

# James R. Voelkel

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## Current Position

### DONALD F. AND MILDRED TOPP OTHMER LIBRARY OF CHEMICAL HISTORY

**Curator of Rare Books**, with primary curatorial responsibility for a world-class research collection of approximately 6,000 rare books in the history of chemistry and chemical industries dating back to the 15th century but especially strong for the 16th and 17th centuries. Responsible for acquisitions and bibliographic description of rare books. Also a ranking member of CHF's academic staff, and regular contributor to *Chemical Heritage* magazine and the podcast *Distillations*.

### ARNOLD AND MABEL BECKMAN CENTER FOR THE HISTORY OF CHEMISTRY

**Scholar-in-Residence**, conducting independent research in the history of early modern science, and participating in the fellows program.

## Education

Ph.D. in history of science, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1994.

M.A. in natural sciences (history and philosophy of science), Emmanuel College, Cambridge University, Cambridge, England, 1990. (Commuted from B.A. hons., 1986.)

M.A. in history and philosophy of science, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1989.

B.A. with honors in astronomy and physics, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, 1984.

## Professional Certification

Certificate of Proficiency in Bibliography, Rare Book School, Charlottesville, Virginia, Oct. 2012.

## Previous Positions

### THE CHYMISTRY OF ISAAC NEWTON PROJECT

7/05-12/07 & 3/04-9/04, **Senior Editorial and Encoding Consultant**. Transcribed and encoded Newton's alchemical manuscripts in TEI xml. Completed numerous Newtonian alchemical manuscripts, including Newton's most complete alchemical notebook. Also helped to establish best encoding practices, and contributed to the content and editorial practices of the Chymistry of Isaac Newton website. Supervisor: Prof. William R. Newman (Indiana University).

### DIBNER INSTITUTE FOR THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

9/04-5/05, **Senior Fellow**, worked on translation with commentary of Kepler's *Rudolphine Tables* (1627), and wrote computer code to support ongoing research on the accuracy of Keplerian planetary theory. Made progress in translation of Part II of the *Rudolphine Tables*, and completed Java code that successfully reproduces Kepler's calculation of his tables and positions of the sun, moon, and planets.

### HISTORY OF RECENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON THE WEB

10/03-8/04, **System administrator and Curator** of HRST website.

6/01-9/03, **Digital Library Manager** (software developer).

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, Dept. of History of Science, Medicine, and Technology  
7/99-6/01, **Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow.**

DIBNER INSTITUTE FOR THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
9/97-8/99, **Postdoctoral Research Fellow.**

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
9/97-8/99, **Postdoctoral Research Fellow** in the Department of History of Science.  
9/95-6/97, **Head Teaching Assistant** for Core Science A-17/B-17, and **Teaching Assistant** in the  
Department of History of Science.

WILLIAMS COLLEGE, Dept. of Astronomy  
7/94-6/95, **Visiting Assistant Professor of Astronomy and History of Science.**

### **Exhibitions**

*The Alchemical Quest*, Clifford C. Hach Gallery, Chemical Heritage Foundation, July 2 – December 7, 2012.

### **Books**

*The Composition of Kepler's Astronomia Nova* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).  
*Johannes Kepler and the New Astronomy* [Portraits in Science Series] (New York: Oxford University Press,  
1999). Translated into Turkish (Ankara: Tübitak), Arabic (Riyadh: Obeikan), and Chinese.

### **Selected Articles**

“Tycho and Kepler: Subtle Truth versus Solid Myth” (with Owen Gingerich), *Social Research*, 72:1 (2005).  
“Giovanni Antonio Magini’s ‘Keplerian’ Tables of 1614 and their Implications for the Reception of Keplerian  
Astronomy in the Seventeenth Century”(with Owen Gingerich), *Journal for the History of Astronomy*,  
32 (2001): 237-262.  
“Publish or Perish: Legal Contingencies and the Publication of Kepler’s *Astronomia nova*,” *Science in Context*,  
12:1 (1999), 33-59.  
“Tycho Brahe’s Copernican Campaign” (with Owen Gingerich), *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 29  
(1998), 1-34.

### **Selected Academic Honors**

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
Certificate of Distinction in Teaching (Spring 1996 & Fall 1996)

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
Esther L. Kinsley Award for best doctoral dissertation at Indiana University (1995)  
Victor E. Thoren Graduate Research Fellowship in History of Science (1992).

WILLIAMS COLLEGE  
Magna Cum Laude; Honors in Astronomy and Physics; Member, Phi Beta Kappa; Associate Member,  
Sigma Xi; Willis I. Milham Prize in Astronomy; Herchel Smith Graduate Fellowship.

### **Languages**

German (fluent), Latin, and French.