MICHAELA J. THOMPSON
Curriculum Vitae
October 2026

Education

Ph.D. History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
M.A. History, Northeastern University
B.A. History, Carleton College

Appointments

2022-present Lecturer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

2019-present Instructor, Harvard University Division of Continuing Education

2018-2022 Preceptor, Environmental Science and Public Policy Program, Harvard University

2016-2019 Giorgio Ruffolo Post-doctoral Research Fellow in Sustainability Science, Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government, Harvard Kennedy School

Teaching/Advising

2026-present **Massachusetts Institute of Technology,** School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Compass Initiative
Instructor
"Love, Death, and Taxes: How to Think – and Talk to Others – About Being Human"

2023-present **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, Program in Science, Technology, and Society
Instructor
"Intersections: Science, Technology, and the World"
"Science in Action: Technologies and Controversies in Everyday Life"
"Technology and Culture"

2022-present **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, Anthropology Program
Lecturer
"City Living: Ethnographies of Urban Worlds
"Disease and Health: Culture, Society, and Ethics"
"Introduction to Anthropology: Comparing Human Cultures"
"Technology and Culture"

2022-present **Harvard Extension School,** Sustainability and GDP Program
Instructor
"Designing Sustainability Research"
"Introduction to Sustainability"
"Independent Research Capstone"
"Sustainability and Global Development Practice Case Study Capstone"
"Sustainability and Global Development Practice Case Study Precapstone"

2019-present **Harvard Summer School,** Environmental Studies
Instructor
"Introduction to Environmental Problems and Solutions"
"Sustainability and Global Development Practice Case Study Capstone"

2018-2022 **Harvard University**, Environmental Science and Public Policy
Preceptor
"Capstone Tutorial"
"Senior Thesis Tutorial"
"Sustainable Development"

2014-2018 **Harvard University**, Environmental Science and Public Policy Program
Teaching Assistant
"Environmental Politics"
"Sustainable Development"
"Technology, Environment, and Society"

2014 **Harvard University**, Department of the History of Science
Teaching Assistant
"Knowing the World: An Introduction to the History of Science"

2011-2014 **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, Program in History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society
Teaching Assistant
"Bioethics"
"Evolution and Society"
"The History of MIT"
"Medieval Economic History in Comparative Perspective"

2006-2008 **Northeastern University**, College of Professional Studies
Instructor
"Coming to America: A History of Immigration"

2005 **Northeastern University**, History Department
Teaching Assistant
"Making the Modern World"

Applied Research/Expert Outreach

2025 Contributor, "Beware of Sharks: *Jaws* and an Ocean Full of Monsters", Ideas Podcast, The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, June 23, 2025

2022 Contributor, "Episode 25: Do Shark Stories Help Sharks?," Overheard at National Geographic Podcast, July 12, 2022

2019 Moderator, *The Last Animals* film screening panel, Ann Arbor, MI

2018 Invited Co-Facilitator, "Community Charrette: Codesigning Tools for Public Education on Ann Arbor's Dioxane Plume," Michigan Sustainability Cases, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

2017-2018 Strategic Advisor, "Galaxy Case Innovation Studio," Michigan Sustainability Cases, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

2016 Consultant/Instructor, "Camp Sepawonuk STEM Education Program," Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Maine Indian Education, and Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge, Calais, ME

2010 Research Assistant, "Tangible Things: Making History Through Objects," Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

2006-2008 Research Consultant, "Tories, Timid, or True Blue" Public History Project, Old North Foundation, Boston, MA

2005-2008 Research Assistant and Archivist, Office of the President, Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Publications and Manuscripts

2027 *Shadows in the Water: Sharks and People in the 20th Century and Beyond*, University of North Carolina Press (forthcoming)

2022 "Making a Short Story Long: Teaching Sustainability on the *Longue Durée,*" *World Development Perspectives,* (Volume 26, June 2022)

2022 "The Alaskan Salmon Fishery: Managing Resources in a Globalizing World," working paper, Sustainability Science Program, Harvard Kennedy School

2022 "Boston Harbor: An Evolving Landscape," working paper, Sustainability Science Program, Harvard Kennedy School

2018 Review of *Fishing: How the Sea Fed Civilization* by Brian Fagan, *The Historian*, (Volume 80, Issue 3): 629-631

2016 *Governing the Shark: Predators and People in the Twentieth Century and Beyond*. Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Selected Presentations and Invited Lectures

