

History of Knowledge Reading List

16 October 2026

Week 1: What is the history of knowledge?

Wed 16 Sep: Introductory lecture

Östling & Larsson Heidenblad, *The History of Knowledge* (2024), pp. 1–16

Daston, “The History of Science and the History of Knowledge” (2017), pp. 131–154

Secord, “Against Revolutions” (2024), pp. 17–37

Further:

- Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (1996)

Fri 18 Sep: Introducing Aristotle

Kuhn, *The Essential Tension: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change* (1977), pp. xi–xiii

Dijksterhuis & Dikshoorn, *The Mechanisation of the World Picture* (1961), “Aristotelianism”, pp. 17–42

Source: Aristotle, *Aristotle's Physics*, bk. 1 (pp. 315–317), bk. 3 (pp. 342–345), bk. 8 (pp. 418–427) in Barnes' *Complete Works*; highlighted passages only

Week 2: Aristotle in the Middle Ages and Galileo

Wed 23 Sep: Teaching and learning Aristotle in the Middle Ages

Shank, “Schools and Universities in Medieval Latin Science” (2013), pp. 207–239

Grant, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages: Their Religious, Institutional and Intellectual Contexts* (1996), pp. 127–141

Source: “The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts; Translated from the Latin with an Introduction and Notes”, pp. 46–47, 90–97

Sources (skim, close reading in class):

- Thomas Aquinas, “Commentary on Aristotle's Physics, Book 1”
- Thomas Aquinas, “Commentary on Boethius' De Trinitate, Question 2, Article 2: Can There Be a Science of Divine Realities?”
- Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologiae, Part III, Question 75, Article 4: Whether Bread Can Be Converted into the Body of Christ?”

Fri 25 Sep: Galileo and Aristotle

Heilbron, *Galileo* (2010), pp. 41–56

Source: Galileo, *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* (1632), pp. 144–155, 162–167

Further:

- Settle, “An Experiment in the History of Science: With a Simple but Ingenious Device Galileo Could Obtain Relatively Precise Time Measurements.” (1961)
- Drake, “Galileo's Experimental Confirmation of Horizontal Inertia: Unpublished Manuscripts (Galileo Gleanings XXII)”
- Koyré, “A Documentary History of the Problem of Fall from Kepler to Newton: De Motu Graviorum Naturaliter Cadentium in Hypothesi Terrae Motae” (1955)

Week 3: Exam and ink

Wed 30 Sep: Exam

Fri 2 Oct: Workshop, reconstructing an ink recipe

Fors, Principe, & Sibum, "From the Library to the Laboratory and Back Again: Experiment as a Tool for Historians of Science" (2016), pp. 85–97

Source: Ruscelli & Ward, *The Secrets of the Reverend Maister Alexis of Piemont : Containing Excellent Remedies against Diverse Diseases, Wounds, and Other Accidents, with the Maner to Make Distillations, Parfumes, Confitures, Dying, Colours, Fusions, and Meltings ...* (1595)

Further:

- *Les Secrets Du Seigneur Alexis Piemontois, Divisez En Deux Parties* (1573)

Week 4: Flowers from the garden

Wed 7 Oct: Flowers from the garden

Chen, "Remaking Sixteenth-Century Botanical Woodblocks: Embodied Artisanal Knowledge in Early Modern Woodcutting" (2024), pp. 163–184

Swan, "Ad Vivum, Naer Het Leven, From the Life: Defining a Mode of Representation" (1995), pp. 353–372

Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book of Nature: Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany* (2012), pp. 101–123

Fransen & Reinhart, "The Practice of Copying in Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: An Introduction" (2019), pp. 211–222

Further:

- Papillon, *Traité Historique et Pratique de La Gravure En Bois* (1766)
- Griffiths, *The Print before Photography* (2016)

Fri 9 Oct: Workshop, etching and printing a plant

Assignment 1 due Tue 13 Oct, 23.59

Week 5: Print

Wed 14 Oct: Introducing historiographical debates

Smith, *Science on the Move* (2009), pp. 345–375

Fri 16 Oct: Manuscript and print culture

Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (1998), pp. 1–6

Eisenstein, "An Unacknowledged Revolution Revisited" (2002), pp. 87–105

I Adrian Johns' unjustifiably plays down the revolutionary aspects of printing.

Further:

- Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe* (1979)

Johns, "How to Acknowledge a Revolution" (2002), pp. 106–125

Johns' rhetorical move is to view Elizabeth's (mis)reading of his text as evidence for his claim of the autonomy of readers in "appropriating" books.

Further: John Feather, “The Book Trade in Politics: The Making of the Copyright Act of 1710”.

Week 6: Information management and global histories

Wed 21 Oct: Information management

Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (2010), pp. 22–61

Leong, “Papering the Household: Paper, Recipes, and Everyday Technologies in Early Modern England” (2019), pp. 32–45

Yale, “Marginalia, Commonplaces, and Correspondence: Scribal Exchange in Early Modern Science” (2011), pp. 193–202

Fri 23 Oct: Global histories of knowledge

Needham, “Poverties and Triumphs of the Chinese Scientific Tradition” (2005), pp. 17–51

Poskett, *Horizons: A Global History of Science* (2022), pp. 1–22

Cohen, “From West to East, from East to West? Early Science between Civilizations” (2012), pp. 339–350

Week 7: Global histories and humanism

Wed 28 Oct: Global histories of knowledge 2

Delbourgo, “The Knowing World: A New Global History of Science” (2019), pp. 373–399

Trambaiolo, “Translating the Inner Landscape: Anatomical Bricolage in Early Modern Japan” (2022), pp. 163–191

Fri 30 Oct: Humanism in the history of science

Ashworth, “Natural History and the Emblematic World View” (1990), pp. 303–332

Grafton, *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450–1800* (1991), pp. 178–203

Week 8: Philology and the material book

Wed 4 Nov: Philology and empiricism

Miert, “Philology and Empiricism: Observation and Description in the Correspondence of Joseph Scaliger (1540–1609)” (2013), pp. 89–114

Dunkelgrün, *The Multiplicity of Scripture: The Making of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible* (2025), pp. xvii–xxv, 1–30

Fri 6 Nov: Special Collections UBU (map room, Science Park)

“Lecture on a Galileo Forgery”

Assignment 2 due Sun 8 Nov, 23.59