

HISTORY OF SCIENCE SOCIETY

Newsletter



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Sarton Medalist Announcement

HSS is pleased to announce the 2025 Sarton Medalist, Pamela Smith.

Pamela Smith is the Seth Low Professor of History and Director of the Center for Science and Society at Columbia University. Over the course of more than three decades, Smith has published three monographs and seven edited volumes, authored or co-authored over eighty articles, and served on the dissertation committees of over sixty students.

Sarton Medalist Announcement (cont.)

Smith has been a transformative figure in the history of science, particularly through her pioneering work on the material culture of early modern science. Her scholarship has profoundly reshaped questions of how artisanal knowledge, craft practices, and embodied skills contributed to the development of scientific knowledge in early modern Europe. From Smith's first monograph on the business of alchemy to her most recent book on practical experience and lived experience, Smith's scholarly contributions have been read widely in the history of science and beyond. Smith's work as a mentor to generations of graduate students has also greatly impacted contemporary research in the history of science.



In particular, she has nurtured a group of scholars dedicated to the study of history of science and technology in the global early modern world. Through her guidance, scholars influenced by Smith's work and thinking are now actively shaping discourse on the history of science and knowledge formation in early modern and modern Europe, Asia, and beyond.

Institutionally, Smith's work has changed the field through her leadership in founding the Center for Science and Society at Columbia University. She has pioneered perhaps one of the largest collaborative humanities projects in recent memory, the Making and Knowing Project. These serve as key examples of how Smith has expanded the practice of doing the history of science in impressive and lasting ways. The Making and Knowing project has over 400 collaborators. To produce this panoramic, multi-faceted project, Smith brought together a vast international and interdisciplinary community of scholars, curators, archivists, artists, and programmers. The innovative website of the project required an immense amount of labor behind the scenes, from creating sustainable software platforms, to figuring out how to serve both research communities and the public, to developing pedagogical tools that could and have been widely deployed. It has also produced immensely impactful scholarship, including Smith's prize-winning *From Lived Experience to the Written Word*, which received the George L. Mosse Prize from the American Historical Association. This project has had incredible international influence. The Netherlands counts three large universities that have placed hands-on history and material engagement at the core of their research and teaching programs in Art History and Conservation: The University of Amsterdam, Utrecht University, and the University of Groningen. All three have been influenced by Smith's work.

Smith's collaborative approach to the history of science and her generosity towards junior scholars make her highly deserving of the Sarton Medal and provide a model of lasting impact in our field.

Nominated by Vera Keller.

Distinguished Lecturer announcement

HSS is pleased to announce that Conevery Bolton Valencius will deliver the Distinguished Lecture at the Annual Meeting in New Orleans, entitled “Boom: What History of Science Needs to Know about Shale,” Friday, 14 November, 6 pm.

The History of Science Society’s series of Distinguished Lectures began in 1981 at the annual meeting in Los Angeles, California. Over the past 20 years this “Society Lecture” has evolved into a highlight of the annual meeting, drawing by far the largest attendance of any session. Through the generosity of Joseph H. Hazen, the renamed HSS Distinguished Lecture has been endowed.



Conevery Bolton Valencius works on the history of environments, health, and energy. She earned a Ph.D. in the History of Science from Harvard University in 1998 and was a Fellow of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study in 2016. She has earned awards from the Society of American Historians and the History of Science Society. In February 2022 she was named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Valencius is the author of two books: *The Health of the Country: How American Settlers Understood Themselves and Their Land* (2002, Basic Books), which won the 2003 George Perkins Marsh Prize from the American Society for Environmental History, and *The Lost History of the New Madrid Earthquakes* (2013, University of Chicago Press).

Valencius is currently finishing a book about earthquakes and contemporary US energy which she is co-writing with science journalist Anna Kuchment of the Boston Globe. Her recent projects include a history of the Cape Ann earthquakes, an article about the influential 1927 World War I film *Wings*, and descriptive panels for the newly-donated Lynch Collection artworks soon to be installed at BC’s McMullen Museum.

Along with two scientist colleagues, Valencius recently received a grant from BC’s Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society to study the history and impact of injection wells, a waste-disposal technology linked to induced earthquakes.

Valencius teaches fabulous BC undergrads in courses including “Powering America,” a six-credit Core course on the history and technology of US energy systems which she co-teaches with two scientists. Her other courses include “Leeches to Lasers: Health and Medicine in the US” and “This Land is Your Land: US Environmental History.” She is co-convenor of the “Bodies and Places” grad/faculty working group in the History Department and works to support the energetic programming of the Program in Environmental Studies and the Schiller Institute.

Note from the Executive Office

HSS conducted its second Interdisciplinary Summer School from 23-27 June 2025 at the University of Bologna. This incredible program paired 12 early career scholars with faculty for a four-day intensive workshop.

