engagement, and a better visitor experience overall.

¹²⁰ "Equitable Hiring Practices," American Alliance of Museums, September 12, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/resource-library/equitable-hiring/>.

¹²¹ "How to Engage Employees; A Complete Guide for Managers," Nutcache, May 28, 2019, <https://www.nutcache.com/blog/how-to-engage-employees/>.

¹²² "The Economics of Engagement," The Economics of Engagement | Research | The Incentive Research Foundation, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://theirf.org/research/the-economics-of-engagement/206/>.

¹²³ "The Economics of Engagement," The Economics of Engagement | Research | The Incentive Research Foundation, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://theirf.org/research/the-economics-of-engagement/206/>.

Leadership and board

The Leadership and Board within museums play a significant role in ensuring wage equity and fair work practices at all levels. Change can come from any direction but without buy in at the upper levels, it goes nowhere. Museum leadership needs to embrace and encourage change for any impact to be made. Much of this change comes in the form of budgeting for their workers and effectively communicating strategic measures to them¹²⁴. Raises and fair pay should be included in the budget, including pay for all interns. Museum leadership is powerful, and they have the potential to make drastic change to the system for the better.

Many cultural institutions are responding negatively to the current economic issues caused by the Covid-19 shut down. Museums are laying off their workforce while staff at the top are still making their full or nearly full salaries¹²⁵. When museums reopen the leaders behind them need to provide better benefits and job security to those they employ. Leadership should also be more responsive to staff needs and cultivate an environment where workers feel empowered and encouraged to speak up in the workplace. Leadership should also champion diversity in the field from recruiting more diverse board members to including and promoting more diversity in the workforce.

¹²⁴ "The Economics of Engagement," The Economics of Engagement | Research | The Incentive Research Foundation, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://theirf.org/research/the-economics-of-engagement/206/>.

¹²⁵ artandmuseumtransparency, "Art + Museum Transparency Newsletter #3 -- Stats and Initial Strategies," Art and Museum Transparency Newsletter, Tinyletter, 10 April 2020.

Governing Organizations

At the time this thesis was researched and written the American Alliance of Museums does not require a salary or salary range in their job postings although it is highly encouraged.¹²⁶ The American Alliance of Museums and other museum governing organizations should take steps to increase equity within the field. While only 1,070 museums are accredited by AAM,¹²⁷ they have a great deal of influence over the field and can enact change that will happen across the field.

Small Museums

Many of the recommendations above are not possible for smaller museums due to budget and staff size. When looking at smaller museums the focus should be more on equity within the workplace. According to the Association of State and Local History (AASLH) a small museum is a museum with an annual operating budget below \$250,000 where volunteers perform key staff functions¹²⁸. With this type of museum relying on volunteers so heavily it is important to ensure these workers are treated fairly and equitably. If small museums already have not done so, they should adopt the

¹²⁶ "Equitable Hiring Practices," American Alliance of Museums, September 12, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/resource-library/equitable-hiring/>.

¹²⁷ American Alliance of Museums, "American Alliance of Museums Announces Three Newly Accredited Museums and 15 Museums Reaccredited," American Alliance of Museums, April 17, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2018/03/19/american-alliance-of-museums-announces-three-newly-accredited-museums-and-15-museums-reaccredited/>.

¹²⁸ "Small Museums," AASLH, April 14, 2020, <https://aaslh.org/resources/affinity-communities/smallmuseums/>.

American Association of Museum Volunteers Standards and Best Practices to ensure they are effectively managing volunteers and effectively engaging this work group.¹²⁹

Volunteers should be treated as employees when it comes to engagement. They are a vital audience within the museum sector and play a significant role in museum operations. Across the field volunteers outnumber paid staff six to one, and in small museums that number is eighteen to one.¹³⁰ Volunteers should be offered professional development opportunities and recognized for their work. The standards and best practices mentioned above also recommend proper communication with volunteers on operational protocols, emergency plans and also proper risk management documentation.¹³¹ Overall volunteers should be treated like staff in regard to engagement and management.

¹²⁹ "Standards and Best Practices for Museum Volunteer Programs," American Association for Museum Volunteers - Best Practices, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://aamv.wildapricot.org/Standards-and-Best-Practices>.

¹³⁰ Elizabeth Merritt, "Volunteers and Museum Labor," American Alliance of Museums, September 12, 2018, <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/10/18/volunteers-and-museum-labor/>.

¹³¹ "Standards and Best Practices for Museum Volunteer Programs," American Association for Museum Volunteers - Best Practices, accessed May 11, 2020, <https://aamv.wildapricot.org/Standards-and-Best-Practices>.

Conclusion

The museum field is in a period of change right now more than ever due to the enforced shutdowns due to the Novel Coronavirus, Museums nationwide are laying off workers and changing staffing structures to account for the new remote work environment. As a whole, the field can use this shut down as a way to reevaluate how things work and how workers are compensated. When all is said and done, and people begin to return to work, things should not return to normal. This is a chance to change how the field functions and supports its workers.

The shutdown provides a chance to reset the field and come out of this stronger as a field that supports its workers and is more diverse and equitable. In 2019 the average current self-reported salary was \$53,079.52, which may seem livable, but many job categories fell below that average. All museum salaries and wages should be fair and livable moving forward. This may be low, but it is fixable.

Change can and needs to come from all levels of the field from the students to governing organizations, whether that be from increased unionization and use of collective bargaining or from managers and leadership enacting change across the organization. Employee engagement is vital to the success of the field and through this, managers can make a lasting impact on their employees and their organizations. Workers should not labor under the misconception that they do not deserve a living wage in order to support an institution that does not work to better engage them.

Areas for Further Research

Looking toward the future of the field is uncertain right now and this thesis could not cover all issues associated with wage equity and provides a point in which other areas of research can grow and the field can reflect on where it has been and where it is going. The impacts of the Novel Coronavirus shutdowns and closures are just starting to be felt and will impact the field for years to come. In relation to this thesis it is important to look at how museums are supporting and engaging their staff during this time and how museums can support their workers in a pandemic.

Another possible area of further research is the development of an equity audit or rubric that can be implemented by governing organizations and also by individual institutions to ensure wage equity and fair work practices are in place for all workers across the field. This would be a set of metrics and guidelines on how to support and engage workers and also to ensure they are getting a fair wage for work done.

The final area for further research would be to study the unionization movement more in depth and show how it is affecting the field as a whole. This could be done by studying the current and new museum unions and comparing wages, benefits, and overall work environments to the field as a whole.

Bibliography

- Alexander, Edward P., Mary Alexander. *Museums in Motion*. Lanham: Alta Mira, 2008.
- Amadeo, Kimberly. "How Much Do You Need to Live in America?" The Balance. The Balance, February 13, 2020. <https://www.thebalance.com/living-wage-3305771>.
- "American Alliance of Museums Announces Three Newly Accredited Museums and 15 Museums Reaccredited." American Alliance of Museums, April 17, 2018. <https://www.aam-us.org/2018/03/19/american-alliance-of-museums-announces-three-newly-accredited-museums-and-15-museums-reaccredited/>.
- Artandmuseumtransparency. "Art + Museum Transparency Newsletter #3 -- Stats and Initial Strategies." Art and Museum Transparency Newsletter, Tynletter, 10 April 2020.
- Baldwin, Joan H., and Anne W. Ackerson. 2017. *Women in the Museum: Lessons from the Workplace*. Routledge. <http://O-search.ebscohost.com.catalog.library.uarts.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cat04417a&AN=art.b1516406&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Bell, Ford W. "How Are Museums Supported Financially in the U.S.?" Embassy of the United States of America, 2012.
- Bishara, Hakim, Valentina Di Liscia, John Yau, Hrag Vartanian Veken Gueyikian, Elisa Wouk Almino, and Dessane Lopez Cassell. "The Growing Tide Against Unpaid Internships." Hyperallergic, July 19, 2019. <https://hyperallergic.com/507441/unpaid-internships/>.
- Cascone, Sarah. "A New Campaign to End Unpaid Internships in the Art World Exposes a Problematic Reliance on Free Labor." artnet News, July 19, 2019. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/a-call-to-end-unpaid-internships-in-the-art-world-1603792>.
- Cascone, Sarah. "In an Effort to Diversify Museum Staffs, a New Program Offers Paid Internships at Museums Across the US." artnet News. artnet News, July 12, 2018. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/paid-college-internship-aamd-1316771>.
- Cascone, Sarah. "Trump's 2020 Budget Is the Largest in Federal History-and It Would Entirely Eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts." artnet News. artnet News, March 19, 2019. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/trump-budget-national-endowment-arts-1490917>.
- "Collective Bargaining: AFL-CIO." AFL-CIO. Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://aflcio.org/what-unions-do/empower-workers/collective-bargaining>.
- Coulomb, C. Andrew. "Commentary: Let the Great Experiment Begin! Reforming Visitor Services for the 21st Century." *Theory & Practice 2* (2019). https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57866b6debbd1aedaf92e668/t/5d20ac02ce6c2600018dd282/1562422276551/TP2019_Coulomb.pdf.
- "Education Pays: Career Outlook." U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Accessed May 11, 2020. https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2019/data-on-display/education_pays.htm?view_full.
- "Equitable Hiring Practices." American Alliance of Museums, September 12, 2018. <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/resource-library/equitable-hiring/>.
- Erdman, Sarah ed. *The Care and Keeping of Museum Professionals*. Sarah Erdman, 2019.

