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WIA Repost-Opportunities in Archaeology-Before Ads(1)

00:00:00 **Emily**

Welcome to the Women in Archaeology Podcast, a podcast about for and by women in the field. This episode originally aired on August 7th, 2016. It's all about opportunities in the field besides digging holes. The discussion includes tips on networking for the different types of jobs there are. The panel includes Chelsi Slotten, Kirsten Lopez, Kristen Bastis, Sarah Head, Jennifer McNiven and April Beisaw. Enjoy the episode.

00:00:30 **Sarah**

Hi everyone and welcome to the Women in Archaeology Podcast. I am your host Sarah with my co-host today.

00:00:38 **April**

This is April Beisaw, I'm an assistant professor at Vassar College. I'm a North American archaeologist.

00:00:44 **Kristen**

I'm Kristin Bastis. I'm an archaeologist at Missouri State Parks.

00:00:49 **Chelsi**

Hi everybody. I'm Chelsi Slotten. I am a current PhD student at American University.

00:00:54 **Kirsten**

Hi, I'm Kirsten Lopez and I am a masters student at Oregon State. University

00:01:00 **Jenny**

And I am Jenny McNiven. I'm a historical archaeologist and I'm also the host of the Struggling Archaeologists Guide to Getting Dirty podcast,

00:01:10 **Sarah**

Ladies, thank you very much for joining me today. So today, we are going to talk about all of the wonderful careers you can have in archaeology that don't revolve around digging holes out in the middle of the woods.

00:01:21 **Kirsten**

I think everything associated with digging holes that is not actually digging holes is something that people forget about sometimes, all of the administrata that goes along with things such as CRM and government work. That's a little bit of a start,

00:01:38 Sarah

Like Kirsten said, there's a lot of other things we can do. A lot of people do not respect the office end of archaeology. I was in the office end for a long time, doing a lot of the data entry, not necessarily artifact sorting and all that. But the data entry in databases and then the crunching numbers, and that is a very, kind of hidden end to that. A lot of people do that as well as other things. I don't think there's a lot of archaeologists that just specifically do data entry though.

00:02:06 Kirsten

Well, no, but you have a lot of the other office stuff. So like GIS, you'll have so some maps people, or those who do a lot of the processing of paperwork. So say you have a large survey and have some 200 shovel probes to process that were all written on paper

00:02:24 All

Laughter

00:02:26 Kirsten

Digitizing, all that. It does take a bit of time.

00:02:29 April

I've been doing animal bone analysis, as a consultant for almost 20 years now and I very rarely actually go to the sites that I've written very long reports on. One year I analyzed a hundred fifty thousand animal bones from various sites, mostly in the southwest for a pipeline project, and then also my dissertation that same year. That was a bumper crop year for bone analysis without digging a single hole.

00:02:57 Sarah

That's pretty good. So, what do they do? What happens when you're doing that kind of long-distance analysis?

00:03:02 April

Magic happens of course. The company who has excavated the bones, mails them to me and UPS has no idea that they're delivering boxes and boxes of dead animals and plastic bags to my door. And then I fill up, I used to do it in my house so I'd fill up my dining room and my husband was so nice about that. I did a project for a cave in Nevada and some of the bags actually contained mummified rats that smelled really, really bad. And I catalog them as complete mummified rat. I didn't need to go through every single one. So I pretty much left them in the bags. And then when I'm done, I put them back into UPS and the company pays to mail them to me. I pay to mail them back and

whenever UPS asked, you know, for insurance. I'm like, "there's no amount of insurance that could replace these containers of bones." and they look at me, like, I'm crazy and they just take my money and process it through. It's very easy to do remotely as long as you have your own comparative collection, including both bones, and books, and it can be costly to get it up and running but once you're up and running, it works very well. And if anybody out there is trying to do this, I get contacted constantly for more consulting work than I could ever handle. So if you let me know you're out there, you know, I might be able to send some work your way.

00:04:23 Sarah

So hey April. You say you've got some bones you need looked at. So that's a great. That's pretty cool. I didn't realize you could, I don't know why I didn't think that could happen, but I didn't realize they would just FedEx you bones. Make sense though.

00:04:37 April

You actually have to know somebody who vouches for you kind of thing. So sometimes I get contacted say, oh, so-and-so recommended you and I didn't know the so-and-so that they told me about, but I knew the company that they used to work for or something like that.

00:04:52 Sarah

So in this kind of situation, it's good to build, it's good to network and kind of build a word-of-mouth community there.

00:04:59 April

Yeah, and that's why I got in the habit of going to three conferences a year, which I still keep on doing and I know people all over North America. I don't do non-north American animals. So I work on keeping that network active. And now I work on talking to graduate students, who are working on faunal dissertations, because those are the people who I could give some advice to and maybe send information to. I met one woman at the last historical archaeology conference in January and I've been in contact with her a couple of times about various people. Lots of people want fishbone analysis, and fishbone analysis is not one of my strong points. So, I'm always looking for somebody to put in contact with those people, so that I don't have to take it on.

00:05:45 Sarah

So, there you go, folks. If you're good with fish bones, April needs your help.

00:05:50 April

I'll put you in contact with other people who need your help.

00:05:53 **Kirsten**

There's other types of analysis I know of, that, you know, you have the the faunal, the fish of course, lots of ceramic in everywhere, but the Northwest I hear

00:06:05 **Sarah**

Yeah. They apparently didn't do so much with ceramics out there. Or they just have really good people doing out analyze them out there?

00:06:11 **Kirsten**

No, there just aren't any. It's all basketry by and large, in the Northwest, it's some fabulous stuff. I tell you but the preservation record is minimal. So you have a majority lithic analysts out here. And so that's a big thing. So every firm has one lithic analyst or more. Every other person is one, which is great because I'm not a lithic analyst. I'm like, oh, hey here, take a look at this for me.

00:06:38 **Sarah**

I know there's a couple large labs that, all they do is different types of artifact analysis, and they do a lot of the more sciency, soil processing, and light refraction stuff. And all of the really, really cool technologically advanced things that most small firms can't afford to do in-house.

00:07:03 **Kirsten**

Yeah. There's at least one of them in the Northwest that I know that does their own and also receives from other firms and the other agencies, blood analysis for things like tools. that blood residue analysis. And that's pretty fun.