The 12 early career participants came from across the globe to workshop a dissertation chapter, journal article, or other work in progress. These students were selected by an ad hoc committee (composed of Council members, Committee on Meetings and Program members, and early career scholars) to participate. HSS received over 80 applications to participate.

The 2025 cohort included: **Miriam Borgia** (University of Bologna), **Ryan Carty** (Michigan State University), **Yulia Cherniavskaia** (Rutgers University), **Jason Irving** (University of Kent), **Azram Rahman Khan** (University of Delhi), **Joshua Klein** (Geneva Graduate Institute), **CJ Kuncheria** (Jawaharlal Nehru University), **Mogana Lisi** (University of Turin), **David Penteado** (University of Sao Paolo), **Tijana Rupčić** (Polish Academy of Sciences), **Hayley Serpa** (Yale University), and **Shangshang Wang** (Ludwig Maximilian University).

Lead by Summer School Chair, **Matthew Shindell** (Smithsonian Institution), six other faculty members joined to help mentor the students including: **Gisela Mateos** (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), **Vassiliki Betty Smocovitis** (University of Florida), **Jan Surman** (Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences), **Soraya de Chadarevian** (UCLA), **Monica Azzolini** (University of Bologna), and **Rocio Gomez** (Virginia Commonwealth University). Faculty members led workshops for each student and conducted three masterclasses on the history of science.

Students and faculty alike enjoyed the city of Bologna, a city rich with histories of science.

This summer school would not have been possible without the tireless effort of Monica Azzolini. Monica was key in planning and provided a robust experience for students and faculty. She was a gracious host in Bologna: she planned meals and a visit to the botanical gardens, booked the space at the university, and organized delightful meetups outside of class.

Note from the Executive Office (cont.)

My thanks to all the volunteers at HSS who made this program a reality. Members from the Executive Committee, Council, Committee on Meetings and Programs, Committee on Education and Engagement, and the Graduate and Early Career Caucus all donated significant hours to select the participants, design the school, and implement it. The summer school is a testament to how a member-driven society like HSS works to provide programming for its members.

We will be planning for our third Summer School in 2027.



History of Science in the Library: An Interview with Michelle DiMeo

Interview by Sam Franz

Michelle DiMeo is the Vice President of Collections and Programs and the Arnold Thackray Director of the Othmer Library at the Science History Institute. She is the author of Lady Ranelagh: The Incomparable Life of Robert Boyle's Sister (University of Chicago Press, 2021) and currently serves as Associate Editor of the journal Endeavour.



Can you briefly describe your career trajectory?

After completing my PhD at the University of Warwick, I took my first postdoc at Georgia Tech, where I taught Technical Communication. It was a three-year position, but not a great fit for me, so I left after the first year to pursue a career in libraries. My first library position was Director of Digital Library Initiatives at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, where I worked with the Medical Heritage Library digital consortium. I realized then that I wanted to become the director of a research library, and I spent the next decade gaining more experience through jobs at the Science History Institute (then Chemical Heritage Foundation) and Hagley Museum and Library. I've been the Library Director at the Science History Institute since 2020 and their VP of Collections since 2022.

What was surprising and/or challenging in your journey to your current job?

When I got my PhD in 2009, I had very few mentors. In fact, several people actively discouraged me from taking a job outside of academia because it might look like I “failed” to find an academic job! I veered off the tenure track by choice, but quickly found that the job market for curators or research directors wasn't much better. Many institutions also required an additional MLIS degree or actual work experience in a library. Thankfully, I was able to rely on experiences I had in graduate school with Warwick's Perdita Project, where I worked to digitize 17th-century women's manuscripts. Today, it is more typical to see “MLIS or equivalent experience” on a recruitment advertisement. I'd also like to think that the history of science as a field recognizes job diversity more than it did 15 years ago.

Interview (cont.)

How does your perspective as a library director influence how you think about the function of academic societies like HSS?

In some ways, my perspective probably isn't that different from that of a traditional academic member of HSS. I value the Annual Meeting as a place to present research, get feedback, and network with colleagues. Learning about current trends in research also directly impacts how I do my job, including how I allocate funds or update our collecting policy. It is also a chance to learn who might be on the job market and for me to advertise openings at my institution.

Is there anything you would change about how HSS integrates the work of library and museum professionals into the professional society?

I think the addition of Caucuses like CALM (Collections, Archives, Libraries, and Museums) is positive. My recommendation for further integration would be to seek true career diversity in terms of representation on plenaries and in leadership positions. There have been times when an all-academic panel has been asked to speak about something like "public history" or "the future of the field," but I find myself wanting for more perspectives because the advice given can be outdated or incorrect.

Yes, that's right. Museums and libraries are some of the institutions that scholars think about as doing "public history." How do you view the relationship between academic work and public-facing historical work? What are the ways that you do public history in your own work?