- "Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act," US Bureau of Labor Wage and Hour Division, 2018.
- Fisher, Michelle Millar. "Arts + All Museums Salary Transparency 2019." Accessed 9-21-19. https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/14_cn3afoas7NhKvHWaFKqQGkaZS5rvL6DFxzGqXQa6o/edit#gid=0.
- Flax, Corinne, Kathleen Holko, and Laura Stricker. "Clear Expectations, Communication, and Flexibility: Unlocking the Potential of an Education Department Through a Nontraditional Staffing Structure." *Journal of Museum Education* 42, no. 4 (December 2017): 314-22. doi:10.1080/10598650.2017.1371518.
- Garcia, Sandra E. "A State Senator Who Said Nurses 'Play Cards' While on the Job May Shadow One." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, April 23, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/23/us/nurses-maureen-walsh.html>.
- Genoways, Hugh H., Lynne M. Ireland. *Museum Administration 2.0*. New York: Rowman Littlefield, 2016.
- "Government Doubles Official Estimate: There Are 35,000 Active Museums in the U.S.." *Imls.gov*, May 19, 2014. <https://www.imls.gov/news/government-doubles-official-estimate-there-are-35000-active-museums-us>.
- Grams, Diane, and Betty G. Farrell. *Entering Cultural Communities: Diversity and Change in the Nonprofit Arts*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008.
- Greenberger, Alex. "'It's Helpful to Know All Scales': Online Spreadsheet Discloses Museum Workers' Salaries." *ARTnews.com*, November 18, 2019. <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/google-spreadsheet-museum-workers-disclose-salaries-12670/>.
- Herrera, Tim. "Why You Should Tell Your Co-Workers How Much Money You Make." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, August 31, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/31/smarter-living/pay-secrecy-national-labor-rights-act.html>.
- "How to Engage Employees; A Complete Guide for Managers." *Nutcache*, May 28, 2019. <https://www.nutcache.com/blog/how-to-engage-employees/>.
- Howe, Louise Kapp. *Pink Collar Workers: inside the World of Women's Work*. New York: Avon, 1978.
- Janes, Robert R. *Museums and the Paradox of Change*. New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Lord, Gail Dexter, and Lord, Barry. *Manual of Museum Management*. 2nd ed. Lanham: Alta Mira, 2009.
- Merritt, Elizabeth. "Museum Studies Programs & Tools for Creating More Inclusive Curricula." *American Alliance of Museums*, October 4, 2018. <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/03/29/museum-studies-programs-tools-for-creating-more-inclusive-curricula/>.
- Merritt, Elizabeth. "Volunteers and Museum Labor." *American Alliance of Museums*, September 12, 2018. <https://www.aam-us.org/2016/10/18/volunteers-and-museum-labor/>.
- Misra, Parth. "Investing in Your Employees Is the Smartest Business Decision You Can Make." *Entrepreneur.com*. Entrepreneur, 29 June 2018. <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/315095>.

- Moynihan, Colin. "Marciano Art Foundation Is Accused of Unfair Labor Practices." *nytimes.com*, The New York Times, 8 November 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/08/arts/design/marciano-art-foundation-union.html>.
- Nie, Tayrn R. "'Far Too Female': Museums as the New Pink-Collar Profession - An Introductory Analysis of Pay Inequity within American Art Museums". Seton Hall Dissertations and Theses, 2017. <https://scholarship.shu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3382&context=dissertations>
- "Pink Collar Work." Policy Matters Ohio. Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/fair-economy/work-wages/state-of-working-ohio/pink-collar-work>.
- Position Statement: U.S. Internships. Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://www.nacweb.org/about-us/advocacy/position-statements/position-statement-us-internships/>.
- "Quantifying America's Gender Wage Gap by Race/Ethnicity." *nationalpartnership.org*. National Partnership for Women and Families, March 2020. <https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/fair-pay/quantifying-americas-gender-wage-gap.pdf>.
- Resnick, Sarah. "Issues & Commentary: Organizing the Museum." *ARTnews.com*, April 8, 2019. <https://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazines/museum-unions-issues-commentary-organizing-the-museum/>.
- Sandell, Richard and Janes, Robert R. *Museum Management and Marketing*. New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Schonfeld, Roger, and Mariët Westermann. "The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey". The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (2015): https://mellon.org/media/filer_public/ba/99/ba99e53a-48d5-4038-80e1-66f9ba1c020e/awmf_museum_diversity_report_aamd_7-28-15.pdf
- Simon, Nina. "Should Everyone Work on the Front Line as Part of Their Career?" *Museum 2.0*. Accessed May 11, 2020. <http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/2010/03/should-everyone-work-on-front-line-as.html>.
- "Small Museums." AASLH, April 14, 2020. <https://aaslh.org/resources/affinity-communities/smallmuseums/>.
- "Standards and Best Practices for Museum Volunteer Programs." American Association for Museum Volunteers - Best Practices. Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://aamv.wildapricot.org/Standards-and-Best-Practices>.
- Stevens, Greg, and Wendy Luke. *A Life in Museums: Managing Your Museum Career*. Washington DC: AAM Press/American Association of Museums, 2012.
- "The Economics of Engagement." The Economics of Engagement | Research | The Incentive Research Foundation. Accessed May 11, 2020. <https://theirf.org/research/the-economics-of-engagement/206/>.
- "The NLRA & Pay Secrecy - Do You Know the Law?" Labor Relations Stories from Union Proof, April 10, 2020. <https://blog.unionproof.com/nlra-pay-secrecy-laws/>.
- Tyson, Amy. *The Wages of History: Emotional Labor on Public History's Front Lines*. Public History in Historical Perspective. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013.

[http://O-search.ebscohost.com.catalog.library.uarts.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1245452&site=eds-live&scope=site](http://O-search.ebscohost.com/catalog.library.uarts.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1245452&site=eds-live&scope=site).

"USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS FOURTH QUARTER 2019." News Release, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020.

Weil, Stephen. "From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum." *Daedalus* 128, no. 3 (1999): 229-258.

"What Is a 'Nonprofit'?" National Council of Nonprofits. April 15, 2019. Accessed May 03, 2019. <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/what-is-a-nonprofit>.

Wilkinson, Sophie. "Emotional Labour: What Is It, and Why Is Everyone Talking about It?" BBC Three. BBC, December 24, 2018. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/5ea9f140-f722-4214-bb57-8b84f9418a7e>.

Appendix 1: Relevant Tables

Average Pay Based on Job Category (n=2588)

Job Category		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Total Responses per Category
No Category Assigned ¹³²	Starting Salary	16,100.00	4,200.00	28,000.00	14
	Starting Wage				
	Current or End Salary	21,100.00	4,200.00	38,000.00	
Conservators	Current or End Wage				
	Starting Salary	47,559.46	0.00	150,000.00	106
	Starting Wage	16.72	9.00	25.00	
	Current or End Salary	60,079.33	0.00	154,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	26.56	13.50	65.00	
Curatorial	Starting Salary	44,315.27	0.00	240,000.00	582
	Starting Wage	18.59	8.50	90.00	
	Current or End Salary	55,965.60	0.00	330,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	20.95	8.50	140.00	
education	Starting Salary	40,700.91	0.00	125,000.00	470
	Starting Wage	21.81	7.25	135.00	
	Current or End Salary	46,489.51	0.00	187,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	23.63	8.00	150.00	
Exhibit Design and Construction	Starting Salary	41,078.29	0.00	103,000.00	115
	Starting Wage	18.98	10.00	27.10	
	Current or End Salary	48,189.70	0.00	112,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	20.58	12.00	33.38	
Facilities	Starting Salary	29,000.00	29,000.00	29,000.00	1
	Starting Wage				
	Current or End Salary	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	
	Current or End Wage				
Finance/hr.	Starting Salary	45,496.00	39,000.00	55,000.00	7
	Starting Wage	15.30	15.30	15.30	
	Current or End Salary	56,477.50	40,000.00	89,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	16.65	15.30	18.00	

¹³² These responses were excluded from the calculations

Guest Services/retail	<i>Starting Salary</i>	31,067.46	0.00	68,000.00	146
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	12.48	7.25	23.77	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	36,851.77	0.00	68,000.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	13.08	8.00	28.08	
IT	<i>Starting Salary</i>	58,581.62	0.00	115,000.00	44
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	21.98	13.00	32.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	72,337.26	0.00	196,915.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	24.87	13.00	35.00	
leadership	<i>Starting Salary</i>	56,092.74	0.00	250,000.00	218
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	16.55	10.00	24.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	63,369.03	6,000.00	250,000.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	17.88	10.00	25.00	
Library/Archives	<i>Starting Salary</i>	42,525.97	0.00	73,000.00	91
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	17.82	9.00	32.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	53,259.68	0.00	123,223.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	19.61	9.00	30.00	
Marketing/PR	<i>Starting Salary</i>	43,865.21	0.00	105,000.00	147
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	19.14	7.25	42.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	47,308.79	0.00	105,500.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	23.40	8.00	95.00	
Membership/development	<i>Starting Salary</i>	44,538.73	0.00	110,000.00	210
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	16.58	10.00	28.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	48,677.53	0.00	114,000.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	19.10	12.50	28.80	
Preparators/Handlers	<i>Starting Salary</i>	38,916.30	20,000.00	75,000.00	68
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	17.98	0.00	30.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	45,252.73	19.00	83,000.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	21.89	9.27	45.00	
Publication/Editorial	<i>Starting Salary</i>	45,187.29	0.00	88,000.00	33
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	26.80	22.00	42.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	56,372.88	0.00	103,000.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	29.56	22.00	42.00	
Registration	<i>Starting Salary</i>	41,613.07	0.00	75,000.00	130
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	18.47	13.00	25.00	