00:07:19 **Sarah**

Well, I know, tool use analysis, at least in general where they examine the edges of a lot of tools under a electron microscope now, isn't it?

00:07:26 **Kristen**

There's also Craig Skinner ran the obsidian lab where you could send your samples and he could tell you where it came from. He could source it because he had, you know, a comparative collection. And I believe he was trying to sell that business. So I hope that someone bought it and that's continuing because it was a really good resource for people who had obsidian

00:07:50 **Sarah**

And along the same lines if you're somebody, who's good on the computer, especially at the arcgis, there's a lot of people who like to outsource theirr point plotting of their artifacts. A lot of people trying to get better maps and a lot of companies, small companies can't afford to have a mapping

apartment or a GIS department so they outsource that. So that's another end of archaeology, pickup some consultation work the same way that April picks up faunal analysis.

00:08:22 **Kirsten**

Yes, and even outside of working for the firms and outsourcing different work like April does. Just things that are not strictly, directly rather related to CRM like education or parks is another place that I've seen a lot of people in archaeology happily end up, Kristen I know you're at some parts, right?

00:08:47 **Kristen**

Yeah. Yeah. I worked at City of Rocks National Reserve and Castle Rock State Park, which are both in Elmo, Idaho for a little over six years, and now I'm working at the office of Missouri state parks, and I help the 89 state parks in Missouri, with cultural resource issues. Mostly it's clearances for, they want to put a memorial bench in along the river, or the Katy Trail, or they need to replace their shower house, or build a new one. So, I look at past surveys and sometimes go out to the parks and see, you know, if anything is there, do a surface walk over or shovel tests. And then write an in house report sometimes and sometimes that report goes to the SHPO, it depends on the funding source. Yeah, so there's, there's definitely a park and there's also, you know, Park interpreters archaeologists can sometimes end up there, telling the public about a historic site, whether that be a pre-contact, you know, like Graham cave or an actual post contact historic home or other kind of historic site. So there's that too if you're interested in talking to the public about a specific place or if you can't move around for some reason, there's a place in parks for a lot of people.

00:10:11 **Sarah**

We do kind of circle back to the topic of education, archaeologists, especially modern archaeologists through very much being pushed into the public eye to interact with the public to educate the public. But there's also the specific need for direct education. Much like Kristen was saying, archaeologists being used at historical sites, at archaeological sites to be interpreters of the site. It's much easier to bring in someone who already knows what's going on as opposed to trying to train an interpreter who may or may not have a background in archeology.

00:10:49 **Kirsten**

Yeah, and there's a really fun, in my opinion fun, and unique perspectives that we as archaeologists can bring to public education in parks and In museums where archaeological remains, artifacts and foundations and such exist. So, you know, you have some foundations out of the national park. You have a little bit of a sign that might say a little bit about it, but having someone there to give you the tour, they're just, you know, people can ask questions and feel more interactive with that and the same goes for museums and I've done that a few times as well.

00:11:28 **Kristen**

There's also you know, going beyond that. There's also the exhibit design, you know, for larger museums and there's also you know, smaller museums contract that out sometimes to exhibit design interested in visual arts and archaeology. You can get into that sort of a thing designing archaeological historical, but then other types of exhibits too.

00:11:52 **Jenny**

And I found a lot of museums are really starting to develop education programs of their own which is something that I've had experience in, I've gone from working in laboratories in museums to being a part of their education program, which is, you know, a lot more of that public archaeology world, which you can get a lot of in the Park Service, but the private world of museums and even research institutions and that sort of place are a really good spot for archaeologists who also are really great with the public who love to educate. There's opportunities for education in a lot of different places that you wouldn't think to look which I've come across because I've been in some unique situations with my personal life because I can't move around a lot. So you kind of got to explore and find places where you can wedge your way in there and say, "hey, I've got this particular skill who wants to work with me?" And so, I've worked with high schools, with community colleges, with museums. There's definitely lots of opportunities. Maybe not the academic career you were hoping for when you first got into archeology, but as a stepping stone on the way there, they're really great opportunities, especially to share your love of archaeology and history with the public.

00:13:07 **Chelsi**

Yeah, and actually beyond just education and interpretation, which is SO important. There are the more I guess traditional museum careers that one might think of, you know, curation or collections management. And there are a lot of, you know, collections out there that need people to work on them which, either as contract work or if you can get it as full-time work which can be a little bit harder. You know but, it's a good opportunity. And if you need to stay in one place rather than you know, constantly being out in the field, collection work is a great opportunity or if you just get tired of digging. I know that sounds like blasphemy but

00:13:45 **Sarah**

It happens

00:13:46 **Chelsi**

It does happen, you know, so so those collections definitely exist and they're both at traditional museums, a lot of universities have collections as well. So get a little bit creative looking for people who are housing collections, and there is work to be done there too.

00:14:03 **Kirsten**

Yeah which goes to what you were saying too about places you might not expect, older corporations that have been around for a while also often have historic collections. I worked for the Wells Fargo Museum here in Portland for about a year or so a little while, back in a similar, like trying to find work locally because I couldn't move around a whole lot and that was kind of fascinating because they have some neat stuff and that's one of those things. Having a collections background, I worked for a museum during my undergrad which gave me some of that experience, the networking and the experiences you pull from things that are slightly outside of your main track during your university years is becomes really important as well as things that you do before and after for your side job. So some thing that you might not think may be important for some of the museum jobs, like I find that there is often retail experience that's desired for those smaller museums because they may have one or two people staffing it and a tiny little gift shop and if no one's ever handled cash before that can get messy. So, that's another thing that people don't always think about, that networking and integrating, you know, all of the different fields that you maybe worked in before on the side while you were in college become important later on as well.

00:15:24 **Kristen**

April. I wanted to ask you about the Lost Towns project and the Port Tobacco project that you worked on both in Maryland, about how that was funded and structured and were those short term positions or those full-time permanent jobs that you had?

00:15:41 **April**

Lost Towns was run out of the Anne Arundel County archaeologist office. In Maryland, almost every county, at least on the central and eastern part of Maryland has an archaeology office and they're variously funded and Port Tobacco was funded mostly by Jim Gibbon and I writing grants. We got to Preserve America Grant before that died and sometimes Jim and I were not paid at all and we still paid our crew. So it was almost a labor of love at some points, but when you're putting things together and you have things in between other things, sometimes it makes sense to do that sort of stuff. I wouldn't make a career out of it.

