

AMERICAN MUSEUM NATURAL HISTORY

Seminars on Science

Earth: Inside and Out

Week 1

Introduction to Ro Kinzler

My name is Ro Kinzler. I'm an earth scientist here at the American Museum of Natural History. Along with Ed Mathez, I'm one of the originators of the course "Earth: Inside and Out." As a scientist involved in education here at the Museum, I collaborate with educators, technology folks, Web developers, and Museum scientists to create educational products, Web sites, print materials, and courses like this one—all of which are designed to bring the resources of the Museum to a national audience.

My research interests in earth science focus mainly on how the solid Earth melts in its interior—on the generation of magmas, or molten rock. Once these magmas are generated, how do they move through the Earth? What happens when they get near the surface of the Earth and cool, either underground, or erupting onto the surface of the Earth as lavas? In particular, I focus most of my research on the lavas that erupt at mid-ocean ridges: how they form, where they form, what happened to them before they erupted, and what happens when they do erupt.

I became interested in Earth science as a young person, in middle school and high school. To be honest, I always had an affinity for school and academics. I think I found science the most appealing. The logic of science, the order of science, appealed to me. And I enjoyed being outdoors. So I saw earth science as a way to capitalize on wanting to be outside and study science.