I do both academic and public history. I view that relationship as being similar to how a university professor writes original work for peer-review but also teaches undergraduates. For example, my academic biography of Lady Ranelagh was published with the University of Chicago Press, and then it took months of scripting and revising with the Distillations team to create a podcast episode suitable for a public audience. I think many people confuse public history with just simplifying something, but true public history takes a position in an argument, incorporates pedagogical theory, and refines based on audience research.

Interview (cont.)

What would you want graduate students who are interested in library work to know about the field?

One thing I wish I'd known is that there are many different types of career trajectories in libraries. I mean this in terms of technical expertise (cataloging, digital collections, reader services) but also types of collections (archives, oral history, rare books). These each require different skillsets, and some may require specialist schooling while others don't. I have also found that independent research libraries value experts with advanced degrees more than university libraries, as the primary focus of the latter is serving undergraduates.

I was recently traveling for a research fellowship and I had a challenging time explaining to my father (who isn't an academic) why they would fund me to be in residence at a research library. How do you describe the value of supporting research fellows at an organization like SHI?

Hah! I can see why your father would ask that! An independent research library has a core mission to preserve historically significant collections and to provide access to them. When someone is considering donating their personal library or archival papers to a library, I have to make a pitch for how their collections will be used at my library. Potential donors love hearing that our fellows come from all over the world to create new knowledge through their use of our collections. And the outputs of those fellowships – books, articles, even videos – raise our profile, help us reach new audiences, and cultivate new donations.

Finally, are there any fellowship opportunities that you would like to highlight for members of HSS?

Yes! All of [SHI's fellowships](#) are run through our Beckman Center for the History of Chemistry, but you don't need to be a historian of chemistry to apply. We open our call every fall, close it in early winter, and award fellowships in spring for the following academic year. We competitively award dozens of short-term (1-4 month) and long-term (9-12 month) fellowships each year – collectively over 100 months of fellowships annually. Based on the questions in this interview, I want to highlight our Curatorial Fellowships, which are ideal for anyone seeking a career in libraries or museums. Each year a new Curatorial Fellow joins us for two years to work with our collections on a public history project. We then help these fellows land jobs at institutions like the Smithsonian, Library of Congress, and Penn Libraries. Our program is proud to have supported or launched hundreds of careers across the field. I myself am a former Beckman Center Fellow!

Meet the Team – Morgan Valenzuela

Meet the team is a series meant to introduce members of HSS to the workers that make the society run. The final installment will be in the next issue of the newsletter.

What's your role at HSS and how long have you been in it?

I joined the Executive Office in July of 2021 as an Administrative Assistant. In August 2024, I became the Member Manager at HSS, though I still perform most of my administrative and meeting-related duties. Both positions have permitted me to wear many hats. I really enjoy the variety that comes with the work.

Reflecting on the centennial annual meeting, was there anything that surprised you?

Honestly, I'm still surprised that the skies didn't open up and rain out the centennial banquet! The evening was hot and humid (it was the Yucatán after all) and excitement grew like the gathering clouds all day. But the night was beautiful! Members gathered for dinner and drinks after the Distinguished Lecture. HSS President Professor Evelyn Hammonds ushered in the next 100 years of the History of Science and the evening ended in good conversation on the grounds of the Quinta Montes Molina.



As someone who works in administration of academic societies and professional organizations, how do you think about the relationship between an organization like HSS and the academy?

HSS is the first academic society I've worked for. One of the most interesting and rewarding parts of the job is hearing from members about why societies like HSS matter to them. My hope is that HSS serves as a support system, a way to build and engage in community for academics in the field.

Compared to other professional societies or non-profits that you've worked in, how is HSS different?

In a former life, I was on track to pursue a career in the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums) world. So, while I've not worked for an academic society prior to HSS, I worked in a handful of museums that were non-profits. At museums, I worked on exhibit openings and, later, fundraising events.

Meet the Team (cont.)

The work I do for HSS means I spend less time in archives or revising exhibit labels, but I now have a better understanding of what it takes for institutions, organizations, or societies to support the work they do. It also means I spend more time on event logistics, which can be just as entertaining and gratifying. Work for the annual meeting takes up a large portion of my time and I enjoy the logistics and communications immensely. It's amazing to see the work that program chairs, committees, caucuses, and individual members do that culminates in the annual meeting.

What are your hopes for HSS given your current role? How do you see the society growing in the future?

I'm encouraged every day by the work of our members and the ambitions of the history of science as a whole. I am delighted to be able to serve the society in my small way. The goals of internationalizing and expanding the definition of historian resonate with me. The Biennial Interdisciplinary Summer School is a program I am proud to support and I am excited by the work that our Development Coordinator, Alex, is doing to ensure graduate students are able to participate in HSS. In my current role, I'm hoping that the member experience can be improved, that we can expand membership benefits, and I look forward to supporting the members in directing the Society as it continues into its second century.