00:16:23 **Sarah**

Let's take a break real quick, and when we come back, let's shift away from this and start talking a little bit about all of the fun things we can do in academia.

00:16:51 **Sarah**

And we are back and we are still discussing the different careers you can have within the field of archaeology. We have to talk about academia because a lot of people they go into archaeology and

this is actually the career track that they have in mind and a lot of people I will say, a lot of us, don't make it. But those of us that do find that we do different things in academia, than, maybe we expected that we were going to do. April, would you like to open up for us?

00:17:18 **April**

Oh, geez, that was a quite the general lead in of unexpectedness. Well, I'll say that. I'm coming up for tenure next year. So I'm about to get tenured next year. If all goes well

00:17:31 **Sarah**

Congratulations

00:17:33 **April**

Thank you. This is the second college that I've worked at as an assistant professor. So it's been a long time. I finished my PhD in 2007. So to get tenure in 2017, is a long wait in that aspect. And I did my bachelor's in chemistry actually and was offered a full-time permanent job in chemistry from the company that I was working for at the time and that scared the heck out of me that my life was going to be in labs playing with carcinogens all day and never seeing the sun. So, I did my bachelor's in anthropology in one year and then went to get my Master's, did that and left a little disenfranchised with graduate school after the Masters. I took five years off. I worked and realized that I couldn't do what I wanted to do in archeology without the PHD. So I went back and finished my PhD in four years because I was refreshed and quite motivated. So I would say that in general, you know, academia you have to really want it and even though I was getting my PhD, I wasn't sure that I was going to go the professor track, but it worked out partially because I had a book that I had published, an edited volume that I had published before I finished my PhD so that made it a little easier to get noticed on the job hunt. So, you know, publishing is very important. even when you're a graduate student if you want the chance to be a professor somewhere.

00:19:10 **Sarah**

So publish early and publish often

00:19:12 **April**

and go to conferences and network and talk to people

00:19:15 **Sarah**

and we just did a thing on conferences. So everybody should be up to speed on this conference thing.

00:19:19 **April**

There's nothing like walking into an interview and knowing the people on the interview panel to help you relax, you know,

00:19:26 **Chelsi**

so one of the other things that I think is really important as a current PhD student, and I also took some time off. I jumped straight from my bachelor's into a masters and then took several years off before deciding to go back for my PhD. Again realizing that I really needed a PhD to do what I want to do. But I think having that real world experience is so important in terms of future jobs, in terms of knowing what it is you want to do in academia, what you want to focus on, I think going for a PhD in something, or in a field that you've maybe never worked on isn't the smartest idea. So I strongly encourage people to go get some life experience

00:20:06 **April**

And you can only advise students well, if you know what's out there.

00:20:09 **Chelsi**

Exactly.

00:20:11 **Jenny**

Sure. And if you want to test the waters with teaching without a PhD, there still opportunities for you as adjunct, as online. Now, there's a lot of places that will take people with master's degrees to teach online. So it's not, you know, the world isn't completely shut off for you if you don't have a PhD yet. So there are opportunities.

00:20:31 **Kirsten**

I believe some community colleges also will take in Masters, some of it depends on the college, some of it depends on the field within that college, but I've seen, I have seen that fairly often. So that's another thing depending on the college

00:20:47 **April**

Just don't expect much for adjunct pay. It can be as low as five hundred dollars a class.

00:20:54 **Jenny**

Yeah, it's not really something you're going to make a career, but it's a good supplement and it's a good way to build up your experience.

00:21:02 **Sarah**

So, let's take a minute here and talk about. I mean, I know that we've got several people, either with a PhD or working on their PhD, but let's talk about people who have gone past their bachelor's, and they're in their masters and they're like, I'm done. This is where I want to stay. What is open academically to people with a masters only? Because I know what the field, I know a little bit of what the field has to offer. But what does academia have to offer someone with just a master's? Besides adjunct professorships

00:21:33 **April**

It generally has to be a very small school. A local school, a commuter school kind of thing, someplace that can't afford PhD people. They will be very open to people with a masters, but it's hard to get anywhere with a school that is a bigger school, a residential school, a private school with just a masters and you definitely won't get a long-term contract. You'll be semester to semester or year to year usually as a replacement for somebody.

00:22:04 **Sarah**

Is there any opportunities for research at the Masters level or does that have to happen at the PHD level?

00:22:11 **April**

I think it would probably be that you did your Masters on that work and you were at a research one University and that your advisor would keep you on through a grant.

00:22:20 **Chelsi**

I also know some people and it again it's grants, but the the Fulbright scholarships, they have some pre-PhD grants that people can apply to. So if you want to, you know, you got a Masters or even a bachelor's, I know some people have applied for these right out of undergrad. You want to get some some work in the field, experience in the field. You don't necessarily want to go do a PhD right now because it is exhausting, and sometimes it's nice to take a little bit of a break. You know, go ahead look into those, apply for those, oftentimes universities will have departments that can help you with grants. So, you know, stay in contact with the university that you did your undergraduate or Masters at. See if they can help you out. You can kind of create your own research potential.

00:23:15 **Kristen**

So what, that would kind of be a one-off kind of the thing. You're not going to get Fulbright year after year.

00:23:22 **Chelsi**

That is like a one year thing, right.

00:23:24 **Kristen**

It's not a, I just want to make sure that people understand it's not a career path. That's a step on your path.

00:23:31 **Chelsi**

Oh, for sure.

00:23:32 **Sarah**

So basically what I'm hearing is if you want to do the academic thing, you're either in it for the PHD or you're not really in it.

00:23:41 **April**

Unless you have strong contacts, somebody who's willing to fight for you. But there's always somebody coming out with another Masters the next year. So very few people are willing to keep you on when you know, somebody's right behind you who wants the same opportunity.

