Write on two of the following topics. Your essays should combine historiographical
discussion with your own answers to the questions posed. You should try to frame clear
arguments supported by specific historical detail and by analysis of the relevant
historiography. Also, your two essays taken together should include significant discussion
of both early modern and modern issues.

1. One of the founding documents of modern history of science has been Thomas S. Kuhn's
Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Discuss some of the major historiographical movements in
the field since Kuhn and their relation to his basic conceptions. In this context, discuss the
historiographical significance of two or three recent works that you take to be important for the
field.

2. Half a century ago, it was common to regard science as a distinctive achievement of Western
culture. How did historians who made such claims define “science” and how did that definition
change as historians of science expanded the range of their topic to include most of the world?

3. Write an essay on the historiography of gender as an analytic category in the history of science,
technology and medicine. Discuss some of the key works in the field and consider how the
scholarship on gender and science has evolved since 1980.

4. What topics or disciplines have been most prominent in the framing of the human sciences as a
distinct area of the history of science? On the basis of a few exemplary works on history of
human sciences, discuss whether you think these sciences have enough in common among
themselves, and have been sufficiently distinct from the natural sciences, that they deserve to be
treated by historians as a distinct field.

5. The historiography of science since the 1980s has been marked by an emphasis on materiality.
Discuss three diverse modes of historical analysis in which materiality has played a central role.
Whether you choose to focus on more theoretically oriented works, such as those of
Latour/Callon and Rheinberger, or on more empirical studies like those of Pamela Smith, Kohler,
and Landecker, be sure to enliven your discussion with concrete exemplification of what is
achieved through the emphasis on materiality. [Note: this framing of the issue should not be
taken to exclude intellectual and cultural history.]

6. Consider the so-called “visual turn” in the history of science. How have historians used
visual materials as sources? What kinds of arguments can be grounded on visual evidence, and
what are some of the potential problems or limitations of such sources? Use specific examples of
different kinds of visual materials, preferably drawn from different periods.

7. Scientific knowledge is made in specific sites, and these have increasingly been a focus of
scholarship. Discuss this historiographical development, with attention to different kinds of
sites. Be specific. Take your examples from different periods, and consider different kinds of sites.

8. Experiments provided a new way of knowing about the natural world, starting (roughly speaking) in the 17th century. What issues were at stake as experimenters argued for the validity, and even the superiority, of knowledge generated by experiments? Take examples from different places to show how arguments about experiment played into attempts to define a methodology for science. Then consider how experiments and experimental methodology have been studied by scholars working on other periods.