Are there any scholars whose work you've been particularly interested in or inspired by as you've worked with them as part of HSS?

Oh no I can't pick favorites! But I will confess that working with the scholars in HSS has resulted in many Google searches and research rabbit-holes. I'm endlessly impressed and intrigued by the work our members do, especially when reading article abstracts, book descriptions, or professional websites. Really! You're all doing such fascinating work. My degree is in History and Gender and Women's Studies, and my own research focused on LGBTQ experiences in the late 1800s. Whenever I hear a presentation or read that a scholar works on medical history and gender, I'm in danger of adding to my ever-growing "To Be Read" pile.

Lone Star Historians of Science

Continuing a longstanding tradition, the Lone Star History of Science Group held its 38th annual meeting in Austin on 18 April 2025. This spring the group was happy to welcome as its speaker Dr. Elizabeth Bishop of the American University of Iraq–Baghdad, formerly of Texas State University in San Marcos. Dr. Bishop spoke on “‘Atoms for Peace’ in Iraq,” tracing efforts by the U. S. government in the 1950s to use access to nuclear technology to gain diplomatic leverage in the Middle East. The British nuclear establishment also made an important contribution, with staff from the UK Atomic Energy Authority helping to set up a training center in Baghdad in 1957 to conduct radioisotope research. Dr. Bishop’s talk brought out the complex role nuclear science and technology played mid-20th century international relations, particularly in the Middle East.

Each spring, the Lone Star Group brings together historians of science, technology, and medicine from around Texas to discuss their shared interests and enjoy a friendly dinner. Its constitution, adopted at an Austin restaurant in 1988, provides that there shall be “no officers, no by-laws, and no dues,” and the group remains resolutely informal. Anyone wishing to be added to the group’s mailing list (and that’s all it takes to become a member in good standing) should contact Bruce Hunt of the University of Texas at bjhunt@austin.utexas.edu.



Front row: Cliff Cunningham, Abena Osseo-Asare, Liz Petrick, Megan Raby, Scottie Buehler, Elizabeth Bishop, Jamie Sackett, Jessie Sackett. Back row: Felipe Vilo, Yohad Zacarias, Steve Bratteng, Bruce Hunt, Luis Campos, John Lisle. Not pictured: Zayna Abdel-Rahim, Karl Stephan, Pam Stephan.

News from the CoDI

In 2025, the Committee on Diversity and Inclusivity will focus on advancing accessibility in all forms at the HSS. We invite you to join us in making this possible. Here are three tips on accessibility from the [HSS Guide to Inclusivity](#) that will improve your presentations at the annual meeting, and indeed in any context:

- Be sure to make your presentations accessible for d/Deaf and hearing-impaired people: [Google Slides](#) and [Microsoft PowerPoint](#) have built-in closed captioning features that transcribe the speaker's and audience members' words onto the screen.
- Ensure that the colors you use on your slides are friendly for the colorblind. There are online apps—for example [Vischeck](#)—that will check each slide to ensure that it is accessible. Colors on opposite sides of the color wheel work best together (red/blue, yellow/purple). Here's a helpful [accessibility color palette](#).
- If a microphone is available, please make sure to use it consistently.

[An essay](#) by HSS member Nicole Schroeder on accessibility appeared in *Inside Higher Ed*, October 5, 2022.

Towards a Materialist History of Knowledge: Reflections from a Workshop

By Brad Bolman, Sam Franz, Claire Votava

As humanistic disciplines reengage with critical theories of capitalism—particularly those shaped by Marx and his interpreters—can the history of science afford to remain on the sidelines? On April 4-5, 2025, we participated in a workshop held at the University of Pennsylvania that took up this challenge, convened under the theme of “materialist approaches to the history of knowledge.” Scholars from NYU, Johns Hopkins, the University of Pennsylvania, UCLA, Columbia, and more gathered from across disciplines including History, the History of Science, English, and Religious Studies. We offer this reflection to highlight themes and questions that we believe are relevant to the History of Science Society as we reevaluate the political project of our discipline.