00:23:57 **Sarah**

Let's talk about, field-specific specializations tend to happen in academia. And what I mean by that is, in the field you will run into people who are like, "I'm very up and up on industrial era archaeology", or "I'm very up on pre-contact or post contact settlement archaeology". But those specialties come about because someone at the academic level has said, this is where I want to focus and then it becomes a thing. So why don't we just come up, each one of us mention a specialty field in archaeology that we find intriguing. I myself am very interested in the industrial archaeology that's coming up. I don't know anything about it. Like I'm not specialized in it. It's just I know a couple people who are and I just think the whole idea of going in and doing an archaeological dig in an old industrial factory kind of situation just sounds incredibly fascinating to me.

00:24:55 **Kristen**

It sounds like tetanus shots.

00:24:58 **Sarah**

You should have one of those anyway,

00:25:01 **Kirsten**

Yes. Yes. Most definitely

00:25:03 **Jenny**

I actually did my thesis research in an industrial site. So that is kind of one of my subspecialties oddly enough.

00:25:12 **Kirsten**

So my area of specialty or interest rather focuses more on paleo-indian textiles, basketry and like environmental interactions. So it's a whole lot of really fun, complexities in nuance, and a little bit of chemistry.

00:25:33 **Kristen**

This is Kristen. My thesis project was on a tomb in Connecticut. And so my Master's work kind of sent me down the path of the analysis of human remains, which it was unexpected actually. It kind of was this product, that kind of appeared out of nowhere, and I feel very lucky to have been able to do that. But that has been a long standing interest of mine is skeletal analysis from any time period.

00:26:00 **Chelsi**

I am also a bone person

00:26:02 **Sarah**

there are a lot of bones in archaeology. It's okay,

00:26:05 **Kristen**

Not as many people think,

00:26:07 **Sarah**

really?

00:26:08 **Chelsi**

Yeah. Well preservation issues are important.

00:26:12 **Kristen**

It's getting trickier here because of the Native American Tribal Voice, that's being exercised now and it limits the analysis of Native American skeletons in the United States. So you can you know, sometimes they'll be an opportunity to work on a historic cemetery if there's a project where it requires the cemetery to be moved or something like that. Or like mine was a private family that was pretty wealthy. One of the patriarchs of the family at the turn of the 20th century was the founder of the Aetna insurance company and the family still retained much of its wealth from that and some other business opportunities and so they were able to spend money to refurbish this tomb of their ancestors.

00:27:02 **April**

I'm in the enviable position as a professor that I get to do whatever aspect I really want to do as long as I publish on it and involve students and things like that. I'm really into the the contemporary historical archaeology stuff right now and excited to go to Orkney for the chat Conference in October. Where better to be in October than the top of Scotland on an island. I'm sure it's going to be great weather. I'll pack a bathing suit or two

00:27:30 **Sarah**

Sunscreen. You'll need all that stuff.

00:27:32 **Jenny**

I'm so jealous.

00:27:34 **April**

You can all come ite, just an open conference. We could have that we could do a podcast there.

00:27:40 **Sarah**

You know, what? If you got me there we would totally do a podcaster. But April you actually take a really interesting spin on your archaeology. And I know that I interviewed you about this on Tuesday on the archyfantasies podcast. But can you talk of just a tiny bit about your special spin on archaeology?

00:28:02 **April**

The special spin? It's like the secret sauce

00:28:06 **Sarah**

It is it's cool as hell, I'm sorry.

00:28:10 **April**

Well, when you, when you do contemporary stuff, a lot of it is ruins. And once you start getting into ruins, you start having to confront that there are contemporary interpretations of these sites that are not guided by archaeologists, so if you have to dig it out of the ground, there's nobody else who's really saying "Oh, that over there means this". But when it's an old building in the forest that you've come across, and you're writing about, there's somebody else who's come across it before, and has local legends about it, things like that. So that has encouraged me to seek out the understanding of ghost hunting, because everybody wants to talk to me about haunted houses, and things like that, so I decided eventually to embrace it. So I've been studying ghost hunting and how

that is part of how non-archaeologists understand the past and use the past in their daily lives. So if you ever watch one of these ghost hunting shows, sometimes it's just great to watch them for all the historical information you get. And after a half hour, an hour goes by, you really, like haven't really learned anything about ghosts themselves. Like you can't answer the question is this site haunted? But you've had a good time and you've gotten to see a new place. And you've learned some things whether it be a castle in Orkney maybe. So I've been trying to learn from Ghost Hunters why they're so successful in getting people to care about abandoned places and to use that through contemporary historical archaeology to deal with these ruins. That I'm looking at.

00:29:45 **Jenny**

Jenny Did you want to add anything?

00:29:50 **Jenny**

Well, yeah, I guess we were talking about specialties, right? So as I said before my thesis research was on an industrial site and I was excavating actually the slave community that worked at this industrial site in the early 19th century. So I kind of had to become a quasi- expert in both African American archaeology and industrial archaeology because there really isn't a lot of precedent for archaeology in industrial sites at the moment. So I found that that has it's been interesting in the job market or just with research and stuff like that because I can kind of go in either direction. But seeing as I've recently moved to the Southwest. I don't really have any plans at the moment to use either of my specialties out here. So, you know, in this post-grad world for me, it's all about sort of, being able to be pliable, to be able to reinvent myself and to go in different directions depending on where I'm located and where, you know, where my interests are at the moment. So it's good to have all of these different specialties in areas that I have experience with. And I think employers

00:31:05 **Jenny**

recognize and appreciate that. I don't think it's bad if you aren't able to continue in one area or another and you want to expand your interests and your research goals. I think that's always something to be encouraged. So that's kind of my take o specialization right now

00:31:21 **Sarah**

So far we've learned that you need to network. Don't over specialized, definitely double specialized or triple specialized and learn to write grants. That's what I'm hearing from everybody, just learn to write a grant. Just do it.

00:31:36 **April**

Just learn to write in general. Good writing in general is the one thing that these people who own CRM companies, when I talk to them, they're always asking how good my students are at writing because they could teach them the archaeology, but they can't teach Teach them how to write.

00:31:50 Sarah

That's true, you're not doing anybody any favors if you can't put a decent paragraph together.

00:31:55 Kirsten

Word

00:31:57 Sarah

So learn to write damn it.

00:31:59 April

Can I say something to Jenny about her move?

00:32:02 Sarah

Yeah, go for it.

00:32:03 Jenny

Yes, please.