	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	47,771.01	0.00	120,074.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	20.37	12.36	35.00	
Rights/Reproductions	<i>Starting Salary</i>	40,173.64	28,000.00	73,000.00	13
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	26.14	22.27	30.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	52,131.80	37,000.00	73,000.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	26.25	22.49	30.00	
Security	<i>Starting Salary</i>	29,472.50	20,000.00	36,172.00	22
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	12.42	9.23	16.25	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	46,590.71	24,000.00	93,008.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	13.71	9.23	17.63	
Support	<i>Starting Salary</i>	36,281.23	0.00	102,000.00	185
	<i>Starting Wage</i>	16.10	7.00	40.00	
	<i>Current or End Salary</i>	45,692.92	0.00	200,000.00	
	<i>Current or End Wage</i>	17.79	7.50	33.00	

The above table shows the average, minimum, and maximum compensation for workers based on the job categories described within the methodology. These categories were based on the “The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey” but were modified to better represent the jobs listed within this data set. When looking at this table, it is important to note that the positions in the initial data set were placed into these categories at the discretion of the author.

Average Pay Based on Type of Guest Service/Retail Position (n=146)

Type of Position		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Total Guest Service Responses
Manager	Starting Salary	36,015.33	21,000.00	68,000.00	45
	Starting Wage	14.10	10.00	20.00	
	Current or End Salary	40,373.06	26,000.00	68,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	15.08	11.25	20.66	
Worker	Starting Salary	25,446.78	0.00	40,000.00	101
	Starting Wage	12.31	7.25	23.77	
	Current or End Salary	29,339.67	0.00	50,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	12.81	8.00	28.08	

This table represents the division within the Guest Service/Retail job category. Within this category it was possible to parse out which positions were supervisory in nature and which were not. By doing this it was then possible to see the differences in wages for supervisors and workers within this category.

Average Pay Based on Education Required (n=2602)

Degrees Required for Position		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Total Responses
Did not Respond	Starting Salary	44,165.85	0.00	250,000.00	1005
	Starting wage	18.81	8.00	110.00	
	Current or End Salary	54,746.51	0.00	330,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	20.60	8.00	110.00	
Associate degree	Starting Salary	36,240.00	25,000.00	47,480.00	4
	Starting Wage	11.25	11.25	11.25	
	Current or End Salary	35,510.00	28,550.00	47,480.00	
	Current or End Wage	11.25	11.25	11.25	
Bachelor's degree	Starting Salary	40,579.35	0.00	110,000.00	751

	Starting Wage	15.60	0.00	60.00	
	Current or End Salary	46,112.97	0.00	156,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	17.62	8.50	60.00	
High School Diploma	Starting Salary	30,388.91	11,856.00	44,500.00	34
	Starting Wage	12.36	8.00	22.00	
	Current or End Salary	33,358.20	12,480.00	46,500.00	
	Current or End Wage	13.02	8.00	22.00	
Master's Degree	Starting Salary	46,056.28	0.00	150,000.00	657
	Starting Wage	21.39	7.00	135.00	
	Current or End Salary	53,203.72	0.00	150,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	24.31	7.50	150.00	
None Applicable	Starting Salary	41,195.45	0.00	150,000.00	91
	Starting Wage	18.40	7.25	100.00	
	Current or End Salary	51,903.97	0.00	150,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	20.33	8.00	83.30	
Doctorate	Starting Salary	53,478.18	0.00	125,000.00	60
	Starting Wage	21.00	21.00	21.00	
	Current or End Salary	67,997.25	18,000.00	175,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	22.30	22.30	22.30	

The pay based on education shows a highly educated field not compensated for their educational attainment. Most responses showed a necessity for higher education within the field.

Average Pay Based on Race (n=2602)

Race		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Total Entries
Did not Respond	Starting Salary	43,849.68	0.00	250,000.00	911
	Starting Wage	18.62	7.00	135.00	
	Current or End Salary	54,279.61	0.00	330,000.00	

	Current or End Wage	21.02	7.50	150.00	
ZORMORE	Starting Salary	41,442.09	0.00	80,000.00	47
	Starting Wage	13.83	8.00	18.75	
	Current or End Salary	46,409.13	0.00	80,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	14.54	10.00	18.00	
ASIAN	Starting Salary	44,346.77	18,550.00	85,000.00	37
	Starting Wage	32.50	15.00	50.00	
	Current or End Salary	51,110.50	21,000.00	92,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	33.00	16.00	50.00	
BLACK	Starting Salary	43,033.52	16.00	100,000.00	36
	Starting Wage	14.53	11.00	22.12	
	Current or End Salary	45,707.69	27,500.00	84,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	18.27	11.13	30.00	
H/L	Starting Salary	42,225.87	0.00	102,000.00	76
	Starting Wage	19.71	8.75	94.26	
	Current or End Salary	48,069.73	0.00	125,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	19.94	10.00	50.00	
H/L+OTHER	Starting Salary	43,860.80	25,896.00	90,000.00	31
	Starting Wage	16.60	13.00	22.00	
	Current or End Salary	53,825.53	26,748.00	97,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	17.95	13.00	25.00	
MIDDLE EASTERN	Starting Salary	32,000.00	32,000.00	32,000.00	4
	Starting Wage	14.00	10.00	18.00	
	Current or End Salary	42,116.67	32,000.00	48,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	12.00	12.00	12.00	
NATIVE AMERICAN	Starting Salary	38,500.00	32,000.00	45,000.00	2
	Starting Wage				
	Current or End Salary	33,000.00	21,000.00	45,000.00	
	Current or End Wage				
POC	Starting Salary	39,054.58	0.00	55,000.00	24
	Starting Wage	20.19	14.00	30.00	
	Current or End Salary	44,281.72	1,000.00	58,500.00	
	Current or End Wage	22.89	15.00	30.00	
WHITE	Starting Salary	43,987.09	0.00	240,000.00	1434

	Starting Wage	17.31	0.00	110.00
	Current or End Salary	51,453.75	0.00	240,000.00
	Current or End Wage	19.21	8.00	110.00

When looking at the racial breakdown within the data it was necessary to code responses into the census categories where possible. This was difficult to do with self-reported data. This data shows a primarily white field which aligns with other data sets.

Average Pay Based on Gender Identity (n=2602)

Gender		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Total Responses
Did not Respond	Starting Salary	42,218.25	0.00	250,000.00	674
	Starting Wage	18.29	7.00	135.00	
	Current or End Salary	54,604.93	0.00	330,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	20.18	7.50	150.00	
AGENDER	Starting Salary	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	1
	Starting Wage				
	Current or End Salary	40,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	
	Current or End Wage				
FEMALE	Starting Salary	44,049.09	0.00	240,000.00	1635
	Starting Wage	17.72	7.25	110.00	
	Current or End Salary	50,561.06	0.00	240,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	19.78	8.00	140.00	
GENDER NEUTRAL	Starting Salary				1
	Starting Wage	17.54	17.54	17.54	
	Current or End Salary				
	Current or End Wage	17.54	17.54	17.54	
GENDER NONCONFORMING	Starting Salary	33,888.89	0.00	62,000.00	11
	Starting Wage	9.00	0.00	18.00	
	Current or End Salary	42,425.00	28,000.00	62,400.00	
	Current or End Wage	20.74	20.00	21.47	
GENDERFLUID	Starting Salary	40,000.00	38,000.00	42,000.00	3

	Starting Wage	16.25	16.25	16.25	
	Current or End Salary	42,000.00	42,000.00	42,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	16.25	16.25	16.25	
GENDERQUEER	Starting Salary	35,000.00	30,000.00	40,000.00	5
	Starting Wage	18.79	18.00	20.00	
	Current or End Salary	37,500.00	30,000.00	45,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	20.46	18.00	25.00	
MALE	Starting Salary	46,749.77	0.00	150,000.00	257
	Starting Wage	18.35	9.23	94.26	
	Current or End Salary	56,592.76	12,480.00	200,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	19.64	9.23	50.00	
NONBINARY	Starting Salary	27,923.83	0.00	46,583.00	13
	Starting Wage	14.38	11.50	20.00	
	Current or End Salary	36,797.57	0.00	69,000.00	
	Current or End Wage	15.50	12.00	20.00	
NONBINARY trans	Starting Salary				1
	Starting Wage	11.00	11.00	11.00	
	Current or End Salary				
	Current or End Wage	13.00	13.00	13.00	
TRANS MAN	Starting Salary				1
	Starting Wage	15.00	15.00	15.00	
	Current or End Salary				
	Current or End Wage	26.00	26.00	26.00	

The gender data shows what is common knowledge about the field, that it is predominantly female, more so in this data set than in other reports. The data in this response field also had to be standardized to the categories listed above.