Critical social theory, especially of Marxian influence, has long been a part of the history of science. Genealogies often begin with Boris Hessen’s classic analysis of the socio-economic roots of Newton’s *Principia* (1931) or Franz Borkenau’s *The Transition from Feudal to Modern Thought* (*Der Übergang vom feudalen zum bürgerlichen Weltbild*, 1934). Such texts directly influenced key figures in British history of science in the first half of the 20th century, including Joseph Needham and J. D. Bernal, among others.¹ Austrian émigré Edgar Zilsel, whose work is foundational to debates about the role of artisanal labor in the emergence of modern science, was similarly indebted to Marxism, even while he combined the tradition with elements of logical positivism.² Robert Merton’s work in the 1930s frequently cited Hessen and acknowledged a direct influence, while Max Weber, Karl Mannheim, and other classical sociologists of knowledge built on the work of Hungarian Marxist historian and philosopher György Lukács.³ Foucault, too, justified his work in light of Marx’s political project, even while he critiqued what he saw as a problematic discourse of 19th century political economy in Marx’s work.⁴

In an era marked by deepening wealth inequality and the unraveling of the post-war science funding regime, particularly in the United States, which underpinned much of 20th century science, it appears increasingly necessary to center critical theories of economy and society in our studies of science.

Although scholars throughout the 20th century repeatedly turned to materialist frameworks to understand the production of knowledge, the discipline of the history of science has often distanced itself from the explicit terrain of political economy or lost sight of its own earlier engagements. While we root science in society through historical epistemology, we frequently gesture toward the social without fully theorizing its structures, contradictions, or material conditions. Our workshop on “materialist histories of knowledge” aimed to address this gap by returning to a foundational conception of materialism that centers the production and reproduction of life as essential to the historical understanding of science.

Towards a Materialist History of Knowledge (cont.)

In our view, these critical perspectives can make the social and political stakes of the history of science clearly visible. Recently, work in the history of capitalism and intellectual history has been given serious attention outside of scholarly circles—here we are here thinking about the work of Adam Tooze, Quinn Slobodian, Julia Ott, Naomi Klein, and more. We see the relevance of these thinkers as evidence that, in our current moment, studies of the entanglement of science, technology, and capitalism are gaining visibility in public discourse. Recent and commendable work in the history of science has highlighted concepts from political economy, for instance the role of markets or of work in the construction of scientific knowledge.⁵ Our work focused instead on the systemic character of capitalism, especially production, management, and value. We raise a number of questions for the field: can we expand on histories of the laboratory commodity or scientific circulation to explore the structures that make that possible? Can we go beyond recognizing invisible labor to understanding the conditions of capitalist labor itself? Furthermore, might a reengagement with critical theories of capitalism replace “economic-,” “social-,” or “political-historical” frames in the history of science with a more sophisticated engagement with political economy and renew the contemporary political relevance of our work?

Scholars at the workshop approached materialist histories of science through a range of lenses, but one cluster of panels focused on historical actors—primarily scientists—who grappled explicitly with questions of labor, class, and expertise. This was not to suggest a uniform embrace of an explicitly “Hessian” framework, but rather to trace how members of the scientific community have, at various moments, attempted to make sense of the political economy of their own discipline.

One such (perhaps overt) example includes that of the “radical science movement,” or the multi-national effort, which emerged in the late 1960s, to challenge science and its more vexing sociopolitical and economic entanglements. In Britain, the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science (BSSRS)—which drew intellectual lineage from figures such as J.D. Bernal—mounted wide-ranging critiques of the scientific establishment. These included interrogations of the relationship between science and capital, calls for the radical redistribution of knowledge, and demands for a structural reorganization of the laboratory itself. Historical cases such as BSSRS offer fertile ground for engaging with historical materialism—not as an abstract framework, but as a lived problem for those attempting to remake science from within.

Another set of panels raised methodological questions about the relative place of contingency in history and the value of knowledge production. Drawing directly on Marxian critical theory, panelists went beyond a historicist understanding of the way that material interests and social location inform scientific work. While the history of science has often centered theories of history that attempt to explain the contingency and historical choice that inform the development of knowledge, panelists asked whether questions about the role that the general social dynamics generated by capital—those that are *not* contingent—can be understood to play a role in the production of knowledge. In other words, should capitalism and its attendant social relations be understood as contingent? Can they be? Or does the analysis of generalized social systems (such as capitalism) require theoretical frameworks that reach beyond historicist and contingent understandings of the history of science?

Towards a Materialist History of Knowledge (cont.)

The implications of such an approach would move the history of science beyond historical epistemology. Rather than studying scientists as members of a class, or scientific objects as commodities, this approach would consider the way that labor under capitalism, as the dominant form of social mediation in our society, centrally regulates the production of scientific knowledge. Instead of “following the money,” a conceptual approach would consider, for instance, the similarities between the commodity form and European conceptions of nature. Such a perspective would maintain that the way that scientists or knowers conceive of the world is conditioned by the social forms that govern everyday practice, such as generalized notions of labor, time, the commodity, value, and so forth.⁶ The production of knowledge (especially “productive” scientific knowledge) would require explanation as part of a larger social system. This would also invite further, necessary engagement with science under actually existing communist or socialist regimes.

