Paint the rock, to be re-scheduled! Be there or be un-anthropological.

November 21st, Undergraduate Presentation. Talk about research experience, study abroad, etc. Last call, email richartr@msu.edu

Ann Chrapkiewicz, grad student in anthropology. Works with GENCEN. Gender in a global context. Facilitate internships, speaker series, etc. NGO Internships in Malawi. Looking at gender. Study abroad designed to look at gender issues in Malawi in southern Africa. Go with Dr. Ferguson goes. Ten week program. Course meetings before you leave. Friday the 28th at 4:30 pm come for more info on the program. Specific questions for topics you may be interested in. Room 204 International Center, should run about an hour. March 1st application deadline for summer. Applications evaluated on a rolling basis. Eight spots available max. “This is very much being there.”

GRAD PANEL!

Taz Karim: Medical Anthropology, PhD candidate. Started off pre-med. Then, took med-anthro class and fell in love. Picked up a major in anthropology. From California. Fifth year at state. Use of ADHD as a study aid. US anthropologist. One year left, graduate next spring.

Kate Spring. Physical anthropology student. Sixth year in the program, dissertation involved skeletal trauma in skeletal collection.

Charlotte Cable: Archeologist. Culture in the Past. Works in the Middle East. First study abroad in Jerusalem. Undergrad in Notre Dame. Theology degree and really early cultures and see where they intersect. Here nine years, most of it spent working abroad. Works in Oman. Arabian peninsula. Excavate at a world heritage site. Excavate towers. Walks along strips of land and look at tombs and towers and compile data about them and see how people would have constructed their landscape and their world. There are reasons why cities are set up the way they’re set up. Also, worked in the US, South America, the UK.

How did you deal with funding?

Kate: Funded in the short term, in the first year. Year without funding then became a TA.

Taz: Really depends on the grad program you’re accepted to, some only accept as many as they can fund. Others, not so much. Look for funding outside of the department, taught ISP for a while there. Get in contact with the professor you want to work with ahead of time, might be able to work for them.

Charlotte: TA-ships for the first two years. Later, learned Arabic and received funding for that. The problem with working in Oman is that Summer is not a good time to work there. IE she can’t work, do TA-ships, etc to get by. Did one semester of classes, four months in Oman. Then did other archeology over the course of the summer. Worked for American Antiquity Journal. All a matter of finding little bits of things. If that would stress you out, go for a program that lets you know where exactly your money will come from. Some programs pay room and board in addition to pocket money. Those are nice. Some
will accept 20 and fund two. In some places, this can be a problem at getting people to get along in academic interaction. She came to State because the grad students and professors work well together.

Taz: Go to visit the school. Do it with your grad program. Be strategic about it. Find a faculty member you want to work with. Select three and go visit them. Makes you stand out. Puts you up there for funding, acceptance, etc. Easier for you to negotiate how many years of funding you can get. Don’t be afraid to ask.

Kate: Go outside of the department. For physical anthropology students, it’s really competitive, getting funding is hard to come by. Getting in to a program that you are happy with is more important. You have to take on student loans and that’s what you have to do. Getting in is a big deal. Worth it to try though.

Did you all go straight into grad school?

Charlotte: Took two years off, undergrad was self-funded. Needed two years off to become financially stable. Summers free for work in Syria and Jordan. Worked on different projects. Did that for two years.

Kate: Took a year off, worked for an archeology firm for a year, excavated cemeteries. Wanted bio-archeologists to go out and excavate. Glad to take the time off. Realized she didn’t want to work in contract archeology.

Taz: Didn’t do any break. Field gets more competitive every year. Has undergrad students helping her, great way to get experience. Talk to professors.

Charlotte: Gotta show you love it. You really have to like what you’re doing. If you’re not happy, they’re not happy. Meet with professors, you’ll be working with them for five to ten years. Choose program based on people, making sure you’re comfortable there. They don’t want you in a bad state, the program invests a lot into you academically and emotionally. Don’t burn out!

Kate: Talk with professors and grad students to see what schools they would recommend. You can make yourself stand out is extracurricular activities, field schools, internships are good, go to conferences, start writing papers, publish it! All of those experiences you get all useful, it’s how you frame it.

Taz: Sign up for every mailing list you can find, great way to find out about opportunities. Calls for papers, conferences, etc. If you can show you want this and can work hard, people will want to work with you.

Charlotte: Hang out in McDonel, do your homework there. Lots of opportunities will pop up because you’re at the right place at the right time.

What are the pros and cons for the master, combined masters, PhD, etc.

Fenton: PhD program makes your road a faster one, difficult right now. Many do masters first, prove themselves, and then go on to get their PhD.
Kate: There are a lot of masters programs for forensic anthropology but the push is to have a PhD.

Charlotte: Masters tends to do in the field skills. PhD is about looking at a question, figuring how you can figure it out, do the analysis, and then see if you answered the question. MA's can be really useful, didn't have a lot of field experience and wanted to get more experience. Needed to take the time out to find that out.

How important is the GRE?

Charlotte: A friend of her’s that is a physical anthropologist, had never taken a standardized test in her life, took the GRE, and did terribly. She still got into an Ivy League. She's that good in other ways. There’s the pile of people who meet the department cut off, then those that don’t. But if you have enough going for you, you can surmount that. Look at what your program wants, and what your department wants.

Kate: certain GRE to get in and a higher GRE for funding. Personal statement and statement of purpose is also huge. Not just your GRE. But, study for it.

Taz: You can have a life while you’re in grad school. You can have a relationship. She plays soccer. You can get involved in other things. She has a puppy. You can have a complete life, you just have to be organized, and make time for the things you value.

Charlotte: Agrees with that. Undergrad is four years. Putting life on hold for grad school is not a good idea. Remember the things you love because that’s what’s going to keep you sane.