

Interview

What is your current job?

I currently work as an analyst in the New Zealand Government's defence and national security sector.

What is your highest degree (and major)? Where did you study?

My highest degree is a Master of Arts (Honours) in Ancient History, which is a two year course at the University of Auckland.

What drew you to Classical Studies, Ancient History, Egyptology, and/or ancient languages?

I have been interested in the ancient world since I was a child, and started reading classical literature when I was about ten years old. I became interested in ancient languages after studying Latin and ancient Greek while on an exchange overseas as a teenager, and later took Classics and Latin by correspondence. When considering university courses, I was very excited to discover that it was possible to study Latin, Greek and ancient Egyptian at the University of Auckland, and ended up taking all the ancient Egyptian language papers on offer by the time I graduated. I love it how we can remain connected to ancient cultures through studying their languages, and compare how similar/different their perspectives were to ours today.

What was the name of your favourite paper?

My favourite papers at the University of Auckland were always the ancient Egyptian language papers - in some ways, the introductory classes were the most exciting for me, when I was just starting to get a handle on the language.

How has your studies in Classical Studies, Ancient History, Egyptology, and/or ancient languages benefited you in looking for employment?

My studies in Ancient History, Egyptology and ancient languages benefitted me considerably when I was looking for a job after university. These disciplines have given me a strong foundation in academic research and writing, critical thinking and the various modern languages which are required to competently undertake research in these disciplines. Egyptology also led to me present papers at various conferences, both in New Zealand and abroad, which gave me experience in public speaking and professional networking. These are all things that employers are looking for.

What skills have you learnt in the process of your studies that are transferable to an industry based job?

The range of skills that students develop in disciplines like Classical Studies, Ancient History, Egyptology, and/or ancient languages can translate well to an industry-based job. There is no set degree that prepares graduates for many jobs that exist in the workforce, therefore adaptability, creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills are some best prerequisites for these jobs. Dedicated students with a degree in Classical Studies, Ancient History and/or Egyptology will usually finish their degree with all of these skills.

What do you like the most about your studies? Has it improved your quality of life?

I liked my studies because they were always interesting, and were something I was passionate about. I feel very glad that I chose to focus on something that I loved doing, rather than choosing a

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degree purely for pragmatic reasons. This definitely enriched my quality of life while at university, as studying was never a chore for me.

What do you think is the biggest misconception about studying Classical Studies, Ancient History, Egyptology, and/or ancient languages?

I think the biggest misconception about studying disciplines Classical Studies, Ancient History, Egyptology, and/or ancient languages is that they are "useless", don't have any practical benefit in the modern workplace and aren't valued by employers. This is simply not true - I had multiple job offers before I completing my Master of Arts, and all of the prospective employers respected the quality of my degree.

Who is your favourite god or goddess? Why?

My favourite goddess is the Egyptian goddess, Ma'at. Ma'at represents the ideas of order, balance, justice and the truth - all things that are very important to me.

If you could invite three people in ancient history, real or fictional, to dinner, who would they be?

If I could invite three people in ancient history to dinner, they would be the Heracleopolitan king, Merikare, the Theban eleventh dynasty king, Intef II, and the nomarch Ankhtify, so they could explain to me what really happened in the First Intermediate Period (and hopefully draw me a timeline).