In general, our approach suggests that while the history of science has intermittently engaged with the histories of capitalism, labor, and work, a more sustained dialogue with critical social theory—especially materialist conceptions of history—can open new avenues of inquiry and reinvigorate the political stakes of our discipline. At the same time, we must push beyond piecemeal analyses centered on production, commodification, or circulation. Moreover, understanding capitalism and science requires attending to their operation beyond traditional sites of economic centrality. This means confronting how capitalist and scientific practices unfold not only in metropolises or laboratories, but also in so-called peripheral or marginal zones, where relations of power, extraction, and knowledge production are often most visible.

Workshop participants included:

Ibanca Anand (Johns Hopkins University)
Brad Bolman (Tulane University)
Jacob Bruggeman (Johns Hopkins University)
Angus Burgin (Johns Hopkins University)
Zoe Fallon (University of Pennsylvania)
Sam Franz (University of Pennsylvania)
Max Ehrenfreund (Kenyon College)
Zac Endter (New York University)
Sam Herrmann (University of Pennsylvania)
Jackson Herndon (New York University)
Daniel Judt (Yale University)
Judy Kaplan (Science History Institute)
Jonas Knatz (New York University)
Harun Küçük (University of Pennsylvania)
Yang Li (University of Wisconsin–Madison)
Robin Manley Mihran (University of California, Berkeley)
Veronique Mickisch (New York University)
Andrew Sartori (New York University)
Gautham Shiralagi (Columbia University)
Meriç Tanik (Columbia University)
Claire Votava (University of California, Los Angeles)

Towards a Materialist History of Knowledge (cont.)

Notes:

[1]: Robert M. Young, "Marxism and the History of Science," in *Companion to the History of Modern Science*, eds. G.N. Cantor, J.R.R. Christie, M.J.S. Hodge, and R.C. Olby, (London: Routledge, 1989), 77–86. See also Joseph Needham, "Foreword" and Gary Werskey, "Introduction," in *Science at the Cross Roads: Papers from The Second International Congress of the History of Science 1931*, ed. Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin, (New York: Routledge, 2013), vii-xxix.

[2]: See, for instance, Edgar Zilsel, "The Sociological Roots of Science," *American Journal of Sociology* 47, no. 4 (January 1942): 544–62. While Mannheim was not an avowed Marxist, his sociology of knowledge was clearly in dialogue with the tradition. See, for instance, David Kaiser, "A Mannheim for All Seasons: Bloor, Merton, and the Roots of the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge," *Science in Context* 11, no. 1 (1998): 51–87; Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils; preface by Louis Wirth (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1954).

[3]: See Robert M. Young, "Marxism and the History of Science," in *Companion to the History of Modern Science*, ed. G. N. Cantor, J. R. R. Christie, M. J. S. Hodge, and R. C. Olby (London: Routledge, 1989), 77–86.

[4]: Even while Foucault famously critiqued Marx, in public venues he often justified his research in terms of class struggle. See, for instance, Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault, *The Chomsky-Foucault Debate: On Human Nature*, ed. and foreword by John Rajchman (New York: The New Press, 2006), p. 46-7.

[5]: Lukas Rieppel, Eugenia Lean, and William Deringer, eds., *Science and Capitalism: Entangled Histories*, *Osiris* 33 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press Journals, 2018). See also Lissa Roberts, Seth Rockman, and Alexandra Hui, "Science and/as Work: An Introduction to This Special Issue," *History of Science* 61, no. 4 (2023): 439–47.

Member News

Karine Chemla announces the publication of her co-edited volume: Agathe Keller and Karine Chemla, (eds.) *Shaping the Sciences of the Ancient and Medieval World. Textual Criticism, Critical Editions and Translations of Scholarly Texts in History* by Springer Nature (2024).

Should you wish to write a review of this book, please directly contact Christopher Wilby from Springer (Chris.Wilby@springer.com).

Andreas Daum, professor at SUNY Buffalo, received the Senior Award for Excellence in International Exchange by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Alumni Association US in April 2025.

Axel Jansen (GHI Washington) has shared a CFP for a conference on “The Moralization of Science,” scheduled to take place at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Vienna, Austria) in September 2026. Deadline for proposals is September 15, 2025. [Find details here.](#)

Patrick McCray’s new book, *A Bookish History of Computing from Electronic Brains to Everything Machines*, will be published by MIT Press in November 2025.

Vivette García-Deister has been featured on Platypus, the blog of the Committee on the Anthropology of Science, Technology and Computing of the American Anthropological Association, speaking about her work as the editor-in-chief of the journal Tapuya.

Read or listen to “*STS Academic Publishing As a Work of Service and Hope: A Conversation with Vivette García-Deister.*”

Pamela O. Long’s most recent book is *Technology in Mediterranean and European Worlds, 600-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2025). She was awarded the Art Molella Distinguished Fellowship at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC (June 2025-March 2026).