Average Pay Based on Gender and Racial Identities (n=1598)

Gender Identity											
		Agender	Female	Gender Neutral	GNC ¹³³	Gender-fluid	Gender queer	Male	Nonbinary	Non-binary Trans	Trans
Racial	Average Starting Salary		\$41,232.80					\$32,000.00			

¹³³ Gender Nonconforming- shortened to preserve space

		Average Starting Wage		\$13.66				\$18.00	\$11.00			
		Average Current/and Salary		\$47,069.02					\$34,000.00			
		Average Current/and Wage		\$14.04				\$18.00				
		Number of Responses		42				1	3			
	Asian	Average Starting Salary		\$45,400.48					\$60,000.00			
		Average Starting Wage		\$32.50								
		Average Current/and Salary		\$52,546.07					\$60,000.00			
		Average Current/and Wage		\$33.00								
		Number of Responses		33					1			
	Black	Average Starting Salary		\$42,444.48		\$62,000.00			\$66,075.00			
		Average Starting Wage		\$11.50								
		Average Current/and Salary		\$41,209.52		\$62,000.00			\$67,500.00			
		Average Current/and Wage		\$18.71								
		Number of Responses		26		1			4			
	Hispanic or Latinx	Average Starting Salary		\$43,693.31				\$40,000.00	\$40,846.50	\$0.00		
		Average Starting Wage		\$15.94					\$57.13			
		Average Current/and Salary		\$45,313.51				\$45,000.00	\$61,268.73	\$0.00		
		Average Current/and Wage		\$18.22					\$36.00			
		Number of Responses		56				1	15	1		

Gender Identity											
		Gender Identity									
		Agender	Female	Gender Neutral	GNC ¹³⁴	Gender-fluid	Gender-queer	Male	Nonbinary	Non-binary Trans	Trans
Racial Identity	Hispanic or Latinx and another Identity	Average Starting Salary	\$44,977.14			\$38,000.00		\$34,000.00			
		Average Starting Wage	\$15.25								
		Average Current/ended Salary	\$55,074.56					\$47,247.00			
		Average Current/ended Wage	\$16.94								
	Middle Eastern	Number of Responses	26			1		1			
		Average Starting Salary	\$32,000.00								
		Average Starting Wage	\$18.00					\$10.00			
		Average Current/ended Salary	\$42,116.67								
	Native American	Average Current/ended Wage						\$12.00			
		Number of Responses	3					1			
		Average Starting Salary	\$38,500								
		Average Starting Wage									
Person	Person	Average Current/ended Salary	\$33,000								
		Average Current/ended Wage									
		Number of Responses	2								
		Average Starting Salary	\$38,874.07					\$43,800.00	\$39,000.00		

¹³⁴ Gender Nonconforming- shortened to preserve space

White	Average Starting Wage		\$20.19								
	Average Current/End Salary		\$44,713.15					\$43,800.00	\$49,000.00		
	Average Current/End Wage		\$22.89								
	Number of Responses		19					1	1		
	Average Starting Salary	\$40,000.00	\$43,720.27		\$27,166.67		\$30,000.00	\$47,493.53	\$34,527.67		
	Average Starting Wage		\$17.82	\$17.54	\$0.00	\$16.25	\$18.37	\$16.78	\$14.38	\$11.00	\$15.00
	Average Current/End Salary	\$40,000.00	\$50,949.64		\$36,400.00		\$30,000.00	\$56,441.80	\$45,645.75		
	Average Current/End Wage		\$19.50	\$17.54	\$20.00	\$16.25	\$18.37	\$18.78	\$15.50	\$13.00	\$26.00
	Number of Responses	1	1141	1	7	1	2	194	10	1	1

This final table compared the gender and racial data to show a more

comprehensive look at the role of race and gender within the field. This was necessary to truly show the prevalence of white women within the field and also where diversity falls short based on the slice of the field who reported their data.

Appendix 2: Interview Transcripts

In researching this topic, I interviewed three individuals within the field whose areas of expertise were reflected within this thesis. The interviews will be included in this section chronologically from interview date.

Michelle Millar Fisher 2-27-20

Michelle Millar Fisher: Oh, okay.

Molly Wolanski: No problem. I always check before we get started.

Michelle Millar Fisher: Sure thing.

Molly Wolanski: First off, I wanted to say thank you again so much. And second of all, the spreadsheet that you created is the foundation of my thesis.

Michelle Millar Fisher: Oh, that's amazing! That's great.

Molly Wolanski: I was originally researching museum management structures and how to better engage the staff, and then the spreadsheet came out, and I slowly refocused my thesis to being wage equity, how it's an issue in the field, and we need to fix it immediately.

Michelle Millar Fisher: That's amazing. Yeah. [inaudible 00:00:40] makes sense.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah, and so back in September I emailed the art and museum transparency email and got a copy of the spreadsheet for research purposes.

Michelle Millar Fisher: That's great.

Molly Wolanski: It's the main data set I'm using for my thesis, and so I just wanted to ask you a couple questions about moving forward and how we as a field can correct it, in a way, if that makes sense.

Michelle Millar Fisher: Yes.

Molly Wolanski: And so my first question is: What are the next steps for art museum transparency? I saw that both of the spreadsheets were now closed.

Michelle Millar Fisher: Yes. So, we have 50 different teams... We have one spreadsheet for it, and it breaks in different spreadsheets, but the core idea that [inaudible 00:01:27] which is unionization. So the first spreadsheet was about salary

transparency, how long we've been without instruction, and the third one that we found [inaudible 00:01:36] is all the legal tips for unionizing. And so here we have committed to making [inaudible 00:01:40] properly about unionizing work. Both in terms of keeping it as the conversation [inaudible 00:01:40] and also in a newsletter.

Michelle Millar Fisher: And so we are writing a newsletter once a month and we do our first one as an a week and a half I think, and between the newsletters and types of images that we're making in current institutions that are looking to unionize, and also having something like the union we're able to make spreadsheets about, we're hoping that's a connotation that does comply as it does indeed become a point so people [inaudible 00:02:14] wages [inaudible 00:02:14] as the wages or cost of living increases or other things related to [inaudible 00:02:46] a union [inaudible 00:02:48]

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:02:53] and solidarity, as a means to collectively bargain rather than to always be in it for one's self, that is really important that we all band together.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah, that's what I initially want to be geared to look at salary and wages and everything, I initially looked at, museum unions and why we need them, and then as I did more research I realized that union is just not a fix-all, it means come from the different levels and, how do you see the field coming together to solve it besides unions and collective bargaining?

Michelle Millar Fisher: It's just having strength in solidarity, not being as afraid to speak up for what is correct and being able to see [inaudible 00:03:40] having a healthy environment and to say no to toxic environments. It's often in the field of, how many people are behind you who could easily [inaudible 00:04:18] and so what unions deliberately give is feeling incredibly connected and at a very high load and [inaudible 00:04:22] and I think anything [inaudible 00:04:22] really an effort to you as well as to everybody else.

Michelle Millar Fisher: It's also, I don't know, taking a stand, the greatest power that we have as workers is the power and the ability to [inaudible 00:04:24] so literally just to state things in public if anything's wrong or anything's off then [inaudible 00:04:26] toxicity, and I think people just [inaudible 00:04:36] if we can and move on if we can because it's a horrific experience for them.

Michelle Millar Fisher: I think I'd have to talk to my colleagues at the Museum of Arts who [inaudible 00:04:46] harassment and at the hands of power, who are completely unable to have leadership at that museum-

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michelle Millar Fisher: And also then the physical abuse that happens would be [inaudible 00:05:00]. What I see in the field is barrier grades, others physical solidarity and being empowered to say something when you see something going on. Either one of those things would be [inaudible 00:05:14] needs to be taken on and to be supported because then you are going to do something a role would help you with, it is unlikely it is something they would strongly [inaudible 00:05:27] institutions and the ferocity with which they hold their [inaudible 00:05:32] to be their [inaudible 00:05:33] in terms of their action.

Michelle Millar Fisher: So those two things in particular, worker solidarity and speaking up so they know they're [inaudible 00:05:40] but I do know people are starting to feel more and more like that [inaudible 00:05:46] possible.

Molly Wolanski: Thank you so much, I honestly feel the same way where I work in a very toxic museum work environment right now and that's also what inspired my thesis. How do we keep the field motivated for wanting to fight for fair wages? Because I feel like it's been very big the past year but how do we keep it going, to actually make this change?

Michelle Millar Fisher: That's a really good question, and I think, I don't know, again [inaudible 00:06:24] picture, I have a [inaudible 00:06:29] two years ago probably because [inaudible 00:06:33]. Just really trying to think of the ideas that when you as people shine, it comes to you in [inaudible 00:06:47] glow of other people, happiness or [inaudible 00:06:56].

