

Paul- Travel writer

Paul Howard is a Travel Writer

What A Level combination did you do?
Geography, French, Chemistry and General Studies

Why did you choose Geography at University?
At its simplest level because I was interested in the world around me. Geography seemed to ask – and answer – the questions that interested me, both in terms of understanding our physical environment and our human interaction with it. It also seemed to offer a different way of explaining how we as humans organised the way we lived in the physical world – a much more profound explanation than prevailing economic paradigms.

At which University did you read Geography?
St Andrews

When?
1991-1996

Do you have any post-graduate qualifications? Please list:
Post Graduate Diploma in Law (x2 – Common Professional Examination and Legal Practice Course)
Professional journalist qualification

Please give an outline of your employment history after graduating (most recent at the top):
Self Employed- Journalist and author
Reed Business Information- Journalist
Grottes de Thouzou- Cave guide for tourists
Help the Aged- Gardener at a care home
Bolton Abbey Estate- Gardener
Tamil University India and Rajshahi University Bangladesh- Research Student, sea level change

What skills do you think you have developed through studying Geography?
The most important skill that geography has helped me develop is the ability and confidence to appraise things – situations, ideas – critically. To not be afraid to ask questions, to challenge accepted views, to avoid taking things for granted and to observe – vital qualifications in most spheres of life, but particularly in journalism – these all stem from having the ability to think critically.

Do you think Geography has helped you with past/current jobs? How?
Definitely. Aside from teaching me to question things and to think for myself, it has provided a fundamental awareness of the world that has been a vital tool for being able to make the most of diverse situations and to have the confidence to meet disparate people on equal terms.

What advice would you give a 6th former who is good at Geography and considering studying it at degree level?
Go ahead and enjoy it, and don't worry too much about the academic obsession with trying to define geography and the split between human and physical, arts and science. If only it would recognise it, geography provides both an empirical and a philosophical framework for understanding the world we live in.

Are there any other ways you feel that geography and your career structure may be linked?
Yes - by inspiring me to revolt against the traditional jobs and professions associated with geography I've had the good fortune to do something I enjoy.

Education Department
Careers poster
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