Laura Meneghello (University of Siegen) has guest-edited the issue of the journal *Global Environment* vol. 18, no. 1 (2025) on “Visions of Sustainability.” The aim of this interdisciplinary issue is to historicize narratives of sustainability from different methodological and disciplinary perspectives, analyzing the plurality of meanings with which sustainability was invested by historical actors and how these changed over time. It gathers specific case studies displaying different perspectives on discourses of sustainability and their social and cultural construction, negotiation and contestation on the global, national and local levels. While analysing discourses of sustainability, the contributions pay special attention to their temporal dimension, as well as to their entanglement with political and economic matters, scientific knowledge and moral values. [The special issue is fully Open Access.](#)

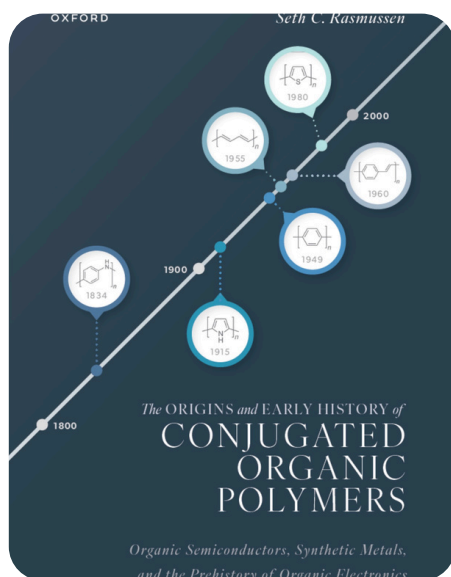
Michael R. Dove (Yale University) announces the publication in 2024 of his book *Hearsay Is Not Excluded: A History of Natural History*, which examines the work of Georg Eberhard Rumphius (seventeenth century), Carl Linnaeus (eighteenth century), Alfred Russel Wallace (nineteenth century), and Harold C. Conklin (twentieth century), published by Yale University Press.

Member News (cont.)

The [Making and Knowing Project](#), led by **Pamela Smith**, Seth Low Professor of History, Columbia University, has recently released an open source and customizable publishing tool, [EditionCrafter](#), which allows users to publish digital editions as feature-rich and sustainable static sites, based on the feature set and infrastructure of Secrets of Craft and Nature, the Making and Knowing Project's [Digital Critical Edition and English Translation of BnF Ms. Fr. 640](#). In January, the Project also released an open-access [Research and Teaching Companion](#) for instructors and students wishing to integrate hands-on lessons into teaching and learning.

Seth Rasmussen is the 2025 recipient of the Award for Outstanding Achievement in the History of Chemistry, awarded by the History of Chemistry (HIST) division of the American Chemical Society. [More information on the award can be found here.](#)

His newest history book has just been published by Oxford University Press: *The Origins and Early History of Conjugated Organic Polymers: Organic Semiconductors, Synthetic Metals, and the Prehistory of Organic Electronics*.



Bonnie Mak (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign) has co-edited [The Routledge Handbook of Information History](#) with Toni Weller, Alistair Black, and Laura Skouvig. The 37-chapter volume explores the cultural history of information practices, from antiquity to the twenty-first century. Available in early July 2025.

Three books edited by **Raffaele Pisano** have been published this year (2025) by Springer: [An Intellectual History of Science in the Renaissance. Part I: Cultural & Fundamental Frameworks](#).

[An Intellectual History of Science in the Renaissance. Part II: Cultural, Fundamental & Technological Frameworks](#).

[Nanoscience & Nanotechnologies: Critical Problems, Science in Society, Historical Perspectives](#).

Joel Cohen has published biographies for a recent plant botanist and conservation scientist occurred as a follow-up to his presentation at the 2023 annual conference of the Crop Science Society of America. A full-length copy of the final biography (titled "[A Life Interrupted: The Story of Botanist Calvin Sperling from Minnesota to Biodiversity](#)") was published in Crop Breeding, Genetics and Genomics, while a different and abbreviated version was invited by the Science History Institute, and published as "[Calvin Ross Sperling](#)," in their "Scientific Biographies" division.