Michelle Millar Fisher: So I think in our field if we start thinking [inaudible 00:07:03] equity, if we start thinking [inaudible 00:07:08] the league of workers, we see ourselves not only as having institution solidarity with one another but also across institutions, equity [inaudible 00:07:20]. And so I think keep trying to think there's any points that will help us [inaudible 00:07:30] as unions in the field [inaudible 00:07:32] as every institution is different [inaudible 00:07:36] re workers, which I don't think is a one size fits all strategy to make sure that things move forward or progress, I think for accurately dealing with those things as well because they're getting to the point in time where [inaudible 00:07:47] use them for a career and they just haven't had the time [inaudible 00:07:55] towards paid enough, and they're still in masses of student debt.

Michelle Millar Fisher: So I think if there is any one strategy I really actually want to focus on the notion of [inaudible 00:08:06], if you want your [inaudible 00:08:07] to succeed, [inaudible 00:08:09]

Molly Wolanski: That's like a give and get, you can't just take, you have to give.

Michelle Millar Fisher: Well, it has to be something that you understand in [inaudible 00:08:31] where you understand that you own your own situation, you have to become [inaudible 00:08:39] situation that [inaudible 00:08:41], making sure that even if you have complaints about the way you're being treated [inaudible 00:08:46] that you are building [inaudible 00:08:47] warmth and solidarity with the people that you care about, [inaudible 00:08:54] impact that area, [inaudible 00:08:57].

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:08:57] knowing when to leave and I think [inaudible 00:09:06] individuals leaving their firm [inaudible 00:09:10] or field is just not changing. I guess that comes from conversations [inaudible 00:09:16] internal, I know that much of our field are talking about [inaudible 00:09:23] recruitment, all of those buzzwords, but also things like decolonization of museums, how they aren't being [inaudible 00:09:31] possible. I really don't know if it is possible to treat decolonization, so while I feel so strongly about unionization and how to reshape our field, I'm not honestly sure the work [inaudible 00:09:50] is achievable in the museum.

Molly Wolanski: That's a really good point to make, that is really big.

Michelle Millar Fisher: I don't know that we knew that at stage 22, [inaudible 00:10:07] 10, 15 years in [inaudible 00:10:08] crew. [inaudible 00:10:08] about what I think, what I can achieve through a museum job, as a curator in an area as delicate as education, [inaudible 00:10:14] whether it's museum visitors-

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:10:14] I spoke a lot with my colleagues, very rarely actually, anyone I teach I believe [inaudible 00:10:34]. I don't suppose [inaudible 00:10:34] increasingly unsure [inaudible 00:10:50] museum.

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michelle Millar Fisher: Not technically what we're working for.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah, I-

Michelle Millar Fisher: And I work for a very good museum right now, [inaudible 00:11:06].

Molly Wolanski: Yeah, the museum I work at, they expect us on the front line to change the world on \$12 an hour.

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:11:22] So, I still feel very, very strongly that [inaudible 00:11:40] incredibly [inaudible 00:11:40] and you're not paying them a living

wage [inaudible 00:11:40] and I just see that time and time and time again. I have to go [inaudible 00:11:54] other people [inaudible 00:11:54] for a long, long time, [inaudible 00:11:56] a lot more internships are paid but I would think they're still in the minority because [inaudible 00:12:07] the fully paid ones are [inaudible 00:12:10] you work [inaudible 00:12:15] allow people to [inaudible 00:12:19] details are.

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative). And so, what advice would you give to the emerging professionals who are in these unpaid internships or underpaid opportunities?

Michelle Millar Fisher: I would say just don't take an unpaid internship, just don't do it. I know it's really, really, really difficult, but I [inaudible 00:12:53] even before they get to that situation, go to a school that [inaudible 00:12:54] offers you money, [inaudible 00:12:54] to a college [inaudible 00:12:54]

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:12:54] school is not worth it for a career in our field and if you are ending up looking for work experience [inaudible 00:13:18]. So if you are doing poorly paid work, then you have [inaudible 00:13:37] others can help you [inaudible 00:13:37] make sure at least that you are making your way through the ranks of [inaudible 00:13:40] willing to look after you for the rest of your personal [inaudible 00:13:45]. [inaudible 00:13:45] and I think if you again [inaudible 00:13:45] for your work of being collegial with your pupil there too, and making sure that if you're [inaudible 00:13:57] this is a wonderful [inaudible 00:14:11] that I found, and you're able to hand out that kind of experience, [inaudible 00:14:20] happy to work for [inaudible 00:14:28]

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:14:28] I'm unable to work with the talent that we're trying to deliver which is about accessibility, inclusion, all of these wonderful things, is probably needed from now. If you don't know if you really feel committed to changing the world that you can do it even easier.

Molly Wolanski: That's kind of... I'm in one of the grad programs right now and put myself into a lot of debt and I'm realizing at the end of it, was it really worth it? And it's been really hard. And I want to be in the field but is it worth it?

Michelle Millar Fisher: I think [inaudible 00:15:15] life-changing, that you really, really are [inaudible 00:15:16] that you can help with [inaudible 00:15:25] two year History MA, whether they're going to be a doctor or a lawyer, [inaudible 00:15:34] helps us change the world, helps us make sure that we don't do [inaudible 00:15:41], that we do [inaudible 00:15:47].

Michelle Millar Fisher: So I think that your degree is worth it, you're completely [inaudible 00:15:58] uncomfortable

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michelle Millar Fisher: I think that critical studies that you apply to the museum space in your program also need to be applied, and you have to press teachers to apply it, and you have to press institutions promising you job prospects have to be applied to the courses they're putting you through. [inaudible 00:16:29] pay leverages because it's leaving you with a lot of debt [inaudible 00:16:38].

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michelle Millar Fisher: Yeah, I mean [inaudible 00:16:44] it's a very interesting topic and when you're looking at [inaudible 00:16:55]... You are called upon in your museum [inaudible 00:17:06] for you to enjoy.

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Just from my personal experience working at a place that's talked about for being revolutionary in its mission and stuff like that, it's not like that when we work there. I feel like it has to be through all levels and I don't think the field is there yet.

Michelle Millar Fisher: No. [inaudible 00:17:42] these people [inaudible 00:17:46] socially malicious [inaudible 00:17:51] because I think [inaudible 00:18:06].

Michelle Millar Fisher: And [inaudible 00:18:06] I think it's really important to make sure that there's people who have become senior in the crew, believe in the crew, and are now responsible for making that generation come up and [inaudible 00:18:25] taking those opportunities as a foreground beforehand to making pay at a rate that is [inaudible 00:18:32].

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:18:32] People in [inaudible 00:18:36] in the field now need to be held accountable for making it safe, I feel.

Molly Wolanski: And another... So, the conclusions section of my thesis is looking at what everybody can do at all levels of the field, from the person considering entering the field all the way up to board members and donors and... It needs to be all of us and not just a couple of us here and there, I feel.

Michelle Millar Fisher: Yeah, I think too, [inaudible 00:19:40] free online now, [inaudible 00:19:40] thinking about is [inaudible 00:19:47] they talked about how in the 1980s there was a type of money that was being thrown around in the art world and the museum world. So now, I think a [inaudible 00:20:11] so I'm going to [inaudible 00:20:30] board in Los Angeles.

Michelle Millar Fisher: [inaudible 00:20:36] you were saying as [inaudible 00:20:36] they also have a [inaudible 00:20:36], they have an office committee on it and they have a community committee on it. And [inaudible 00:20:39] hierarchy between people who are independently [inaudible 00:20:47]. And also the community, so any exchange [inaudible 00:21:06] obviously really interesting way, concrete way in which the museum has changed, our [inaudible 00:21:12] that has been told in the board right now [inaudible 00:21:22] before he is, or she is, but usually he, up to the [inaudible 00:21:31]. What would it be if our [inaudible 00:21:35] in a museum or an institution before.

Molly Wolanski: Wow, I thought you were talking about it a little bit, I pulled up the article and I'm definitely going to read it, it looks very interesting and I'm very excited.

Michelle Millar Fisher: I think absolutely one concrete way to think about [inaudible 00:22:02] changing [inaudible 00:22:06]. [inaudible 00:22:14] unpaid internships [inaudible 00:22:18] into the museum. If you did work for free then even very quickly, predisposes people with independent wealth to be able to come into the field. [inaudible 00:22:33] or whether it's something else along those lines, but those are the three main levers I see that we have to change our field.

Molly Wolanski: Thank you so much, this has been very helpful and I can send you-

Michelle Millar Fisher: You're welcome.

Molly Wolanski: I can send you my first draft of my thesis if you're interested?

Michelle Millar Fisher: Definitely, yeah, I'm really interested in other people's research and I assume [inaudible 00:23:06] I hope it goes really well, [inaudible 00:23:06].

Molly Wolanski: Thank you so much.

Michelle Millar Fisher: You're welcome, hope you stay safe Molly.

Molly Wolanski: Thank you, you too.

Michelle Millar Fisher: Okay, bye.

Molly Wolanski: All right, bye.

Eli Petzold 3-10-20

Eli Petzold: Let me just get my AirPods in here.

Molly Wolanski: All right.

