



Computer Systems and Professional Practice

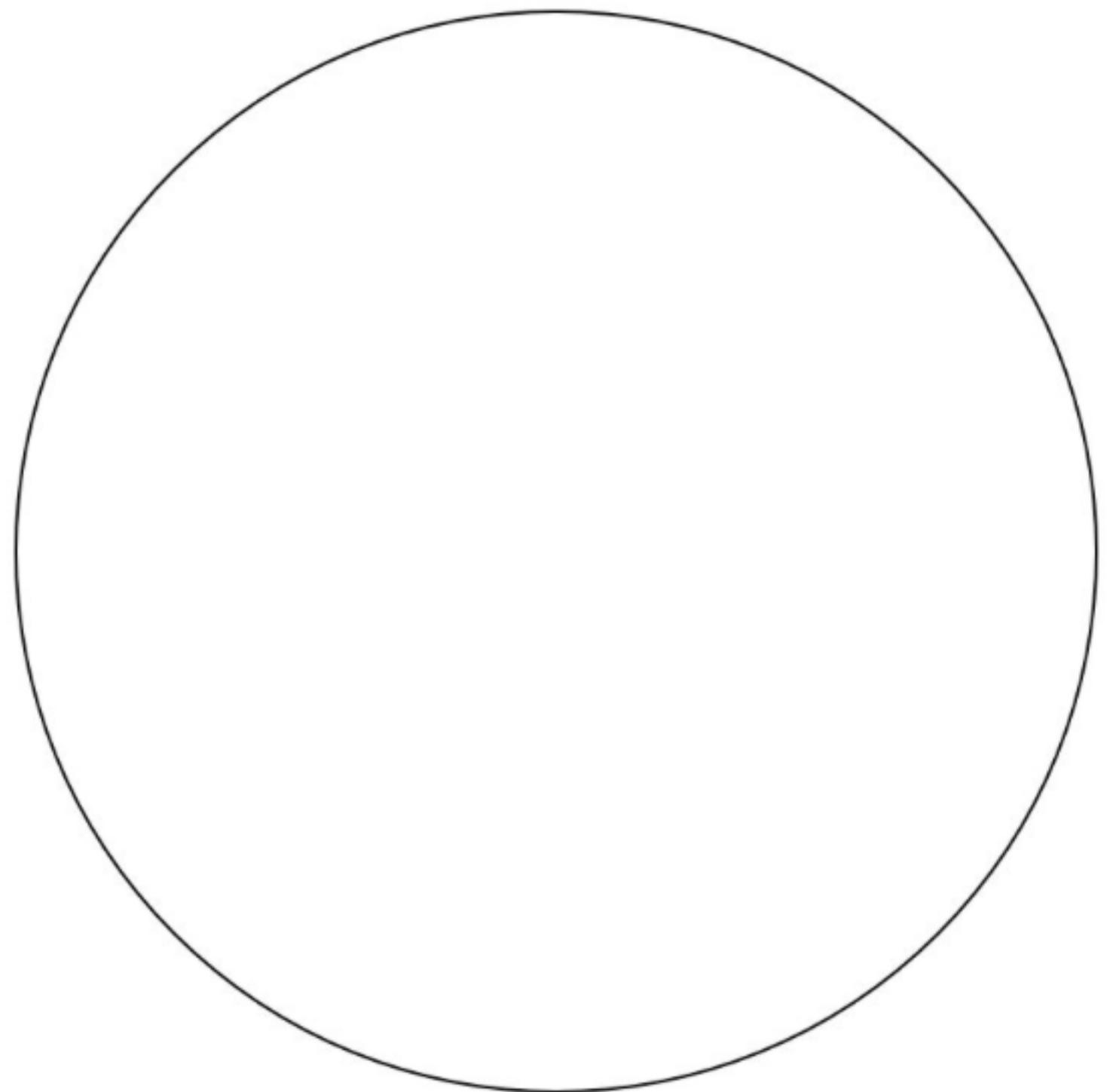
Professor Matthew Leeke
School of Computer Science
University of Birmingham