00:32:03 April

You're probably one of the very few people with those qualifications in the southwest and these companies, every now and then have to do surveys of old airfields, and things like that. There's plenty of people to analyze Pueblo pottery, but you could easily be the go-to person for the more historic stuff that's out there and they won't care about the details. Just the fact that you get excited about the historic stuff that nobody gets excited about in the southwest because they're excited about all the earlier stuff. I think you're in an enviable position right there as long as you market yourself the right way and make those contacts,

00:32:43 Jenny

You are so right to every job I've had out here it's been "oh thank God we've got a historical archaeologist, everybody ask Jenny about this piece of pottery" because there's a lot of historical archaeology out here that people are not familiar with because it's not their area of expertise. So that's an excellent point. I'm not complaining about not being able to do a lot of industrial archaeology, but my historical skills have definitely come in handy.

00:33:07 **Kirsten**

Yeah that's one thing that I'm glad you pointed out Jenny is the importance and ability to kind of broaden your interests. I mean, most archaeologists, I think would agree that it may have been difficult to narrow it down going into a graduate degree. I've met a few people that are you know, "I have so many interests. I don't know what I want to focus on" when they're halfway through their masters. So it's one of those things I think most people will be very thankful to hear that they're not pigeonholing themselves too badly.

00:33:40 **Jenny**

Absolutely.

00:33:41 **Sarah**

Okay. Well, let's go to a break real quick and when we come back, let's shift our focus away from academia and into the field some,

00:33:48 **Sarah**

And we are back and we are going to talk about all the fun things you can do in the actual field that aren't necessarily digging. One of my favorite things. One of the things I went back to school for was using remote sensing and ground-penetrating radar and the magnetometer. These are really great tools that are being used in a lot of phase one's now. And if you own your own magnetometer, I suppose you could just go magnetometer the crap out of someone's field for giggles. I know people who do that. And I'm kind of envious because it's a lot of fun. You can actually magnetometer, you can do that in a field and you never have to dig in the ground and you can get a pretty reasonable idea of what you're looking at without breaking ground. And so I find that to be a really useful field tool and it requires a little bit of extra study. So it is kind of a career thing.

00:34:42 **Kirsten**

Yeah,

00:34:43 **Chelsi**

I mean if we're going to talk about other kind of cool things you can do for digging without actually digging, some of the work that's being done with aerial photographs, from satellites, or drones is really fascinating because you can, you do see the outlines of sites. So for example, and I unfortunately can't remember her name but there's a woman who has found a potential Viking site up at

00:35:10 **Jenny**

Sarah Parcak

00:35:12 **Chelsi**

Yes. Thank you very much. I'm terrible with names. It's a thing I'm working on, you know, that site was identified using aerial photos or satellite images. Given the technological improvements that we've seen, even in the last five years there's so much more you can do .

00:35:31 **Jenny**

Archaeology really isn't thought, of, by the general public, as a field for tech geeks. You know, we're sort of thought of, as more diggy, holey, dirty boots, but there is a lot of room in the field for tech geekery. So I think that's a really great direction moving forward in the future for people who are really into that side of science and research,

00:35:56 **Sarah**

Yeah people who aren't getting an education in technology and who aren't learning ways to utilize the technology that's coming out. I mean, I know there are a lot of people that still have their mind blown by the tremble and it's like the tremble is the least of your worries at this point.

00:36:13 **April**

My current research project doing the archaeology of the New York City water system, which is a huge project for one person herself to do. You know I have students to work with me, but we don't excavate and we don't collect artifacts. We just take GPS tracks and geotagged photos and we do everything in quantum GIS which is the freeware of GIS. So there's no collections other than digital. There's no data other than digital.

00:36:40 **Sarah**

That's pretty freaking cool

00:36:42 **Kirsten**

crazy.

00:36:45 **April**

It's a little scary to some of my friends who haven't been in archaeology for a while that they want to come back and they're a little scared about all the technology stuff. It's really easy to learn if you just sit down and learn it, and the fact that Qgis is free, it could be on any platform. You can download it. You can play with it. You could figure it all out, but our museums are filling up and our curation facilities are charging, huge box fees and it just takes a lot to manage both running a project and then all the artifacts stuff that, being the only full-time archaeologists at Vassar. It's easier for me to do it this way.

00:37:20 Sarah

Well, and speaking of the collections thing, moving into the scanning and the 3D printing now of artifacts and remains at some points so that they can be returned. That's a developing field, as well, I don't know how huge it is, but I know that there are museums that are investing quite a bit into 3D scanning of their collections, and I know that once something's been 3D scanned, it can be 3D printed. So there's an interesting field to look into.

00:37:48 April

Lots of potential ethical problems with that though.

00:37:52 Sarah

There are, there are it's a developing field. There's a lot of ethical issues, but there's a lot of things that can be solved with that, some ethical issues that can be solved with that as well. And also, there's the whole concept of the whole open archaeology thing and making things, reports, artifacts, etc open to the public, or at least open to the rest of the archaeology world.

00:38:14 Chelsi

Oh, so with the 3D scanning, there's also a differentiation to be made between whether or not your 3D scan scanning something for Open Access, something you're going to try and put online, which some museums are doing or whether you are 3D scanning two particularly fragile pieces of like pot sherds or whatever it is to see like how they fit together or... you know, there are things that you can do with a replica of something that you maybe would have used cast for in the past, that 3D scanning is cheaper, potentially less damaging to the artifact and I think that the the ethical concerns there are very different from if you're having Open Access 3D scanning

00:39:02 Kirsten

in the museum context. There are a couple of things. So museum world is changing quite a bit at a faster pace than archaeology is. One of those is the digitization as you mentioned the 3D digitizing but even just straight like turning the paper records into, scanning them into the computer and storing them. Also taking all of the weird random 90s digital storage archives and modernizing them or somehow retrieving the data off of magnetic files, tapes. There's a whole business that's kind of cropped up in contracting. I think someone mentioned before to do curation work in digitizing, even just taking photos, scanning things in. As an undergrad I did a lot of that. They actually had to purchase or rent equipment in order to do it. And I spent many, many, many hours because it's very time intensive. Especially if you have you know, say several hundred thousand artifacts that are being stored and, you know, it's a big budget item for larger museums, and I'm sure places like the Smithsonian have been up on that. I know they've 3D scanned a lot of things, such as vases and

paintings that, you can take a closer look at online on their website. And so that opens doors for research that isn't academic necessarily and you know, that's where you start getting into ethical concerns and such but it's it's been a big thing for a little while.

