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What can you do with a History Degree?

History is about more than understanding what happened in the past. Studying history develops skills that will make you successful in a variety of professional pursuits, and will also enable you to be a more informed citizen. Learn to:

1. Evaluate contradictory viewpoints, including differentiating between fact and opinion. Develop and practice empathetic thinking.
2. Contend with and draw conclusions from incomplete or inconsistent evidence. Synthesize sources from a variety of perspective, and use evidence to inform critical discussion and argumentation.
3. Grasp the significance of the past in shaping the present, including both continuity and change. Recognize the diversity of human experience across time and place as well as the forces that tie societies together.
4. Use historical knowledge as a lens to understand contemporary issues. Understand that our ability to make choices and create change are constrained by circumstances and opportunity.

Popular Careers for History Majors.

The size of these categories reflect the recent data¹ of career paths chosen by history majors. We hope these ideas and quotes provide inspiration as you consider your future career path.

1. Law, Politics, and Public Life 11%
 - a. Cultural Strategist, Lawyer, Politician, Political Campaign Manager, Judge, Development Associate, Community Organizer, Paralegal
 - b. Quote by Sonia Sotomayor: "It is important for all of us to appreciate where we come from and how that history has really shaped us in ways that we might not understand."

¹ Paul B. Sturtevant, "History is Not a Useless Major: Fighting Myths with Data," Perspectives on History, April 1, 2017.

- c. Quote by George Orwell: “Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.”
- 2. **Business and Management (Administration, Sales and Management) 35%**
 - a. Market Research Analyst, Marketing Associate, Advertising Account Executive, Banking Associate, Equity Analyst, Sales Representative, Insurance Analyst, Customer Success Specialist, Financial Planning Analyst, Public Relations Specialist
 - b. Quote by William Faulkner: “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”
 - c. Quote by Ziauddin Barani: “I have not observed such advantages from any branch of learning as I have from history.”
- 3. **Research and Archival Sciences 36% (when combined with Journalism, Publishing, and Entertainment)²**
 - a. Librarian, Historic Preservation Specialist, Archivist, Public Historian, Cultural Resource Manager, Geographic Mapping Systems (GIS) Technician, Historical Consultant, Policy Advisor
 - b. Quote by Michelle Obama: “You may not always have a comfortable life and you will not always be able to solve all of the world’s problems at once but don’t ever underestimate the importance you can have because history has shown us that courage can be contagious and hope can take on a life of its own.”
- 4. **Journalism, Publishing, and Entertainment 36% (when combined with Research and Archival Sciences)**
 - a. Documentary Filmmaker, Podcast Host, Television Writer, Professional Athlete, Book or Newspaper Editor, Producer, Journalist, Social Media Manager, Actor

² “Research and Archival Sciences” and “Journalism, Publishing and Entertainment” also includes other careers including financial services, community and social services, healthcare, architecture/engineering, information technology, art, design, entertainment, sports, and media.

- b. Quote by Maya Angelou: “History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need to be lived again.”
 - c. Quote by Winston Churchill: “The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward.”
- 5. Education 18%
 - a. Museum Docent, Interpreter, Teacher, Professor, Tutor, Education Director, Curator
 - b. Quote by James Baldwin: “[History] is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer to merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us,... [that] history is literally present in all that we do.”
 - c. Quote by Confucius: “Study the past if you would define the future.”

Sources

1. © 2019 W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., Q-441, 978-0-393-44320-2,
2. Poster design by Leah Clark
3. List of Skills (above) informed by the American Historical Associations Tuning Project and the National Council for History Education’s “History’s Habits of Mind.”

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