Academic Writing and Plagiarism

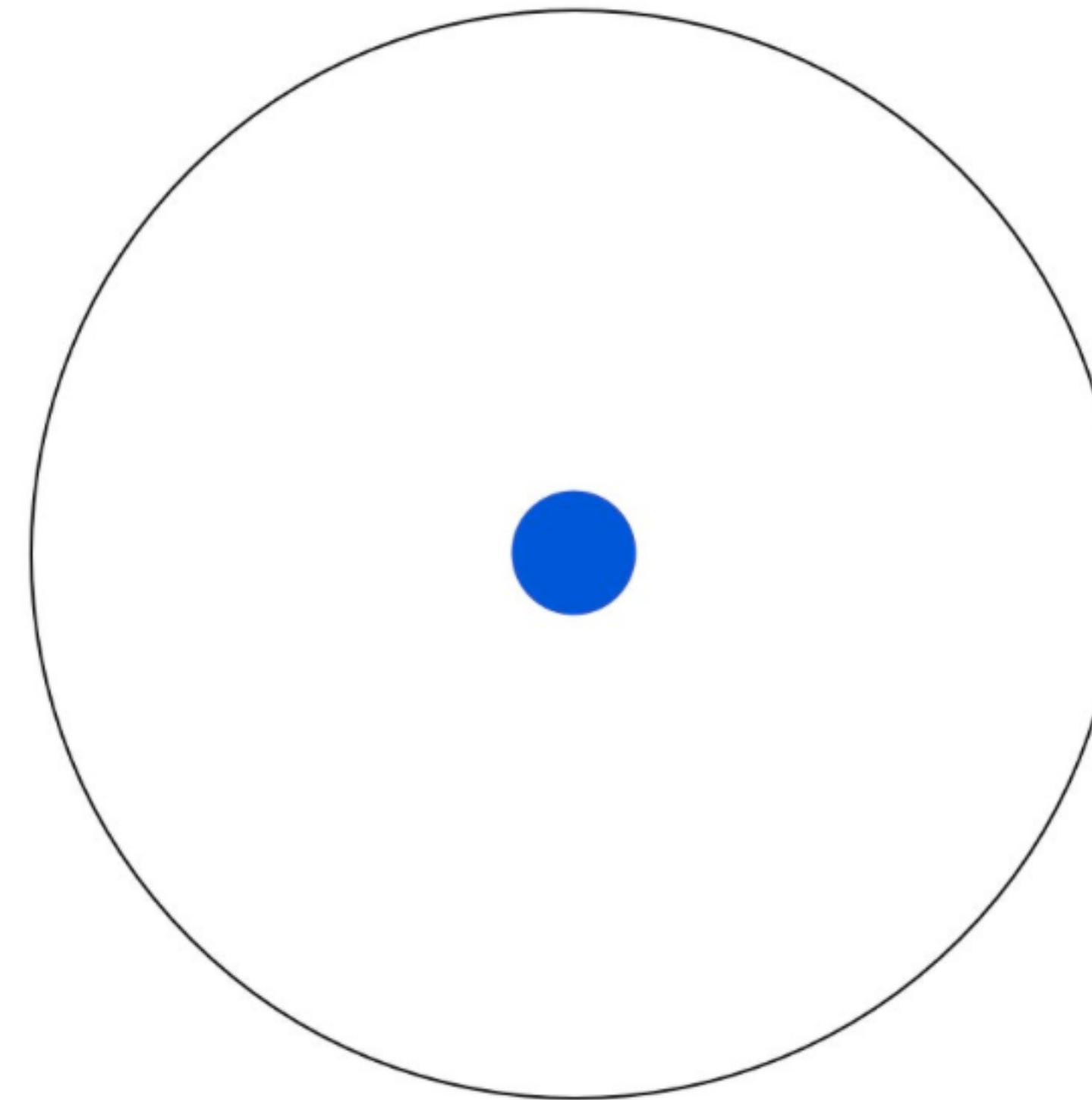
Information Sources

A View of Science

Imagine a circle that contains all of human knowledge:

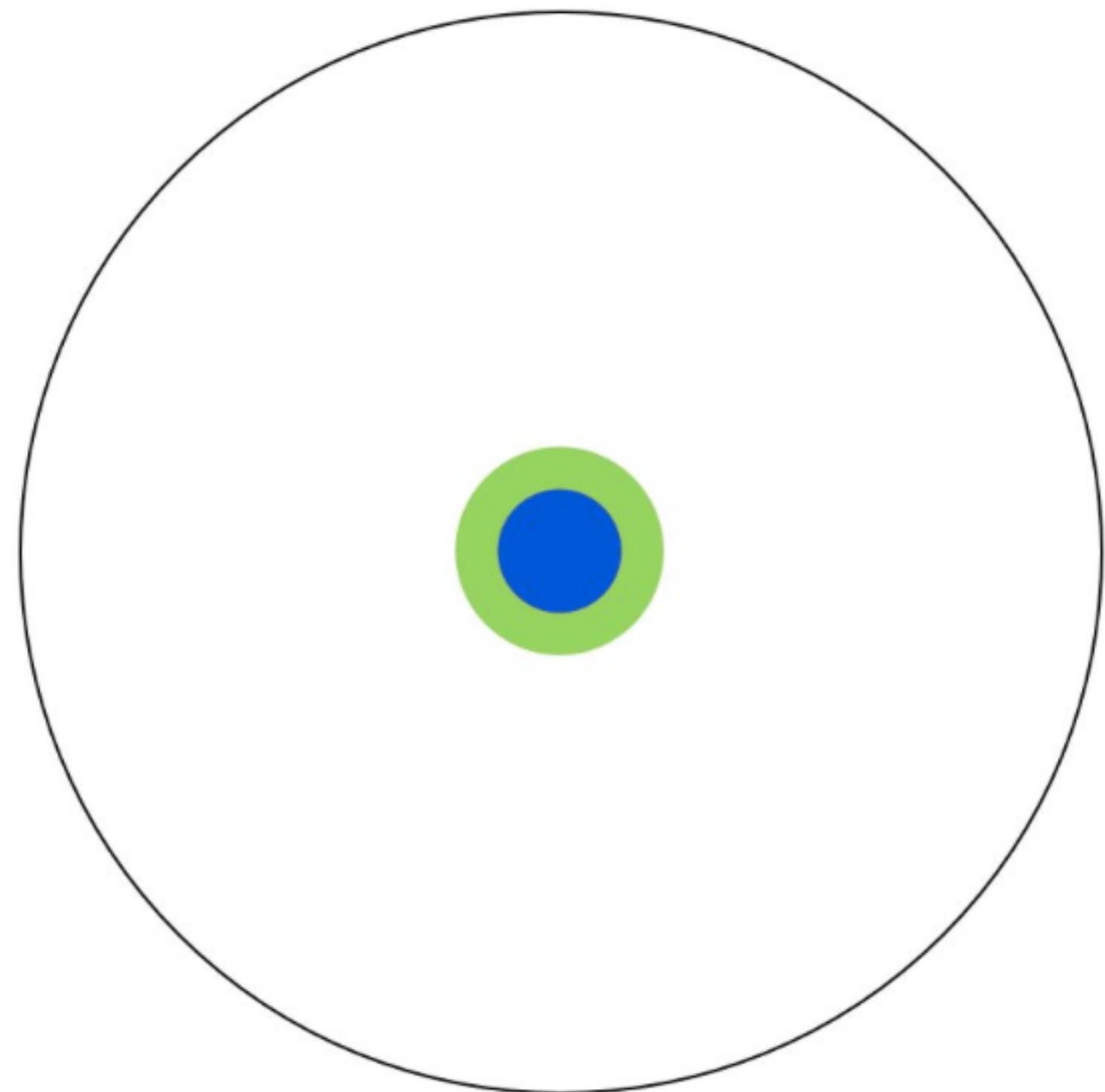


By the time you finish elementary school, you know a little:

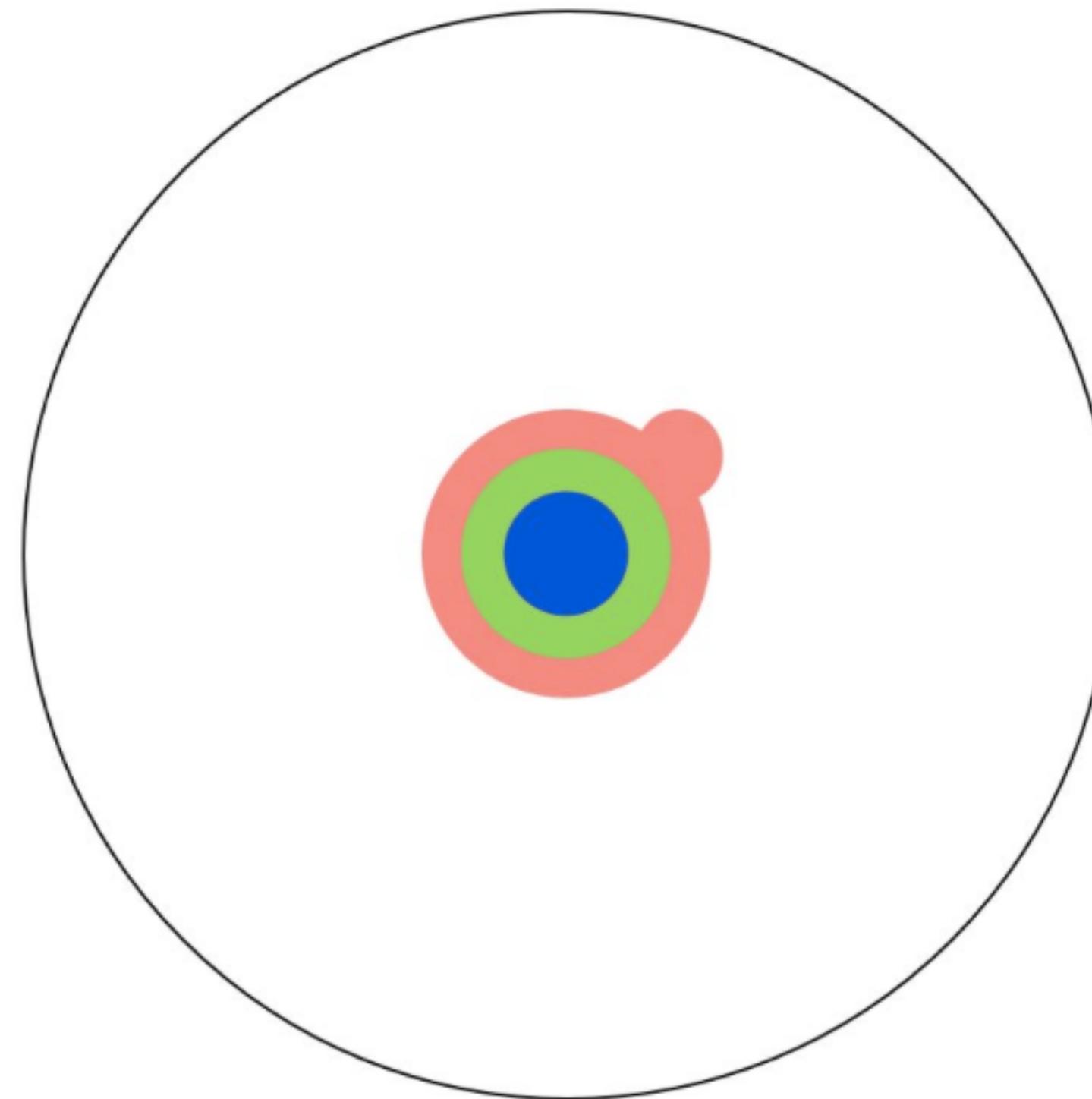


A View of Science

By the time you finish high school, you know a bit more:

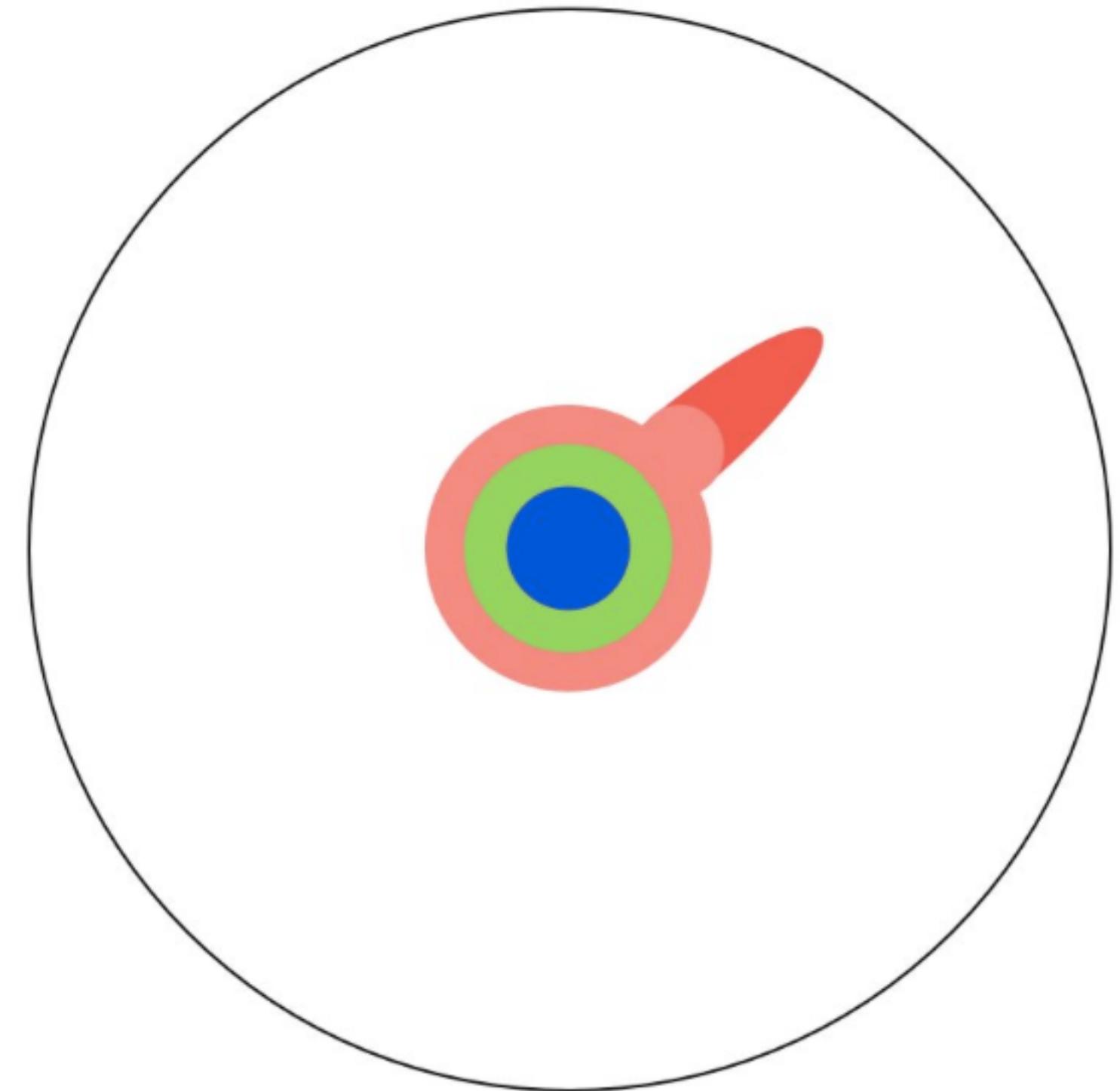


With a bachelor's degree, you gain a specialty:

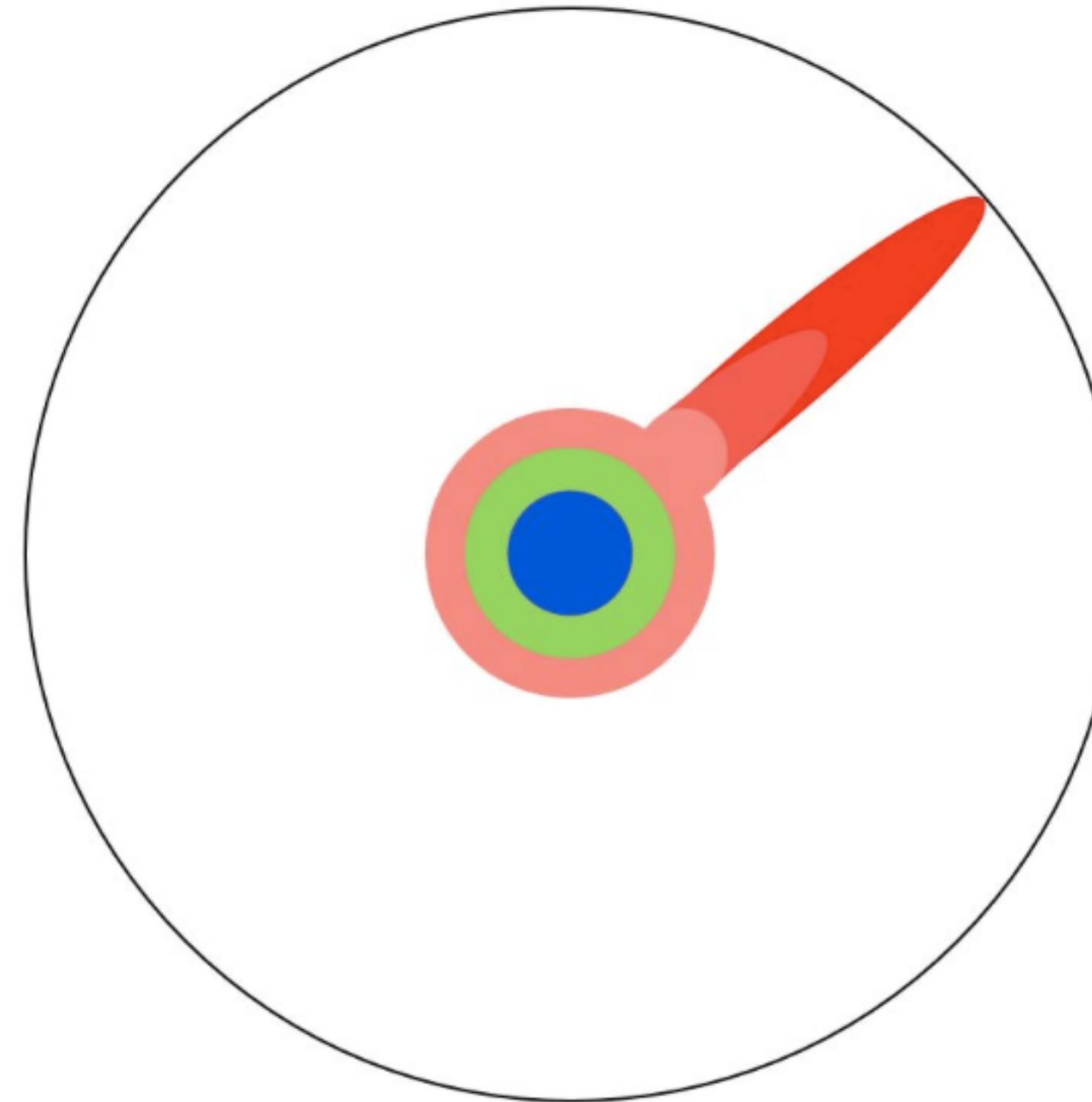


A View of Science

A master's degree deepens that specialty:

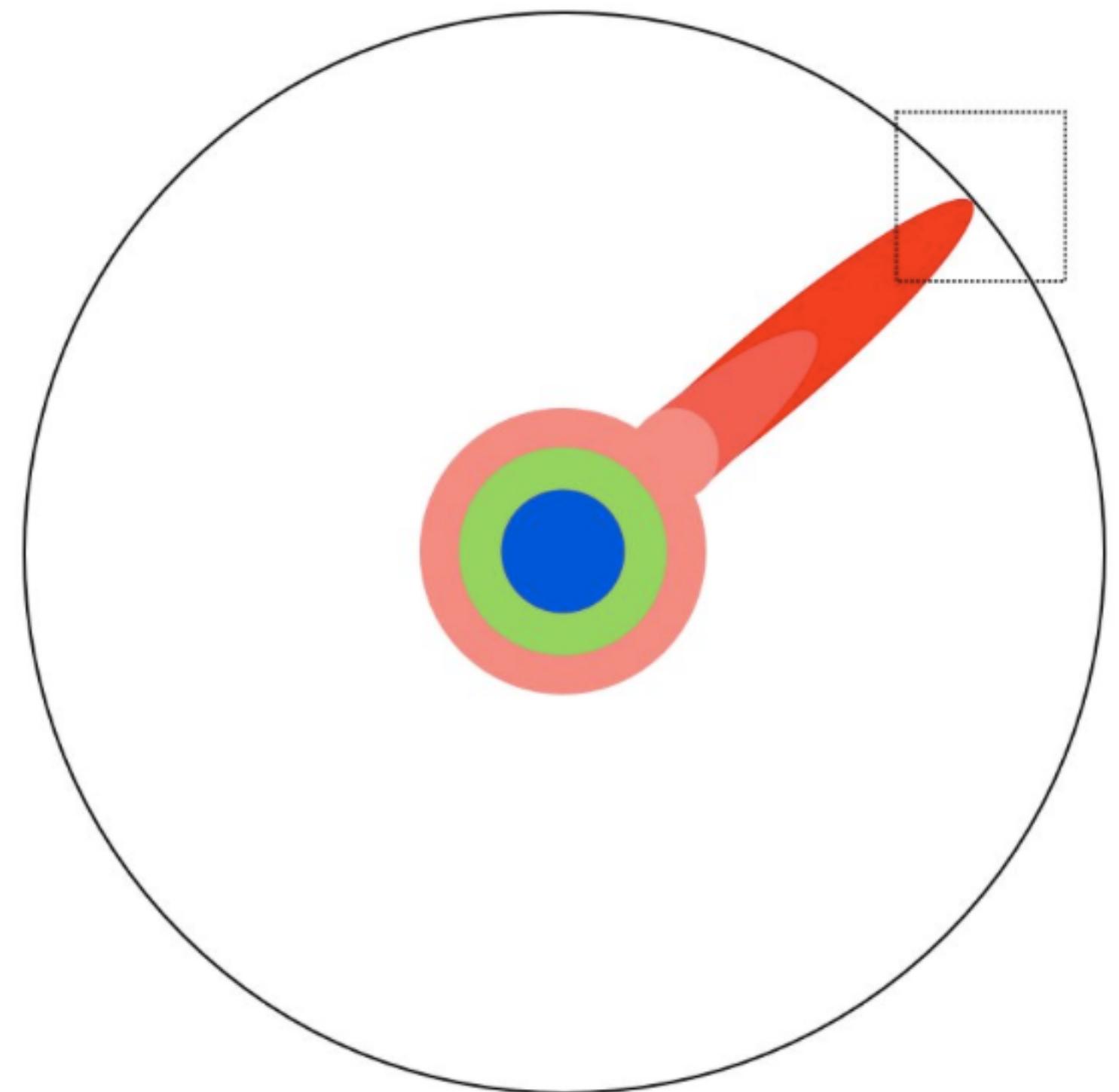


Reading research papers takes you to the edge of human knowledge:

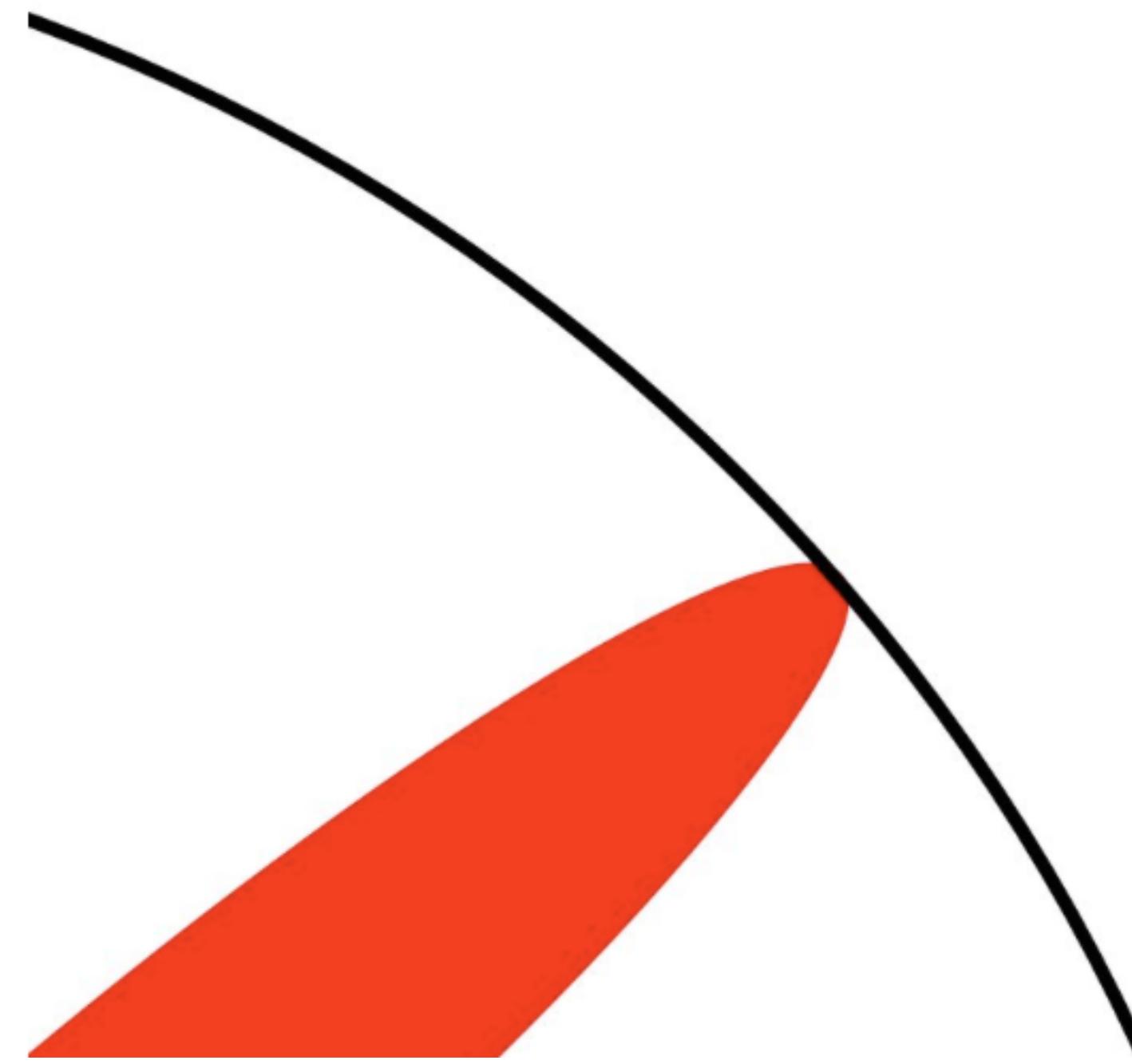


A View of Science

Once you're at the boundary, you focus:

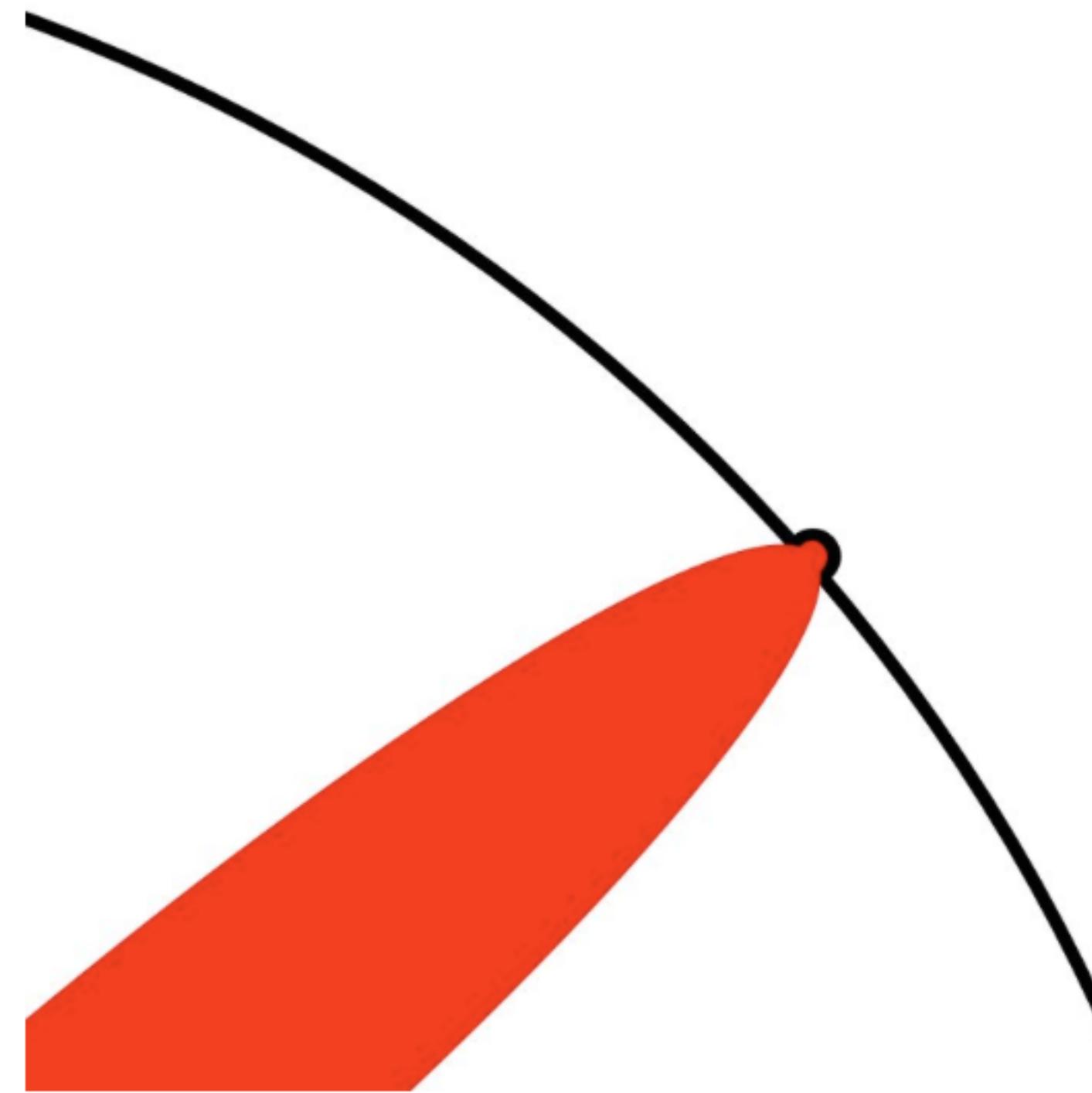


You push at the boundary for a few years:

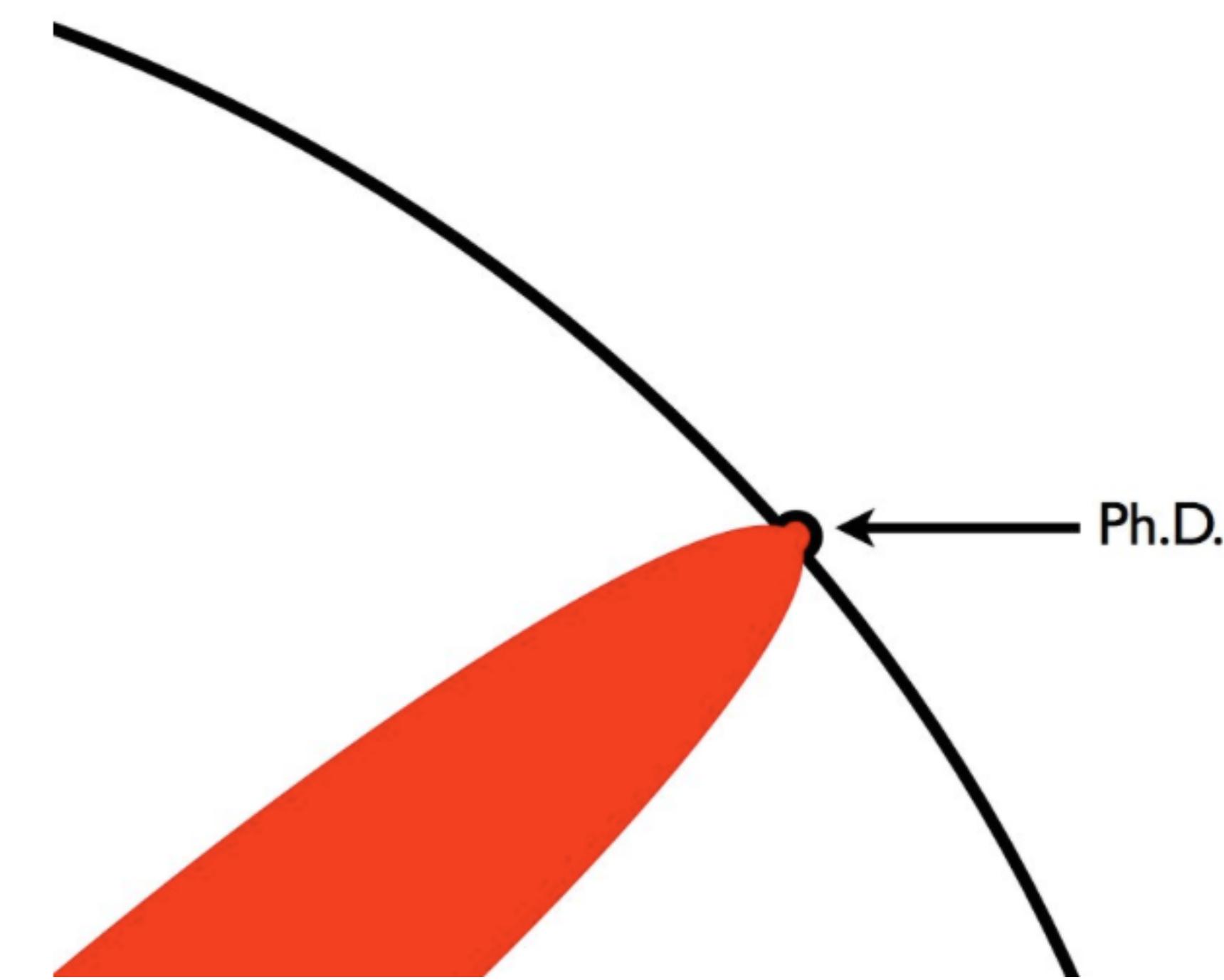


A View of Science

Until one day, the boundary gives way:



And, that dent you've made is called a Ph.D.:

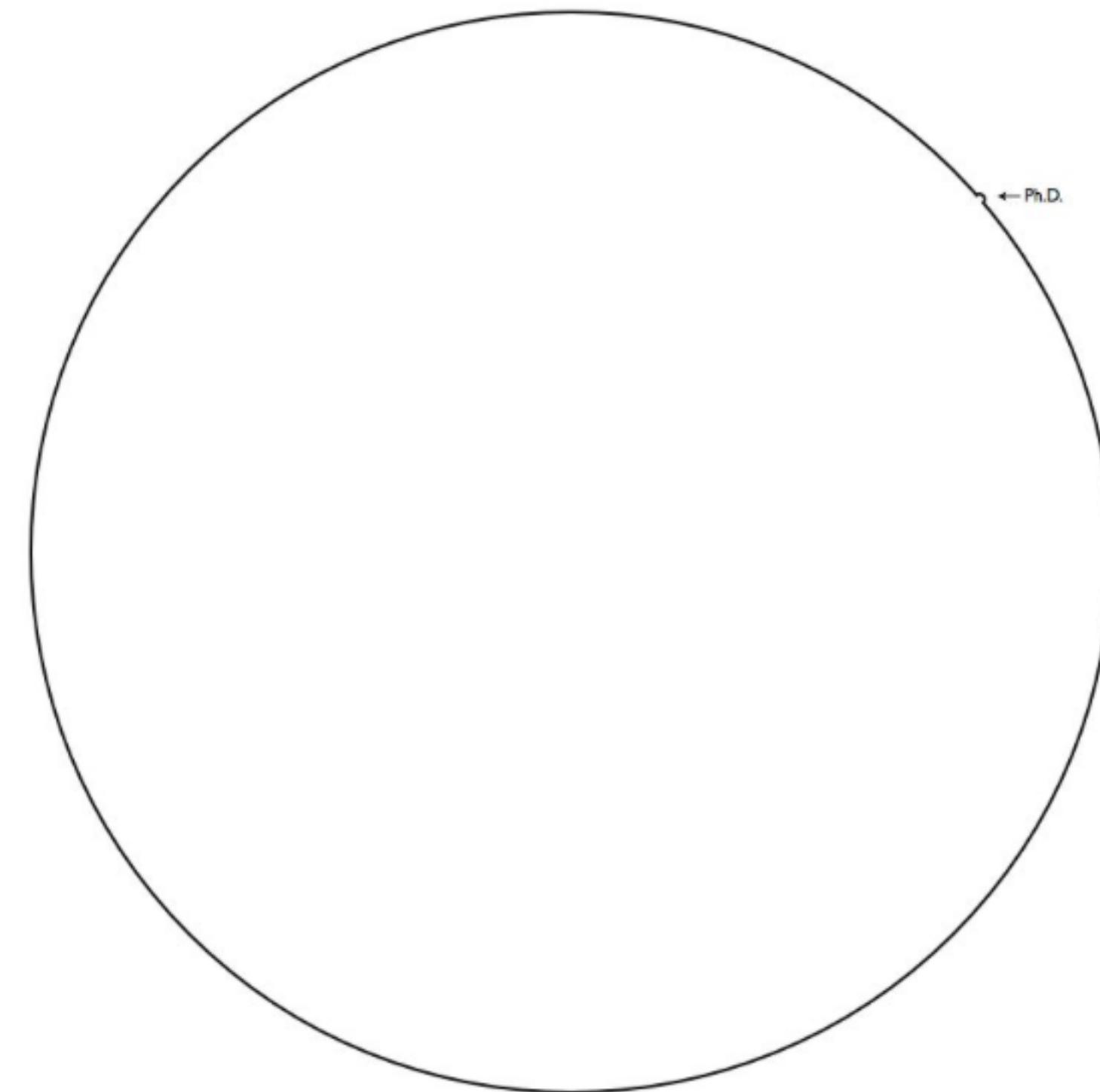


A View of Science

Of course, the world looks different to you now:



So, don't forget the bigger picture:



Information Sources

The term “literature” should be understood as content produced by researchers for other researchers