00:40:45 Sarah

But it's like I said, it's a developing field. There's going to be roadblocks. There's going to be things that we are not even thinking of right now that will pop-up later that we'll have to address. I know one of the medical museums opened, all of their human remains skeletons scans open to I think you can get them... any way you can get them online and I know that created a little bit of a hubbub, but it wasn't like they got hijacked. They they open those up. So yes, it's going to be a museum by museum basis. We're just gonna have to use our best judgment on that and like, you see the digitization of documents and images and that kind of stuff, and the trying to retrieve old data. It's just going to be an ongoing process. That one is just converting data into the new format. Then converting that format into the next new format and on, and on, and on, and on, and on, and then data storage is going to become an issue as well.

00:41:42 Kirsten

Yes. I mean, it's, it is in a lot of ways, considered by most museums more fragile than paper. So there's always still paper copies. I know of very few that have gotten rid of paper copies, if any I doubt any have but I could, I'm probably wrong all that and another note going back to the mapping and the remote sensing in a way that uav's or drones being used for crop reconnaissance, I know that there has been some movement, I want to say in forestry, and some government agencies looking into using drones to do archaeological survey from the air. Things that may not be noticeable from the ground, which I thought was interesting as well.

00:42:31 Sarah

Well, and of course, there's always the whole what time of year are you looking? Because that'll change things

00:42:36 Kirsten

Okay. Yeah.

00:42:36 Sarah

You may not be able to afford to get a plane up there but you could get a drone up there. Pr. So other interesting things that happen in the field, we were talking about the tremble and using the GPS and to do the marking and I know that a lot of firms try to overlap that, but it's turning into sort of, kind of a careers specialization because with the companies that can afford to have an in-house group. Now, they're doing the whole that person is the cheapest person out in the field and then

that person, then takes the data back to the office, you know, there's always like the hotel office and that person is then also responsible for downloading the data, correcting the data, getting the data onto a readable map updating the site maps, the project maps, and that's a full-time thing. And it also requires a lot of specialists in specialized information because granted the trembles not brain surgery, but there are tricks to it and the software can be kind of temperamental. So knowing how to navigate the glitches of technology that make our lives easier. That is a valuable skill to have when you're out digging. And another thing that I find interesting is the mixing of fields. I think Kirsten wanted to talk about this a little bit. One of the things out in the field digging that I find interesting is how many wetland people who are coming over from like environmental science and that kind of stuff. Who come into digging specifically because we're in a wetland area so they bring in someone who's completely familiar with, what it means to have a wetland and what is going on inside of that wetlands that happens on pipelines a lot and I think it's interesting.

00:44:20 **Kirsten**

Yeah, there's some interesting things as far as, you know, everyone or most everyone is fascinated by archaeology. And while I love archaeology and I'm gonna continue doing it. I think there's a lot of people, especially in their younger years and they get really excited and then realize it may not be something that they want to do long-term or don't necessarily have...I don't want to say what it takes to stay in... I've had dig partners that didn't like dirt. And that's when you start wondering, why are you here? But that love of history and the love of archaeology itself. I mean other fields get involved as well. Like you mentioned with GPS becoming a thing GIS in general, is its own field and have their own department in many universities. You also have scientists from various fields, which we talked about archaeologists being specialists in certain Sciences. You also have different sciences that work specifically with archaeologists. I know there's, you know, DNA labs that specialize in ancient DNA processing. There's, you know, everything from paleobotanists that work with archaeologists or paleo ethnobotanists. You have, you know, people that work in geology, geologists that work with archaeologists as well as geoarchaeologists. So there's a crisscrossing and generally just you know, people get handed stuff because we're such a broad field that you will often, you know think you meet a really great. Oh, let's say the tree person that has this great information that you want to know more about. Well, he does modern and as well as native trees, there may be a very specific type of botanist that you need their input on and they get really excited about your work because everyone does. So there's always ways to stay connected without having to stay in the field of archaeology specifically as well. So, I know some people are afraid to kind of branch out into other interests and you won't lose

00:46:37 **Sarah**

Its like what April was saying earlier when she had her degree in chemistry and then switched into a degree in archaeology.

00:46:43 April

Exactly.

00:46:44 Sarah

Another person who would following the same kind of path might have taken that chemistry degree and applied it directly to archaeology and that's where you get a lot of this really interesting like, microscopic analysis that's being done on everything from like the pollen that they find in the dirt, to the chemical makeup of the dirt. Just all kinds of really interesting, very detailed analysis that can be done on things that we back in the day and back when I was in school even, where we were just kind of like "eh toss it no one's ever going to do anything with it". And it's like, noooo, but now we can and all these people are very specialized. I'm not saying that they can't go out and do all of the aspects of archaeology, but it takes a lot of focus to be able to do wear use analysis really well, I mean, and we've moved beyond just knowing how to flint knap. That used to be like the thing and now we're to the point where yeah, you can knap it, but we can also put it under this electron microscope and see what it was used to scrape and you were saying the DNA analysis. There's a lot of really great stuff coming out of the DNA analysis. And there's going to be a lot more really fun stuff coming out of that as it develops as a field.

00:47:58 April

I tried doing that archaeology chemistry stuff for a while, but I'm too much of a big picture person and all of the little minut details. I just, I couldn't get into it and with the animal bones, it's kind of that minut detail, but I just, I love bone so much and I love having the right answer, you know, a squirrel bone is always a squirrel bone but that piece of pottery might be Schultz insized, it might be Richmond insized. You never really know, so that's still there. But I think the other side of that, all that science that goes along with archaeology fields is there's all the history stuff too. I do a lot of architectural history. I do a lot of land deed research and you could never dig and still do a lot of historical archaeology and almost every property that has any CRM done on it needs somebody to land deed research and that is a specialized skill that every office I go to is very, very different on what they have and what's in the deeds and to be able to read old script. My students can't write in script. Forget about read old script. So that is going to become more and more of a specialty that people are going to be looking for who could read these old documents that they have?

00:49:13 Sarah

Yeah, if you're worried about what's going to become of cursive, it's going to become a field that you could make money in, is what it is.

00:49:19 April

Exactly.