Eli Petzold: All right. Go ahead. Can you hear me all right?

Molly Wolanski: Yeah, I can hear you.

Eli Petzold: Awesome. Awesome. Hi.

Molly Wolanski: Hi, can I just ask you one question real quick? I'm doing this interview for my thesis. Are you okay with me recording this call tonight?

Eli Petzold: Yes. I am.

Molly Wolanski: Okay, thank you. Well, thank you so much for agreeing to talk to me. I've been following the Marciano Union effort since I first saw that it was happening.

Eli Petzold: Oh cool. Yeah. Cool. Cool. So, as in [inaudible 00:00:39] original [inaudible 00:00:40] before the layoffs even started?

Molly Wolanski: Oh yeah. My original thesis topic was about the unionization effort and then I just expanded it to be about wage and equity with unions as a possible solution. So I was keeping track of like every museum that was unionizing for a little while.

Eli Petzold: Oh, wow. That's really cool.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah, yeah.

Eli Petzold: So what are, you're doing a Master's?

Molly Wolanski: Yeah. I'm working on my master's in museum studies right now, and I'm currently in Philadelphia for that.

Eli Petzold: Cool.

Molly Wolanski: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eli Petzold: What institution?

Molly Wolanski: I'm at University of the Arts.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Cool. Yeah. Well, I'm very happy to talk. Like I said, it's funny. [inaudible 00:01:25] I'm saying, let's just chat. Really, because I just kind of want to see who else is out there, thinking about these things, writing about these things. I also have a strategic goal of wanting to keep these things going.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah.

Eli Petzold: So that was sorted out. Yeah. But yeah, I'm happy to chat. I'm just steeping some tea.

Molly Wolanski: Nice. So I did prepare a couple of questions to ask you and everything. Context and then personal thoughts on different things within my thesis topic. Fill me in. What was everything that led up to wanting to unionize at the Marciano?

Eli Petzold: Yeah, so we unionized... there's so many different ways of saying why there's the... these are the issues that we were agitating around, therefore we unionized. But the reality of the situation was we unionized because we liked our work. Because we enjoyed showing up and doing what we did. We were visitor services associates, so we did front of house stuff. But also there was no classification. I mean, there were docents, but the docents were like an extension of us and they were hired from us, from our ranks. So our department was the sole education. Well, there was also a nonprofit, an external nonprofit, that did school programming that we helped with. But for the most part we were the education department on hand for general visitors. Yeah, I think we really enjoyed what we did.

Eli Petzold: We took our job very seriously. Marciano was a new and exciting institution and we felt like... We saw ourselves as a big part of it because it was so new and there were things that were a little rocky and it was kind of this, we understand that you don't have everything figured out. We're here to help. We have ideas about how to make this great. Obviously the first thing is going to start with respecting us and recognizing that we are doing a lot of work because there is a pretty... Okay the office staff was a skeleton crew, there's somebody doing programming. There was no curator. There was very, very, very limited staff. And so it kind of felt like, well wait a second, we're kind of, running the museum in a way.

Eli Petzold: We felt like we had a big role at the museum. We enjoyed how much freedom we had to just engage with folks. We felt like we were doing something really important and at the same time we felt like there was just a culture of no transparency.. so a lack of transparency and also... We got the line that it was a stepping stone job repeated over and over and over, the implication being we were only supposed to be there for a certain amount of time. Also like literally in emails from the head of HR. Occasionally we would get messages, or almost delineated, like "We look forward to the year ahead with you." As though it was like, don't try and be here longer than that please. So yeah. This whole stepping stone mentality without actually offering anything for the most part would actually advance anybody's career.

Eli Petzold: Right. It was just like, oh, you got to say that you worked at the museum for a year. Sure. And occasionally they would try and organize some programming for us or try and say they're going to be doing stuff. But very, very rarely did anything follow through. And the stuff that they did follow through with often was just kind of half assed. Yeah. So, I started in February 2019. I was fairly, definitely, new. But I was definitely... I sort of started right at the point when the first people were sort of thinking about this and I must have said... In my first few days I realized I had these amazing coworkers. I really enjoyed the work and it was just a really good job for a lot of people from a lot of different backgrounds who... I mean, yes, in a way it was a great stepping stone job. It's a good placeholder, sort of. But ultimately we're fighting back against the notion that just because it works as a stepping stone doesn't mean that it has to be a stepping stone for everybody.

Eli Petzold: Sorry, I'm kind of getting ahead of myself and talking all around it.

Eli Petzold: My first few days, I really am just feeling. I found it really fulfilling and I really liked my coworkers. But then I was like, okay, when I started, we were making I think 13.50 or 13.25. I was like, okay, I have a master's degree, not in art, but I have a master's degree in literature. I'm using these skills that I learned from academia on this job. I'm kind of throwing myself into this and everybody is throwing their own unique talents and skills and their training too into it. I mean, A we needed a \$15 minimum wage, obviously. We need a \$20 minimum wage actually. But yeah, I mean I was just like, there's something fishy here. We deserve a lot more than this. We deserve, more accountability and we deserve to be recognized for what we were doing at the institution.

Eli Petzold: That was sort of what we organized around, was like this love... This stuff I was saying at the very beginning really. It's this love for the institution and this... I mean now it's hard to remember what that felt like. And then going back and looking at writing. When I look at the texts, I read the text when we made our announcement, but I looked back at the text and it's so rosy. It's all about making a more sustainable and equitable institution, how much we love coming in and how we enjoy. It was our curiosity, even as we fuel the curiosity of the visitors and it was just this really lofty thinking and I really stand by it.

Eli Petzold: I mean it's easy to.. So that's why when I first started I was like, "There are a lot of ways to frame this," because if you want to talk about specifics and not really ideas, yeah, higher wages, more accountability about scheduling, and certain access to resources like water and seating, very simple things. Really it was about negotiating the terms of our employment. That's why you unionize. You unionize so you have a seat at the table so you can say, "Hey, I like what we're doing. I just want to sit down in

a protected setting and talk about how this is going to work for all of us." With the goal of making it work for everybody. Yeah, I mean I don't think you unionize if you don't love your workplace.

Molly Wolanski: And I feel that's where the museum and cultural field draws their power, is that if you work in a museum then you're in it for the passion cause you're not going to make money in the museum field.

Eli Petzold: Right. Yeah, exactly. I mean it's often that they leverage your passion against you. The way I see this whole museum union movement as leveraging, it's the exact same leverage point. It's instead of, oh, well, if you love it so much, you can take a pay cut. It's, oh, well we love it so much that we're going to do this legally protected action by which you have to sit down on the table and negotiate with us. That's the amazing thing about unions is it's a really simple, it's not a big deal. There's a lot of things... I think that all the media around museum unions is obviously amazing and great. What gets lost in it is the fact that it's not really a big deal, which... I want the awareness to be out there far and wide, but I also don't want people to think that it's this whole thing that you have to do. There are a lot of places that have gone union quietly. Not so much in this current like trend or movement.

Eli Petzold: Whoops. But the Exploratorium unionized in San Francisco in 1993 and you can't really find anything about that.

Molly Wolanski: I found one chapter in a book on it.

Eli Petzold: Yes. There's that. Yeah, actually I just heard that. I had just actually... I went to a talk and that was referenced.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah. The book is Institutional Trauma, if you're wondering.

Eli Petzold: Right. Yeah, I have that actually. Yeah. Is it good?

Molly Wolanski: It was okay. The article was written from the perspective of somebody in [inaudible 00:13:17] for management, so it wasn't a perfect representation. It was all the, but we're a family I don't get why they wanted to do this. Yeah. It's a good read, but I took it with a grain of salt.

Eli Petzold: Yeah.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah. But what was the process that your work unit went through to unionize?

Eli Petzold: Let's see. [inaudible 00:13:50] among record and certain stuff, considering it started a lot earlier than it really did. I think actually our very first meeting was in

either April or May. So I was not originally one of the [inaudible 00:14:13] . I must've said the right things to the right person though, because sometime in May there was an Instagram message that included, I don't know, maybe 20, 25 people saying, hey, let's go bowling. We're going to go to this bar at the bowling alley and talk about union potentials for joining a union. I think everybody on that list knew that there was some idea of it.

Eli Petzold: So what happened is there was an original organizing committee who reached out to me, American Federation of State County Municipal Employees. They had already been talking to them, but we had this first meeting in the bowling alley bar where we landed. They laid out the process, what it would mean, folks want to learn more. Yes, everybody did. And then we had our first formal meeting of the union and basically we'd have these meetings every two weeks where we built our coalition, pretty standard organizing process. So having conversations and bringing people in. And it was 70 people. There's really high turnover, which was a constant issue in these museums. But at some point, somehow, I think because I literally just went to every meeting, I just found myself on the organizing committee one day.

Eli Petzold: And then, so let's see, summer, I don't know, there were a whole bunch of new hires at one point and we had... So we had well over 50% support for a long time, but our union does not go to an election with 51% they go to an election with 80% so it was this long period of time just trying to hit the sweet spot where the turnover wasn't such a big deal.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. And so finally, by October we'd set our date for November 1st and I mean I could go into great detail about the organizing, but hopefully the... Just let me know if there's any specific part of that you want to hear. But, like what it looked like on the floor.