2026 "Dark Waters: Constructing Aquatic Predators in Science and Culture" Roundtable, Annual Meeting of the History of Science Society, Edinburgh, Scotland

2025 "*Albannach Cearbain*: The Changing Fortunes of Basking Sharks in the Scottish Hebrides" 13th European Society for Environmental History Conference, Uppsala, Sweden

2024 "Blood on the Beach: Sharks, Swimmers, and Science in the Mid-20th Century" Second Annual Animal History Lecture, University of Dayton, Dayton, OH

2024 "'White Sharks and White Men': Boundary-Work Within U.S. Shark Science in the 20th Century" Annual Meeting of the History of Science Society, Mérida, Mexico

2024 "Shadows in the Water: Exploring Shark-Human Intimacies in the 20th Century and Beyond" 4th World Congress of Environmental History, Oulu, Finland

2024 "Shadows in the Water: What Sharks Tell Us About Ourselves," Coastal Perspectives Lecture Series, University of Connecticut, Avery Point, CT

2024 "Great Fight Shark: The Challenges of Changing Perceptions of Species," American Society for Environmental History, Denver, CO

2023 "Citizen Shark Science: Stakeholders and Elasmobranch Research on Cape Cod," Annual Meeting of the American Society for Environmental History, Boston, MA

2022 "Tundra Taxonomies: Classification at the End of the World," The Harriet Ritvo Symposium, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

2022 "Speaking (for) Sharks: Contested Expertise in Marine Conversation," STS Circle, Harvard STS Program, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, MA

2019 "To Make a Short Story Long: Teaching Sustainability on the *Longue Durée,*" Sustainability Case Exchange, *Galaxy*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

2019 "Red Fish, Green Fish: A History of the Bristol Bay Sockeye Fishery," *Ocean, Island, Shore: Placing the Global Pacific in the Age of Climate Change* Workshop, Harvard Center for the Environment, Cambridge, MA

2019 "Sharks in the Dark: Examining the Depths of Fear and Fascination" *DARKNESS 2019*, Longyearbyen, Svalbard

2018 "The White Shark Race: Exhibiting the Elusive," Annual Meeting of the American Society for Environmental History, Riverside, CA

2017 "Shark Seasons" *Citizen Science and the Wild* Workshop, Natural History Museum, London, UK

2016 "Biting the Hands That Feed" *Call of the Wild* Workshop, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

2014 "Learning from Sharks" The MBL-ASU History of Biology Seminar, The Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA

2013 "Shark Summers: Predators and People in 21st-Century New England" Annual Meeting of the American Society for Environmental History, Toronto, ON

2011 "Monster, Miracle, and Material: Sharks in History and Culture" Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, Bloomington, IN

Institutional and Professional Service

2025-present Affiliate and Communications Co-Lead, Living Climate Futures, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

2024 Panel Chair, "Beyond Fear and Loathing: New Perspectives on Apex Predators," American Society for Environmental History, Denver, CO

2023 Orientation Curriculum Coordinator, Program on History, Technology, and Science, Technology, and Society, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

2020-2022 Discussion Coordinator, Energy & Environment and ESPP Secondary Fields, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

2022 Speaker, "Carbon Footprint and Sustainability Workshop," "Empowering Humanity: Fostering Change in a Changing Climate," Harvard Undergraduate UNICEF Club, Cambridge, MA

2021 Panelist, "Research for Global Impact," National Collegiate Research Conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

2020 Panelist, "Research and its Real-World Impact: Public Service, Global Good, and Activism," National Collegiate Research Conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

2011-2015 Coordinator, Freshman Pre-Orientation Program, "Discover History and Literature in Boston," Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

2013 Facilitator/Support Staff, "Evolving Culture of Science Engagement" Workshop, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

2010-2011 Graduate Student Representative, History Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

2018-2022 Harvard University, Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for Lecturers and Preceptors

2017, 2016 Harvard University, Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for Teaching Fellows, Teaching Assistants, and Course Assistants

2013 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, History Program, Research Travel Grant

2008-2009 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Kenan Sahin Presidential Fellowship

2005 Northeastern University, History Department, Merit Scholarship Award

Professional Associations

American Elasmobranch Society
American Society for Environmental History
European Society for Environmental History
History of Science Society