00:49:20 Sarah

So let's stop lamenting it and start, you know, making some money off of that. But no April you have an excellent point landscape archaeology, wasn't huge when I was in school. I don't feel like it was, I guess I should say my personal experience was that it was not huge and now that I've gotten out I've see a lot more stuff written about understanding the site as a whole as opposed to as a square. Yeah. It's a very specialized thing being able to read a landscape. We all do it, but landscape archaeologists have it like a sixth sense kind of

00:49:55 April

And that helps with all the grant writing and journal articles because it makes it more meaningful to other people because we all understand landscapes and we don't really care what's in your hole at your site. Right? But if you could tell us about the whole entire landscape, then we'll care what's in unit 2 and what's in unit 4. So having that big picture ability, even if you do love the small things like micro wear analysis.

00:50:21 Sarah

Well, I knew a guy that like his, his calling in life, was micro faunal analysis. And what I mean is after you've done the water screening, the stuff that comes out in the very finest mesh. He would take a teaspoon of it at a time, put it under the high-powered microscope and sort it with the finest pair of tweezers I've ever seen in my life and he would do that for eight hours every day and it didn't faze him at all. I would have gone crazy after 15 minutes, but that's he loved it. That's what he did.

00:50:56 April

I refuse any flotation work. I cannot stand that.

00:51:00 Sarah

I like the flotation machine because I like that, but yeah, I'm with you there. As April was saying, being able to write in general, to write and research. A lot of people underestimate the amount of research that goes into archeology. They think that we're just going to go out there and dig some lines and take our artifacts home and write a report. There is a whole lot of research that goes into it and there are some, some companies have a research department and that's all they do. All they do is research.

00:51:32 April

And being organized in your research so that somebody else could write based on what you've collected. So having all your bibliographic information, having folders, having tabs, making it make

sense. Instead of well this is all I figured out for my research paper, that's due tomorrow so I'll just throw it together. Like it has to be clear, coherent, organized research.

00:51:53 **Kirsten**

Yeah, and on that note, actually I also wanted to mention back sort of the government jobs and that's both a loved and hated term, I'm sure for a lot of people, but outside or even inside the parks, you have the agencies that hire CRM firms, or the agencies that are involved with say permitting companies that hire CRM firms. CRM is, you know you have the companies as the firm's and the universities that do the research, but then you also have those that end up being the government regulators.

00:52:28 **Kristen**

A lot of government agencies have archaeologists, the Forest Service, the BLM but also places like the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission because they permit pipelines and you know different energy projects that are large scale, which require archaeologists to oversee the contractors work, and make sure that the agency is living up to its commitments.

00:52:58 **Sarah**

You still have to wear a safety hat though, because OSHA.

00:53:03 **Kirsten**

There's a lot of things because OSHA I'm not complaining.

00:53:07 **Sarah**

I'm not complaining about all of it, not all of it.

00:53:10 **Jenny**

Well, I hope it's not taboo to talk about, you know, there's positions outside of what you would traditionally think of as archaeology for people who, you know, I try to be a realist on my podcast about this life. It's not easy to get a job sometimes, and it's not easy to get a job in your specialty. It's a competitive field, you know, it shouldn't feel like it's taboo to sort of be specialized a little bit sometimes when that's the best choice for you. So, there's also, you know, even though it's not the topic of this podcast specifically, but there's a world outside of just archaeology that we can work in. If you are trained in anthropology, which all of us should be as a general field then there's an entire world of other opportunities in corporate settings, in social services, in medicine. And then also, a lot of us are very good at research in history, the historical stuff and then you've got other opportunities and historical societies things like that. So, it might be a little bit of a bummer to mention, but there's

always other opportunities, even outside of specifically the academic or field world for people with archaeological backgrounds. If you want to de-specialized a little

00:54:27 Sarah

Like Kirsten said networking is key. And I think pretty much everybody has said that at one point during this podcast, that the key to being in this field, and getting far in this field, and finding your niche in this field is networking. Going to the conference's, doing podcasts, like this. We're always looking for more hosts. So if you ever are in the area and you want to be on a podcast, hit me up and we can see about getting you on, but anytime that, you can interact with other archaeologists or other individuals in the areas you want to be in. Do it, put your best foot forward, put a smile on your face, get yourself some business cards, and go rub some elbows because that's actually going to help you out a whole lot more than just about anything else, except, you know, actually knowing what you're talking about.

00:55:20 Chelsi

That's also very helpful.

00:55:22 Sarah

Yeah. It's important to know what you're talking about.

00:55:26 Kirsten

Yeah. I was mentioning that it's also fun, you know don't get too caught up and be intimidated by the people that you're talking with, everyone's been there and it's fun to chitchat in my opinion.

00:55:43 Sarah

Well and we should spend a little bit of time talking about that actually, because I think of course this is a Women in Archaeology Podcast and we have talked about the imposter syndrome before and I know that women get hit with that a whole lot more frequently than men do. And that's a socialization thing in my opinion. So I think men are just socialized to, you know, shake it off. Women internalized it a whole lot more. So I think as a woman in the field of archaeology, one of the best things you can do for yourself is to force yourself to go and network. And when you start feeling that imposter syndrome creeping up, just shake it off. I know it sounds rough and it's way harder to do than it is to say, but nothing's going to serve you better in life than being able to walk into a room and be like I own this place and that's what you have to do.

00:56:35 Jenny

You can think Taylor Swift if you need to

00:56:37 Sarah

Shake it off, shake it off.

00:56:39 April

I think there's a lot of strategy to it that when I see younger people, or people who are newer in the field, go to conferences they tend to make the mistake of hanging out with all of their friends and the people they did field school with and so forth, and they form this pod and they go out to some really hip bar that they have to take a cab to, and all the people who could offer them work are back at the hotel, sitting down having, like, martinis and things, and we can't offer you anything, because you're gone. There's also the problem that I've had several times I've tried to find somebody on the internet that is an up-and-coming person I want to offer an opportunity to and they have no internet presence, you know. Everybody should have a web profile that says who you are, what you do, and how to contact you. There was a woman who won an award at, you know, an archaeology award at one of these conferences and she was a graduate student and I had chatted with her, had a good time talking to her and I wanted to invite her to come to my college to give a talk, and I can't find her anywhere on the internet. So I just give up after a while and that's one of the big pluses of being a member of all these different societies is that I could go search the membership logs if I want to. But you should be easier to find if people want to help you when you're networking instead of just I hang out with my friends and oh gosh darn, nobody has ever offered me anything. Well, you're not putting yourself in the position as a professional, right? You're hanging out with your friends. That's not networking.

