UX Careers in Tech For Anthropologists: A Roundtable Discussion

Are you interested in pursuing a career in User Experience design but don’t know how to take the first step? Not sure what a career in UX involves, but want to learn more? This panel brings together three anthropologists currently working in UX design roles and tech firms in the Bay Area. They will share their experiences transitioning into UX work from graduate work in academia and will offer insight into how anthropologists can secure--and excel in--UX work.

Tuesday, May 29th, 5:30-7:00 PM
Building 50, 51A

David Platzer is a PhD candidate in the anthropology department at Johns Hopkins and an experience researcher with Adobe’s Design Research and Strategy team. His dissertation research focused on autism employment programs with the global tech industry and has been profiled in Forbes, Entrepreneur, and the upcoming documentary This Business of Autism. In his work for Adobe he has worked on communities of aspiring YouTube stars, artificial intelligence and design practice, and the changing role of documents for immaterial laborers. He recently co-authored “Academic Precarity in American Anthropology,” an article in Cultural Anthropology that investigated the psycho-social consequences of the tenure-track job market and the moral imaginaries that sustain it.

Dana Phelps is a UX Researcher at Facebook, where she is the lead researcher for Facebook Messenger’s business pillar. She also is the leading anthropologist on a video ethnography team that conducts in-house interviews across the globe to help Facebook understand how the introduction of certain products shape people’s behaviors. A PhD Candidate in Anthropology at Stanford, Dana is currently writing her dissertation on how Europeanization processes are impacting upon cultural heritage and connected communities in Albania. After finishing her dissertation research in Albania in 2017, Dana “discovered” UX research and thus stepped into a career that would allow her to unleash her creative side to applied anthropology.

Louise Lamphere Beryl is a lead experience researcher at Airbnb. She’s previously been a UX researcher at Chegg, an education technology company, and Samsung. She made the jump from academia in 2014 after completing her PhD in Anthropology and Education from Columbia University Teachers. In her free time she loves chasing after her three kids (and husband) who are 5 years old, 2 years old, and 6 months.