Molly Wolanski: Sure, thanks. Thank you. So you made it, so you set the date of, was there any significance to you? Like November 1st or just that was the day?

Eli Petzold: I think that was just the day. In retrospect, we probably should have waited until freeze week, which was February, but nobody wanted it. We shouldn't have waited, but in retrospect we should have considered the possibility that something like this could have happened. Certainly people mentioned it. There were a number of people who were like, this is what's going to happen. They're probably going to fire everybody and close, but you know what, I'm still going to sign the damn card because I believe in this. There are a couple of people like that, the Cassandra's among us. I don't think any of us would have done it in any other way. We just wanted it to be as

soon as possible. November 1st was, I don't remember exactly why. I think it was just after... We wanted it to be at the beginning of the weekend. After work. Yeah.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. What else? You want me to walk me through that day or something or-

Molly Wolanski: When I saw it was announced, I was like, Oh that's cool. And then like very soon after that I saw the layoff news article.

Eli Petzold: Where did you see that be announced?

Molly Wolanski: I think I thought... I don't remember because I've followed so many different union Instagram accounts that everybody just kind of shares everybody else around. And that's honestly how I built up my following of every museum union that I could.

Eli Petzold: That's an amazing network that I want. I wanted to become a coalition or communication network at least.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah. It's such a good pool and it's nationwide and it was very useful to me as somebody researching the topic and you could see the very successful ones and then you see the ones that aren't doing as well. And then you see the Marciano example.

Eli Petzold: Whoops. Whoopsies. Yeah. I mean I'm trying to keep it alive, just like a mouthpiece for other things. But it's exhausting. I want to be a mouthpiece for other movements, but it's hard keeping up with everything that's going on.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah. Is the fight still going or...

Eli Petzold: Yeah, sort of. We filed these suit and there are things that are not really... I don't really know exactly what's going on basically. I mean there's movement happening. Not really stuff I can discuss at this point, but I think there's going to be a pressure campaign coming up soon, but I'm just I'm a little daunted because honestly, this is the part where I get emotional. I actually work at AFSCME now, at the union that we worked through. I'm an organizer, which is why I'm able to just keep spending time on this.

Eli Petzold: None of the others on the organizing committee really are... I don't say this resentfully at all. I've been very clear with them that I'm very happy to just keep doing this stuff. Everybody just wants to move on.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah.

Eli Petzold: Myself included. It really hurts to think about it. We really did have an amazing community that... We still hang out as friends, but in smaller groups and also there were just ways that we hung out that just can't be replicated. I mean, for instance, there was a contingent of women above 60 who were just like bad asses.. We loved having this like multi generational community. Basically.

Eli Petzold: I'm not going to call up Betsy Anne and say, "Hey Betsy Anne, want to go get a drink?" Although to be fair, Betsy Anne actually lives near me and we get coffee from time to time. But it's more the community of it. We're limited to these smaller one-on-ones when there was this organic thing. And also it was creating an artistic community too. I mean there were a lot of collaborations that arose from the workplace. And these are the people... The Marciano's, I mean obviously they don't care about anything, but in their own words they were looking out for the artists and the artist community. We were part of that.

Molly Wolanski: What advice would you have for any other museum workforce trying to unionize?

Eli Petzold: Do it no matter what and do it out of love, don't do it out of antagonism. I don't know. I mean I have a lot of advice on individual parts of the process, but broadly speaking, my advice is to organize and... also make sure that, it's the workers' voices and the workers' needs and the workers' narrative is the one that is facing both management and the media. Because it's really important to have a really good partnership with the union organization. We had a really good partnership with Absteny. The union wants just as much as the workers. This whole movement is built on... There's this whole independent discourse around museum unions and around museum labor that is not something that the unions themselves are really participating in. Yeah, there'll be reached for comment in a newspaper article from time to time, but for the most part. I think the new museum, are you in touch with them at all?

Molly Wolanski: I haven't talked to them at all, but I do follow their social media quite closely.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. So I think they kind of spearheaded, don't quote me on this because maybe there was a movement before them, but they definitely in recent memory are the sort of a prototype of this worker driven campaign where it's really... They had a media strategy that really foregrounded their voices and made it about the workers. I think it did a really good job. I think ultimately, I don't know, God, what am I trying to say? I have big ideas. I feel like I'm trying to reach for the big ideas falling a little bit shy of them right now.

Eli Petzold: No, a lot of individual museum unions actually modeled themselves on them. Yeah, just making sure that it was their voices, using social media in a savvy way, good media strategy, good social media strategy, but ultimately it's also really important to have a good transparent partnership with whatever union organization you're working with. Yeah. I don't know if that makes sense. Or-

Molly Wolanski: It does. As somebody who's looked into unionizing, it's a lot of not knowing where to start when looking at possible potential unions to partner with.

Eli Petzold: Yeah, I mean ASFCME is a really good one for museums. I think I'm obligated to say that. They're really trying to be the museum union. In New York. UAW is a pretty... I mean we actually have plenty of museums in New York too, but I think UAW has a good number out there too.

Molly Wolanski: UAW has the PASTA group that's the MOMA and I think the new museum went under them too.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. Did you say pasta?

Molly Wolanski: It's like the professional bla bla bla bla bla. But the acronym is literally PASTA.

Eli Petzold: I did not know that. Wow, that's so cool.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah.

Eli Petzold: I don't know. I talked to Dana and Nora in New Orleans. Dana's the one who's really... She actually just came out with an article [inaudible 00:29:07] that I have to read. But the new museum, they really did. I don't know if they consciously did this, but they basically created a prototype that a lot of other people are now using. And the thing is, for us it wasn't like we were consciously using a prototype. It was more like we just looked at what they did and did similar things. The stuff that worked, we replicated. Or it was literally a week before we announced, I emailed them saying, hey, so what did you guys do about media? Because we had no media strategy and that was something that came from us and not from Absteny and ultimately I don't think this would have been the same thing if we hadn't reached out to the media before we had made our announcement because... Nobody knows.

Eli Petzold: I guess that was sort of our warning shot. It was like, people are watching don't do something dumb. That way that didn't really matter. But I think we got the benefit of... I mean now people know about us.

Eli Petzold: What was I saying? Oh yeah. So it wasn't like I was consciously adapting a model. I think that's the other advice I give to anybody who wants to organize their

museum is look up the names of the people in other articles or just literally go straight to the union Instagrams and just reach out to people, ask them for help, for resources, for insight. There is a sort of lineage to this whole movement. Very, very informal. The new children's museum, I know they organized around the same time as us because they also saw the new museum stuff and were inspired. So we were on a similar trajectory. They are in bargaining right now. They got the union about a month before we announced.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah. I followed them too. And the MOCA and I think they're getting ready to go to bargaining.

Eli Petzold: Yeah, MOCA's with ASFCME also. So they're around. It's really cool getting to see that process. Getting to see what it actually looks like once you get a union. It's funny working for a union but only having seen the election campaign. Although I guess when you're an organizer that's all you really focus on anyway.

Eli Petzold: Anyway. Yeah, I feel like I'm talking a lot vaguely about your questions.

Molly Wolanski: No, this was actually very helpful and it's kind of supplementing everything that I've just gleaned from reading every article published in the past year about using unionizers.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. I'm curious. So what's the thesis? What's the thesis of the thesis?

Molly Wolanski: So looking at... First of all, how museums [inaudible 00:32:43] the low wages that we see right now, what led to it. And then I have to have a data set for my thesis. So I'm looking at the museum salary spreadsheet that got spread around over the summer.

Eli Petzold: Right.

Molly Wolanski: I actually just finished my data analysis of it today and it's a lot. And then my conclusion and next steps is here's what we can do to fix this issue on all levels. From the immersion professional and frontline workers, where I am right now, all the way up to the board and like governing organizations around museums.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. Okay.

Molly Wolanski: It has-

Eli Petzold: Unions?

Molly Wolanski: Unions are part of the answer. I realized when trying to think about this more broadly, it has to come from all directions. There has to be a push from every different stakeholder in the museum field for change to actually happen.

Eli Petzold: Exactly. Okay. Yes. One of the reasons there's a lot of fuel in this movement is because if you can't... [inaudible 00:33:56] the museums could that kind of thing happen. I mean it is this very rosy kind of thinking, but it's like... Museums are literally founded on lofty ideals and I can't really think of many other institutions that run on abstract principles. Obviously money is a huge part of it, but any museum is not going to say that part of... You know what I mean? There's a nonprofit. Well not always, but-

Molly Wolanski: it should be nonprofit.

Eli Petzold: Right. And the business of it, there's obviously is so much business of it, but you can kind of be like, well is this a museum or is this a business? There is that leverage point. There is that... If you believe in these abstract principles, if you, if you believe that there's merit in this sort of idealistic thinking to even have a museum in the first place, then probably you can get on board with talking about equity and sustainability.

Molly Wolanski: And making the field more open to diverse audiences and all of that DEI that everybody talks about. Actually paying your workers a living wage would lead the way for that.

