

BOYD C. RUAMCHAROEN

bruamcharoen@fas.harvard.edu | boydruamch.com

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 2025–27
Postdoctoral Fellow in Global American Studies
Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA 2025
Ph.D. in History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society (HASTS)
Dissertation: “Deteriorating Relations: Weatherable Materials, Tropical Decay, and American Power, 1942–1970s” (Christopher Capozzola, Stefan Helmreich, Kate Brown, Megan Black)
Kaufman Teaching Certificate Program (КТСР), Teaching and Learning Lab
Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA 2015
B.A. in Sociology and Anthropology, with a Minor in Interpretation Theory

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

“Tropicalizing the Portable Radio: Electronics and the U.S. Military’s Battle Against Fungi in the Pacific War,”
Technology and Culture 65, no. 2 (2024): 497–529, <https://doi.org/10.1353/tech.2024.a926313>.

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

William Appleman Williams Emerging Scholar Grant 2026
Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR)
Othmer Library Travel Grant 2025
Science History Institute
Taylor-Wei Dissertation Fellowship in the History of Meteorology 2024–25
Department of History of Science, Technology, and Medicine, University of Oklahoma
Robert L. Platzman Memorial Fellowship 2023
University of Chicago Library
Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation Fellowship 2023
National Museum of American History (NMAH), Smithsonian Institution
Ralph C. and Mary Lynn Heid Research Fellowship 2023
University of Michigan Library
Arthur L. Norberg Travel Grant 2023
Charles Babbage Institute (CBI)
Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant 2023
Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR)

Henry Belin du Pont Fellowship Hagley Museum and Library	2022
Research Fellowship Consortium for History of Science, Technology, and Medicine (CHSTM)	2022

PRESENTATIONS AND CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

“Environmentalism in Decay: The Rise of Biodegradable Materials and the U.S. Empire’s Science of Durability, 1960s–70s,” Technological Environmentalisms, American Society for Environmental History (ASEH) Annual Meeting, Kansas City, MO, March 25–28	2026
“Weathering Decolonization: Tropical Standards of Durability and Postcolonial Worldmaking, 1947–1970s,” Building the Non-Aligned World, Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) Annual Meeting, Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg, October 9–11	2025
“Weathering Decolonization: Weatherable Materials and the Making of Tropical Futures,” The Environment and Worldmaking, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) Annual Meeting, Arlington, VA, June 26–28	2025
Roundtable Participant, Envirotech Roundtable: Past, Present, and Future Directions, American Society of Environmental History (ASEH) Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA, April 9–13	2025
“Archive Fever After Empire: ‘Tropical Archivology,’ Microfilm Copying, and the Role of U.S. Archivists in the Global South,” special presentation at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA, February 25	2025
“Empire’s Deadwood: Decomposing Vegetation in the American Imperium,” Decaying and Decomposing Knowledge, History of Science Society (HSS) Annual Meeting, Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico, November 7–10	2024
Roundtable Participant, The Habitat of Empire: How U.S. Power Shaped the Environment and Vice Versa, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada, June 13–15	2024
“Deteriorating Relations: The Deterioration of Materials and U.S. Global Environmental Management,” Pathologies of Materials, American Society for Environmental History (ASEH) Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, April 3–7	2024
“Testing Environments: The United States, India, and the Internationalization of Tropical Standards for Electronics in a Decolonizing World, 1947–71,” 43rd History of Technology Conference—Good, Durable, Safe: Quality and Safety Requirements of Technology in History, The Iron Library (Eisenbibliothek), Schaffhausen, Switzerland, November 16–18	2023
“Making Waves in the Tropics: Tropical Broadcasting and North-South Contestations over the Radio Tropical Zone at the International Telecommunication Union,” Ethereal Inequality: Empire, Decolonization, and Capitalist Extraction on the Electromagnetic Spectrum, Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA, October 25–29	2023
“Rotten Analogies: Deterioration Control and the U.S. Military’s Approach to the Tropical Environment since World War II,” Militarized Landscapes: An Interdisciplinary Scholarly Workshop, Boise State University, Boise, ID, October 20–22	2023
“Archive Fever After Empire: Microfilm, American Archivists, and the Postcolonial Tropics, 1945–72,” U.S. Foreign Relations in Extreme Environments, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) Annual Meeting, Arlington, VA, June 15–17	2023