00:58:12 Sarah

That's an excellent point. Would LinkedIn be a good enough web presence or are you looking for something more?

00:58:20 April

A lot of LinkedIn you can't actually see unless you're linked to the person and it's hard to, you can't communicate with somebody who's not connected to you. So people send me requests all the time to connect with me that I don't know at all and I don't usually respond. So if they're trying to reach me through that, then they're not going to get to me, but I'm everywhere on the internet. I mean, I'm the only April Beisaw in the world. And if you type that in, it's like you're bored of me after the first page, it's just like, will you get after the internet and go teach a class. So I think anything that shows your personality, like I could find 12 people on LinkedIn in five minutes who do ceramic analysis in the SouthWest, why am I going to offer it to you? Well, now I know that you have all this podcast and media experience and things like that, but did I have to search 12 times to put all that together and figure it out for you? Or do you have a web page that says, this is who I am, this is what I do. And if you want to, you know, offer me something or partner with me, great put it here, you

know, here's my email. We organized sessions for conferences all the time that we just go out and look for people to invite. And if nobody is inviting you, maybe nobody could find you.

00:59:32 Sarah

I feel like you're talking directly to my soul. I appreciate that. I'm internalizing this completely. No, I think that's that's an excellent excellent point in I think that's a topic that we should definitely tackle in another episode, just in general. Just how to get your presence out there so that people can find you. And when we do that topic, April, would you be willing to come back?

00:59:56 April

I think you're sick of me already.

00:59:58 Sarah

you know, you are a fascinating

01:00:00 Sarah

person with the ghost hunting. And now, all of this stuff to, It's such a small world.

01:00:07 April

It is, that's why networking is so important. Yeah. I actually figured out when Kristen and I met, which was so long ago. She probably doesn't even want me to tell anybody, but we met at a conference and we've been in touch for a long, long time. And we just met through a mutual friend that both of us haven't talked to in a long time, but we talk to each other still. I wouldn't be talking to you right now if I didn't go to this conference a long time ago and you know meet her and keep in touch.

01:00:36 Sarah

There you go.

01:00:37 Kristen

Actually, I did talk to her through LinkedIn actually. Her company is trying to expand into Idaho and she was asking me for people that I knew that were available for consulting work

01:00:52 April

More networking, right?

01:00:57 Kristen

Definitely. Definitely keep touch with your friends, like, don't ignore your friends at conferences, but

01:01:04 April

Don't form a pod.

01:01:05 Kristen

Don't form a pod, reach out, and meet a whole range of people, meet government archaeologists. meet academics, meet people who do your specialty, meet people who do the other things that complement your specialty. So that if you needed to put together a whole team, you have people to draw on that have different specializations than you. That provides amazing cross-fertilization for ideas for projects and also interpreting results from excavations and historical research and things like that. So definitely knowing a range of people but, you know, do keep in touch with your peer group because, you know, the older people are going to be gone someday so you'll need your peer group too and also meet younger people, go out and when you're at conferences and recognize them as, oh my God, I was there 10 years ago. That person is probably so scared to talk to anybody. I'm going to go talk to them.

01:02:17 Sarah

Younger people are fun to talk to. Jenny. Do you have anything you want to add?

01:02:21 Jenny

Go to the hotel bar at conferences.

01:02:25 Sarah

I would like, to point out the Jenny's advice is to go to the bar.

01:02:29 Jenny

Yeah. Yeah, not necessarily if it's not your scene, but like there's other opportunities to network and to meet people. Like April I know I met you at, I think it was a Twitter meet up at SAA in Austin, a couple of years ago, which was a really fun afternoon and I got to meet a whole bunch of people that I now know on Twitter and other social media and I keep up with their careers and these are all people that you know, hopefully will be a part of my professional life, you know, for ever. So, yeah, and then also, if you have a social media platform making it available to the general public and getting your name out there as someone who people who just love history can go to to contact with. I don't know, just I answer a lot of fan mail with people with questions about getting into the field, people who just love history and want to know what I think about a certain subject. And not everybody depending on your professional life has the time to spend a lot of time doing this, but I always think it's really important to stay connected. Not just to the other people in our professional circles, but to the public at large because that's a lot of, you know why we do this. So yeah, making

sure that people have your social profiles out there in the world so that they can contact you is really super important.

01:03:54 Sarah

Chelsi. You got anything to add?

01:03:56 Chelsi

I would just second that, we're actually looking at having an upcoming guest, who found me on Twitter, actually, based off of the information on the host profile page for this podcast. So you never know when something is going to crop up.

01:04:14 Kristen

Right? And something that just came to mind is I actually answered some questions for an author that's writing a book about names of Native American tribes in a certain area at a certain time. And so, you know, you can offer people outside the profession, you know who want to make their work better, more accurate, things like that.

01:04:42 Sarah

Kirsten you wanna do finals thoughts?

01:04:44 Kirsten

One thing, I just wanted to touch on one last time as far as other venues to poke around, tribal agencies is something I think that may have gotten passed up and subsumed under the government jobs. There's a lot of, well and depending on where you are there can be a lot of work or work associated with tribes as well as cultural museums and other venues that way too. But that was a one last bit. I'm sure there's other, you know, little tendrils of work relatedness that we haven't touched on. But..

01:05:21 Sarah

We can always do another episode at another time because this is one of those never-ending always evolving topics.

01:05:29 Kristen

It's something to add to that, Tribal Heritage Centers. So not only H full, but like in Boise, there's a basque community that has a significant presence. They have some property that they They own with us with a visitor's center on it. There's also in like, Fall River, Massachusetts. There's a large Portuguese, community and other types of ethnic Heritage centers around the country.

01:05:59 **Speaker 3**

We should have we should talk about working with other ethnic groups because like I said, it's a very white field, but we study people who are not. So it would be interesting to have a, a show talking about that kind of an interaction, but ladies. Thank you very much for coming on the show with me. Me today. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Being again, a special guest.