Eli Petzold: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, and I think especially with the BSA program. The services program [inaudible 00:35:44] part of what was said, the motivator for our whole drive, was that we really believe in that model. They had maybe five security guards on any given day. Only two or three were posted in the building at any given time. But then, we did low grade security stuff like just making sure people didn't get too close to the art and stuff.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah, so my job. We just yell at kids for running around when they shouldn't be.

Eli Petzold: Right. But then there's also this huge potential for, oh, well, how many people go to museums and wish there was somebody that they could just talk to about that abstruse work of contemporary art on the wall. We just made it really accessible and we could be like... because we had so much freedom to do it. It wasn't like we had to stick to a script or anything. We could just be like, what do you think of this? What do you think of this Richard Prince work? And then make it so that this person who might not understand why this piece of work costs so much money and why it's worth spending a couple minutes to look at it. That was what we did and we made it in a disarming way, in a way that wasn't like let me tell you why this is art. It was more like very casual chat.

Eli Petzold: And it was only if the people were curious. It was just this really informal, educational, interaction that we facilitate. And I really believe that that's the only way we can democratize this space, like a museums i just by focusing... I mean programming and events and all that, that's all great. But the museum's function is to be open certain hours to provide the public with access to artifacts or art or whatever. So why not your educational mission towards the actual everyday function instead of... I don't know. Yeah, the other stuff is important. I don't mean replace it, but I mean, how about you make it work better by having people in the galleries more often and paying them well? Capitalism is a drag.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah. Well thank you so much for talking to me this afternoon / evening.

Eli Petzold: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, I'm always happy to chat about things

Molly Wolanski: Thank you for keeping your movement alive.

Eli Petzold: Yeah, I'm doing what I can. I'm a little tired, but we're going to need it in a sec. I'm going to keep a steady drum beat until then.

Molly Wolanski: Yeah.

Eli Petzold: Yeah. Well, good luck with your research and if you have any questions or want to get in touch with anybody, just let me know.

Molly Wolanski: Thank you so much.

Eli Petzold: Yeah, absolutely. Have a lovely evening.

Molly Wolanski: Thank you. You too.

Eli Petzold: Bye.

Molly Wolanski: Bye.

Michael Madeja 3-20-20

Molly Wolanski (00:00): So my like, so I've read your chapter and the care and keeping book and like talking about emerging museum professionals and my thesis, I'm looking for my conclusion. I'm looking at like what the field can do as a whole to kind of remedy wage equity and the issues faced by employees throughout the field. And so just getting the perspective of like what emerging professionals can do to help remedy wage and equity. So all my questions are kind of based around that. So the first one is like kind of what kind of benefits are there to being an emerging museum professional and like benefits to the terminology as a whole?

Michael Madeja (00:49): I think a benefit of being one, um, [inaudible] the field, it's not where it was about like five years ago where um, QP groups weren't really writing. There wasn't a national organization at my time. There are plenty of like blogs, resources being dedicated towards, um, that really helped overall. Um, [inaudible] I don't think, um, but perhaps recruitment has been really helpful at creating those resources. Um, I think they're helpful. It's helpful to have that kind of understand that I think it's productive in a way that sets up a mind frame that cool. My [inaudible]. Um, I think it's a helpful thing. A lot of people and kind of like emotional buckets that put people up for learning and um, establish a framework for professional development.

Molly Wolanski (01:57): Thank you. And like going off of that, like how can a merchant museum professionals work? Like knowing that they're new to the field and like bring new ideas to better the work environment of the museum field.

Michael Madeja (02:16): I think that a lot of it has to do with um, approach and deployment. The attack. Uh, I wouldn't say

Michael Madeja (02:27): [inaudible] is that a, is that idea of like the new idea in the field? I have no idea that the field is not going to bring me the field radicalize everything Denver, but lately that is clearly so it was the right bet like that they did more of that like a job that has the ideas of the field. I have a pressure perspective. Let me learn from you and then let's see how these things can be fleshed out. And I'm a magical for the field and of the kind of change has happened through diplomacy. Being able to operate within that exists right now that I can change for the future. Um, I think it was, what was the question again? I went on land there.

Molly Wolanski (03:06): Um, how can, the quick and dirty question is how can emerging professional professionals work to better work conditions?

Michael Madeja (03:14): Uh, the other advocacy hadn't pointed out realizing that you are and how they're different than say, um, Amanda for regrets are radically different than what that person might have. It is the other way around. Right. Um, but realizing that there's a variance in how to advocate for the reluctance that college is larger, reverting people to advocate for things like healthcare or one case for three DS. And realizing that that's an essential part of having jobs. And at this point, um, and being able to advocate from the company perspective as like [inaudible], that doesn't mean that I don't need to have all these things like that.

Molly Wolanski (04:01): And how do you feel that like museum council, like national emerging museum professionals, other organizations and groups like that play in advocating for this group like this work?

Michael Madeja (04:16): Um, I think it's that one question, right? Uh, so realizing that there is power in numbers as far as the workforce. So being able to operate that patient and then having that focus and that support through these organizations is always more helpful. That [inaudible] kind of national or a result [inaudible]

Molly Wolanski (04:47): okay. I can't read my handwriting. Cool. And how do you see like the emerging professionals in these groups kind of using it as a tool to advocate? Like I was talking to Patrick what a worried yesterday and about, he's going to be my thesis chair by the way.

Michael Madeja (05:19): [inaudible]

Molly Wolanski (05:19): yeah, Mickey connected us, but he's taught like one of his things was the standards for job descriptions that went around within the EMP circle also. How do you see more actions like this helping advocate for workers and like using it as a tool in a way.

Michael Madeja (05:52): [inaudible] what will happen? Five from EMP groups. I'll go advocate for those needs. Um, it didn't hurt. Part of being in working professionals positions that don't eat you or deliver ranking. So the impact seeing how that shifts will be really interesting. Um, but that's the national organizations, local organizations

and incorporate more consistently than EMT Martin [inaudible]. Um, [inaudible] um, if I did that, uh, the accountability of knowing the majority of [inaudible]

Molly Wolanski (06:55): I wrote all of my questions out when I thought we were meeting last week before everything kind of hit the fan with museums doing mass layoffs and everything and

Speaker 3 (07:12): yeah.

Michael Madeja (07:20): Um, but it's all comfort. Yeah.

Molly Wolanski (07:25): Yeah. It's definitely an interesting time to enter the field. Damn. We were plowing through my questions. Um, so mom, the other big ones, I have this because I am looking at wage equity and like emerging museum professionals. We don't get paid that much. How would you like what are some tips that you have from your experience working with these different councils and everything on salary negotiation, self advocacy within an organization?

Michael Madeja (08:09): I think it's realizing how with years ago a master's degree degree and realizing that that has assets with it 20 years ago when, um, I think we like to think that there is more to move in there, more transparency, accountability as you point out with the transparency. Hey, I always their acronym

Molly Wolanski (08:57): transparency, salaries, spreadsheets.

Michael Madeja (08:59): Thank you. Um, so like, so that that exists, not that they have 100 platform now, um, and kind of realizing what the opportunities for advocacy are and it's much more transparent can make like three years ago. Um, so going into

negotiation and realizing what other resources are out there, it's really helpful. But um, really only he's at this point in time have that access to that to remind you that they're better off. We're going to be happy to work for them to, um, to having that comfort and that confidence that they'll become the director.

Speaker 4 (09:38): Yeah.

Molly Wolanski (09:39): Thank you. Yeah, it's definitely interesting right now and with all of the resources and how everything's like shifting and becoming more transparent, but like the, as a whole, like upper management isn't transparent anyway. Like, I'm trying to figure out how to phrase it. Like it's only up to a certain level that the transparency is

Michael Madeja (10:09): correct. Fun. Yeah. More and more either they call her or her. Um, we live in kind of an oncoming lane.

Molly Wolanski (10:25): Yeah. It's like, and then, so that was most of the questions I had. Yeah. And the final ones I have is like, what are some of the issues that emerging museum professionals face? I mean, besides coal bed right now,

Michael Madeja (10:44): that's the large one on my mind. Um, I think it's even murkier, uh, where we can do [inaudible] and happy hour and stuff. It sounds like the overwhelming thing is that, um, it's a mix between the sense of entitlement and a sense of like that the field hasn't changed. So that's that master's degree. He doesn't get to keep a job, but somehow if you can get a job, um, to kind of realizing that the issue exist right now, both would be helpful. Uh, but also that, um, Mmm, but also

that's a big kind of perception, right? So it's a shift in perception of like when people reading those pages, like I won't be entitled thinking that they deserve a job. Uh, there has to be like a shift in that perspective to where that I think is going to be enough of hurdle to overcome. But I think it's a very doable thing where, um, kind of like changing the director's mind of the page to be about \$300 in the springtime. It made me think about yeah.

Molly Wolanski ([12:05](#)): And move on forward, that's for sure. Those were all the questions I had. I was, I wrote like double what I write for a normal interview and we got through all of them.

Michael Madeja ([12:18](#)): Awesome stuff.

Molly Wolanski ([13:17](#)): Thank you so much. Thanks for talking for this brief period. Good luck with the rest of everything with your museum.

Michael Madeja ([13:29](#)): Yeah.