- “The Decomposing Message: Electronics, Tropical Deterioration, and the United States in World War II,” Emerging Scholars Workshop: New Directions in WWII History, The Jenny Craig Institute for the Study of War and Democracy at the National WWII Museum, New Orleans, LA, February 23–24 2023
- “Archive Fever After Empire: Microfilm, American Archivists, and the Postcolonial Tropics,” The Images of Counter-Hegemony, Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 10–13 2022
- “Typography of a Nation: How to Craft Digital Typefaces in Post-Crash Thailand,” How to Read the How-to, Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, virtual, October 6–9 2021
- “Tropicalizing the Portable Radio,” Launching the Atmospheric Humanities, virtual, August 3–5 2021
- “Scaling the Cloud: Filming Pacific Clouds in Postwar Tropical Meteorology,” Workshop on the History of the Physical Sciences (Phunday), virtual, January 22–24 2021
- “Tropicalizing the Portable Radio,” Grotesque Epistemologies, European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST) and Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Joint Annual Meeting, virtual, August 18–21 2020

INVITED COMMENTS

- Discussant, History and Political Economy (HPE) Project Conference, Boston University, Boston, MA, December 12–13 2025
- Discussant and Moderator, “Stories Beyond Species,” by Bathsheba Demuth and Eli Nelson, Cross-STS Series, MIT, Cambridge, MA, October 30 2024
- Discussant, “A Phenomenal Language: Analog Representation and the Graphic Method,” by Jack Klempay, Workshop on the History of the Physical Sciences (Phunday), Cambridge, MA, September 28 2019

CONFERENCE PANEL ORGANIZING

- Convener, “Technological Environmentalisms: Histories of Environmentalist Technologies and Infrastructures,” American Society for Environmental History (ASEH) Annual Meeting, Kansas City, MO, March 25–28 (with Turner Adornetto) 2026
- Convener, “Decomposing and Decaying Knowledge,” History of Science Society (HSS) Annual Meeting, Mérida, Mexico, November 7–10 (with Brad Bolman) 2024
- Convener and Discussant, “Tropical Materialities,” European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST) and Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Joint Annual Meeting, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, July 16–19 (with Hina Walajahi) 2024
- Convener, “Pathologies of Materials: Environmental Histories of Material Decay and Its Management,” American Society for Environmental History (ASEH) Annual Conference, Denver, CO, April 3–7 (with Ji Soo Hong) 2024
- Convener, “U.S. Foreign Relations in Extreme Environments,” Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) Annual Meeting, Arlington, VA, June 15–17 (with Stephen Buono) 2023
- Convener and Chair, “Aerotechnologies: Air as an Elemental Technology,” Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, virtual, October 6–9 (with Jia-Hui Lee) 2021
- Convener and Chair, “How to Read the How-to,” Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) Annual Meeting, virtual, October 6–9 (with Emma Pask) 2021

WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION

Degradation Workshop, Microsoft Research (MSR) New England Lab, Cambridge, MA, May 7	2024
Collaborative Research Workshop on the History of the New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO), Non-Aligned News Research Partnership (NANREP), virtual, June 5–9	2023

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Ecologies of American Empire: The United States and Global Environments, 1898–2000, Instructor of Record, Department of History	Spring 2026
---	-------------

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Cultures of Computing, Teaching Assistant, Program in Science, Technology, and Society	Spring 2023
The Indigenous History of MIT, Teaching Assistant, History Section	Fall 2021
Technology and Culture, Teaching Assistant, Anthropology Program	Fall 2020
Science in Action: Technologies and Controversies in Everyday Life, Teaching Assistant, Program in Science, Technology, and Society	Spring 2020

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Society for Environmental History (ASEH)
Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR)
Society for the History of Technology (SHOT)
Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S)
History of Science Society (HSS)

