

Emma Rutenberg, 2019

History, Classical & Near Eastern Archaeology, Museum Studies

Curatorial Intern at the American Philosophical Society Museum

Objectives and Contributions

- Main objective = become comfortable and acquainted with the inner-workings of museums and libraries
- Conducted intense archival research for 6 hours a day
- Handled rare, delicate, and precious manuscript collections, photographs, and objects
- Followed thematic or visual connections within people, events, or fields of study to form well-rounded, informative research
- Designed, organized, and completed the master-inventory for all items of interest for the upcoming show (200+)

Personal Growth

- Connection: formed thoughts, suggestions, and opinions and shared them openly with my superiors, as well as formed thoughtful relationships with people in my office
- Reflective Practice: looked at my experiences—the good and the bad—in retrospect to appreciate the meaningful learning opportunities that came from all of them
- Digital Competency: learned and adapted computer survival skills so that we could efficiently organize and update multiple digital databases and keep them on the same page

Personal and Professional Influence

- Exposed me to the inner-workings of museums, libraries, and archival collections as well as the politics within them
- Prepared me for professional and friendly relationships within office settings and how to integrate myself into those spaces
- Big learning outcome: there are some battles you will not be able to influence starting out, but time, dedication, hard work, and promising goals will eventually get you to a position where you have that influence
- Made me hopeful for the changes I can eventually make within shows (like people, themes, events), as well as the change I wish to enact on larger scales within institutions as a whole