Member News

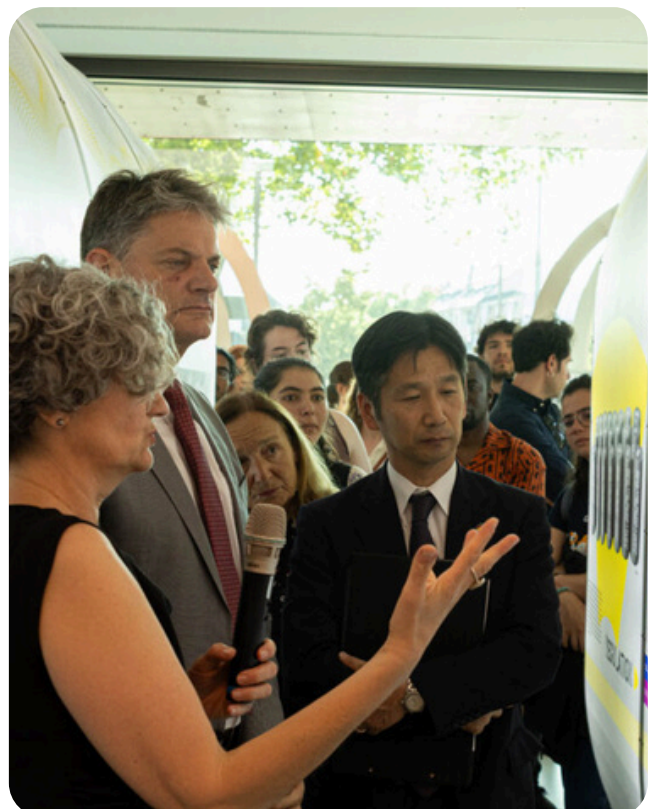
Darryl E. Brock has just published a new research article titled "Dixie, Darwinism, and Democrats: Evolution and American Intellectual Epiphany" in *Southern Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of the South*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2025), pp. 1-34.

Bruce Lewenstein, professor of science communication at Cornell University (in the departments of Science & Technology Studies and of Communication) is the inaugural winner of the new PCST Award for "exceptional contributions to the advancement of science communication as a professional field." The award was announced at the conference of the International Network on Public Communication of Science and Technology, held in Aberdeen, Scotland, in May 2025.

The **Organization of American Historians** (OAH) developed a survey for historians doing research during the summer (Northern Hemisphere) of 2025. OAH aims to collect information about the impact of funding cuts and other deterrents to historical research. To help OAH assess what is happening as historians access archives, libraries, and other collections (physical and digital), you can complete the survey [here](#).

On June 12, 2025, the exhibition *Living with Radiation* opened at the Siemens Healthineers MedMuseum in Erlangen. A visual culmination of **Maria Rentetzi's** five-year research project on the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in shaping the history of radiation protection, the exhibit will remain on view until August 31, 2025. The project was funded through the prestigious European Research Council Consolidator Grant.

As part of the *Living with Radiation* project, Rentetzi published a photobook and established a boutique press. She created a documentary, *The Gender of Nuclear Things*, published a Children's book, *Science on a Trip*, and organized a workshop titled *Geopolitics of Radiation Protection* which took place at Erlangen's Kultursaal from June 13–14, 2025.



FHSAsia Forum News

Announcing the Inaugural Joseph Needham Foundation Awards

Are you conducting groundbreaking research on science in Asia? We invite submissions for two major opportunities supporting emerging scholars in the history of science. The **Joseph Needham Foundation Awards**, administered by the Forum for the History of Science in Asia, recognize outstanding work in the global and transregional history of science centered on Asia.

Two awards will be given:

- A **Research Grant of \$3,000** for graduate students and early-career scholars (including independent scholars and those in temporary positions within three years of the PhD). Proposals should include a one-page CV and a project description (max 1,000 words) outlining goals, contributions, timeline, and plans for use of funds.
- An **Essay Prize of \$500** for original, unpublished essays under 12,000 words. Essays must be in English, anonymized for blind review, and conform to the Chicago Manual of Style.

Both awards include a certificate and will be presented at the History of Science Society's annual meeting. Applications are due **December 1, 2025**, and should be submitted as a single PDF to **needhamfhsasia@gmail.com**. HSS membership is not required at the time of application, though awardees must be members during the year their award is active.

We are deeply grateful to the **Joseph Needham Foundation for Science and Civilisation** for its generous support. The Foundation has played a vital role in advancing scholarship on the global history of science. Joseph Needham's visionary contributions—particularly his decades-long engagement with the sciences of China—have long shaped our understanding of science as a deeply plural, intercultural, and historically entangled enterprise. By supporting new generations of scholars, the Needham Foundation continues to expand the boundaries of the field and affirms the importance of research that knits Asian sciences into global conversations.

History of Science Society Newsletter

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Editorial Policies, Advertising and Submissions

The History of Science Society Newsletter is published quarterly, and sent to all individual members of the Society. The Newsletter is edited and published in the Executive Office. The format and editorial policies are determined by the Society Editors.

All advertising copy must be submitted in electronic form. Advertisements are accepted on a space-available basis only, and the Society reserves the right not to print a submission. The rates are as follows: Full page (7 x 10"), \$625; Half page (3.5 x 10"), \$375; Third page (5 x 3.5"), \$275. The deadline for insertion orders is six weeks prior to the month of publication and should be sent to info@hssonline.org.

News, announcements, and job/fellowship/prize listings and feature story pitches can be submitted [here](#) or emailed to samfranz@sas.upenn.edu.