

**THIRD HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:**  
**Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book,***  
**and Other Critiques of Eisenstein**

*Due electronically by week #4.*

1) In *The Nature of the Book*, Adrian Johns sets out to write, among other things, "a social history of print". (p. 6) What does he mean by this term? People, communities, and nations have social histories, but do books? Draw briefly on his discussions of Tycho Brahe or Galileo Galilei in your response.

2) A common formulation, implied by Eisenstein and explicitly argued by others, is that the invention of printing with movable type in the 1450s led to European literacy. How does Michael T. Clanchy reverse this argument in the article you read?

3) We have now read three criticisms, implicit or explicit, by Grafton, Johns, and Clanchy, of Elizabeth Eisenstein's argument for a "printing revolution". In light of these objections, consider not whether Eisenstein was right or wrong in her 1979 book and its abridgement, but whether she asked the right question; i.e., after reading her critics, would you still agree that the Gutenberg "revolution" of the 1450s, this new way of "technologizing of the word", is the place to begin examining the profound changes in learning, theology and science that took place in the Early Modern period (ca. 1450-1800)?