Books

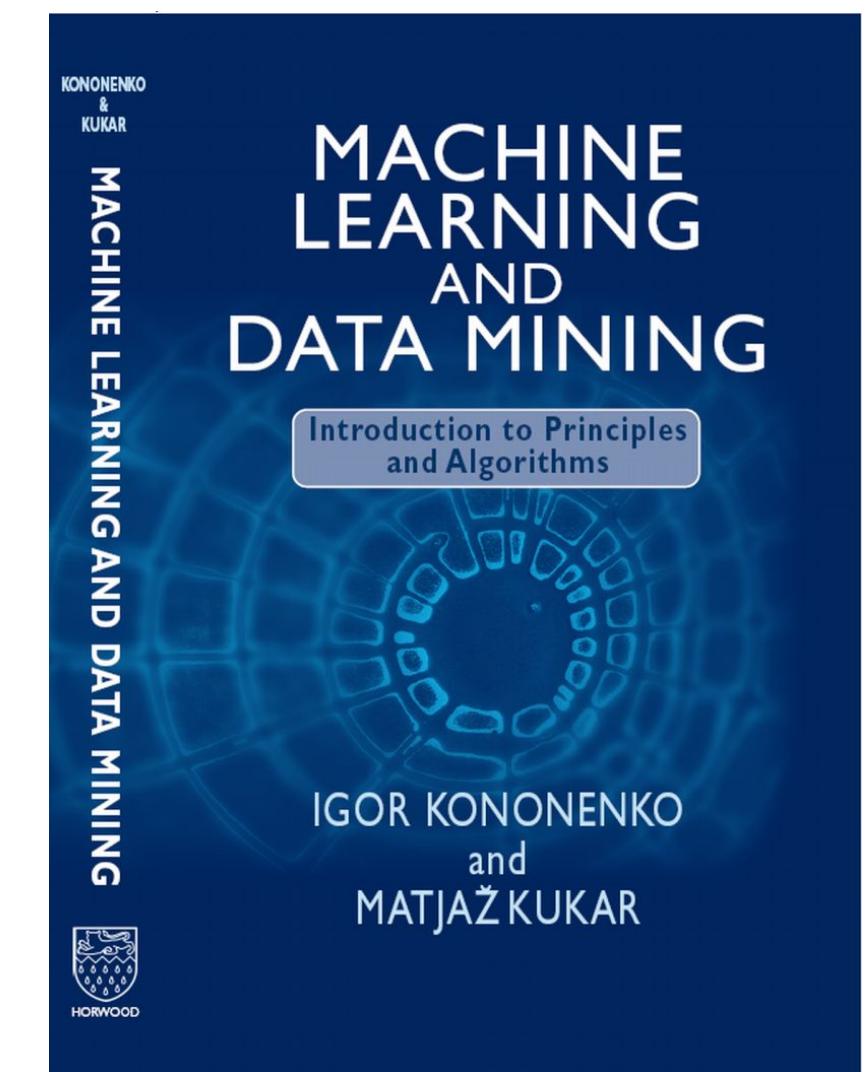
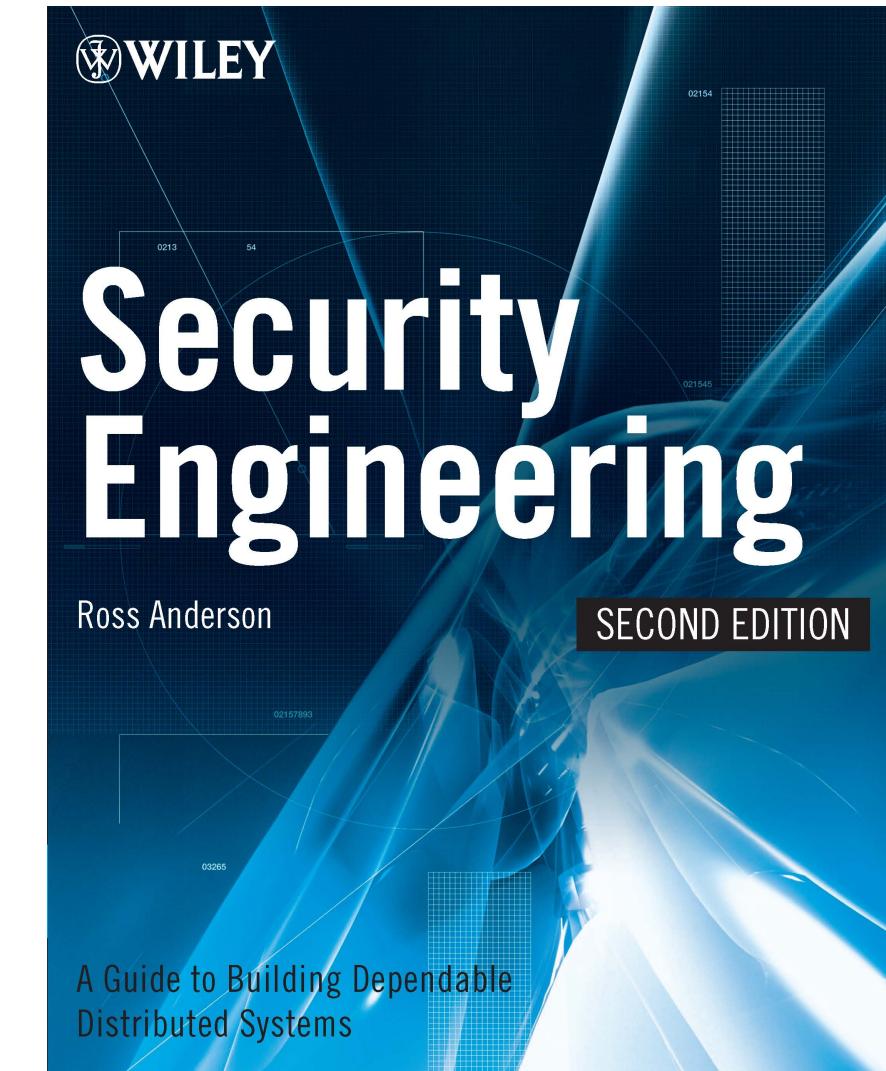
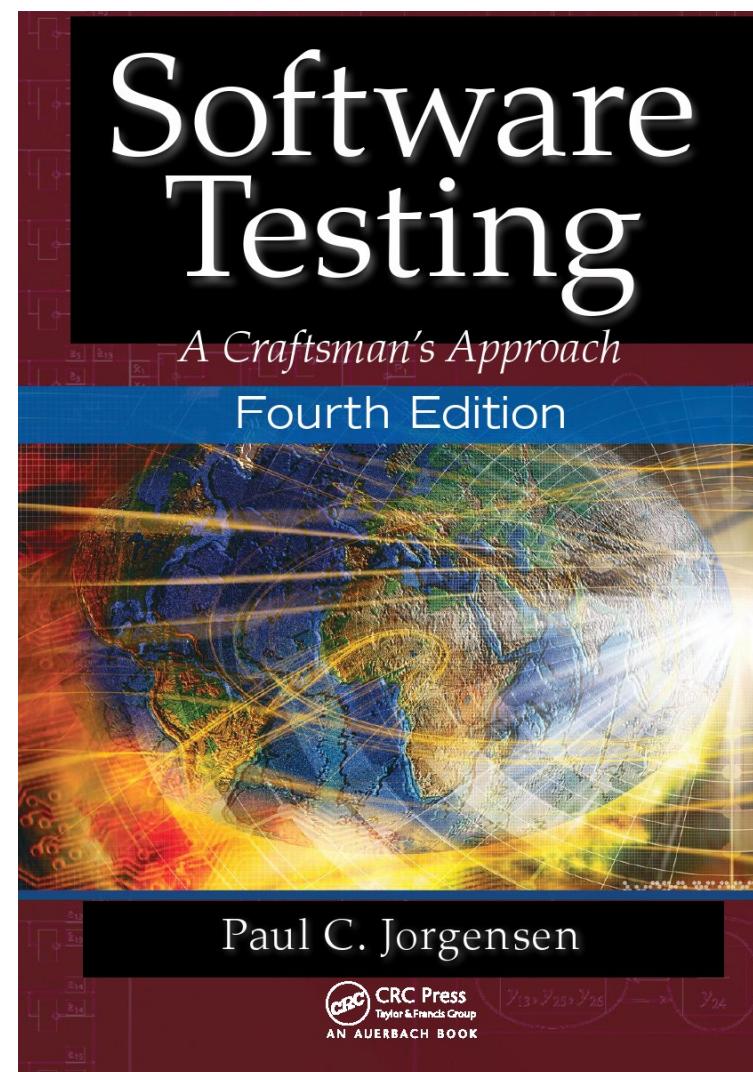
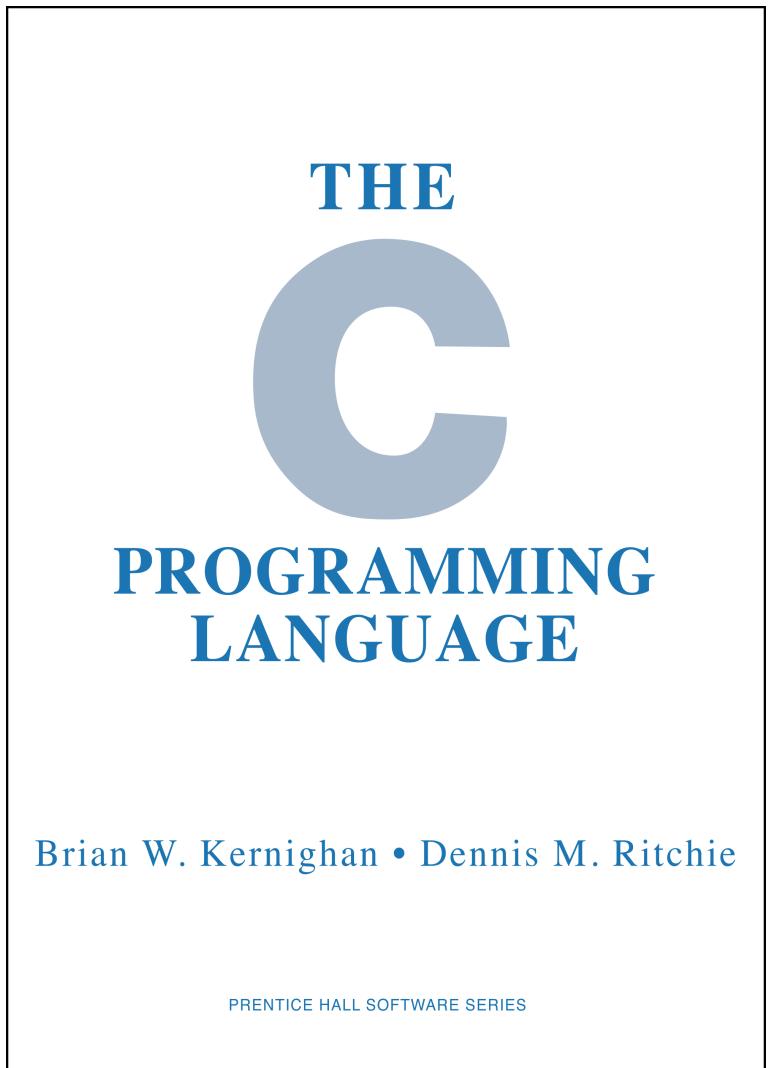
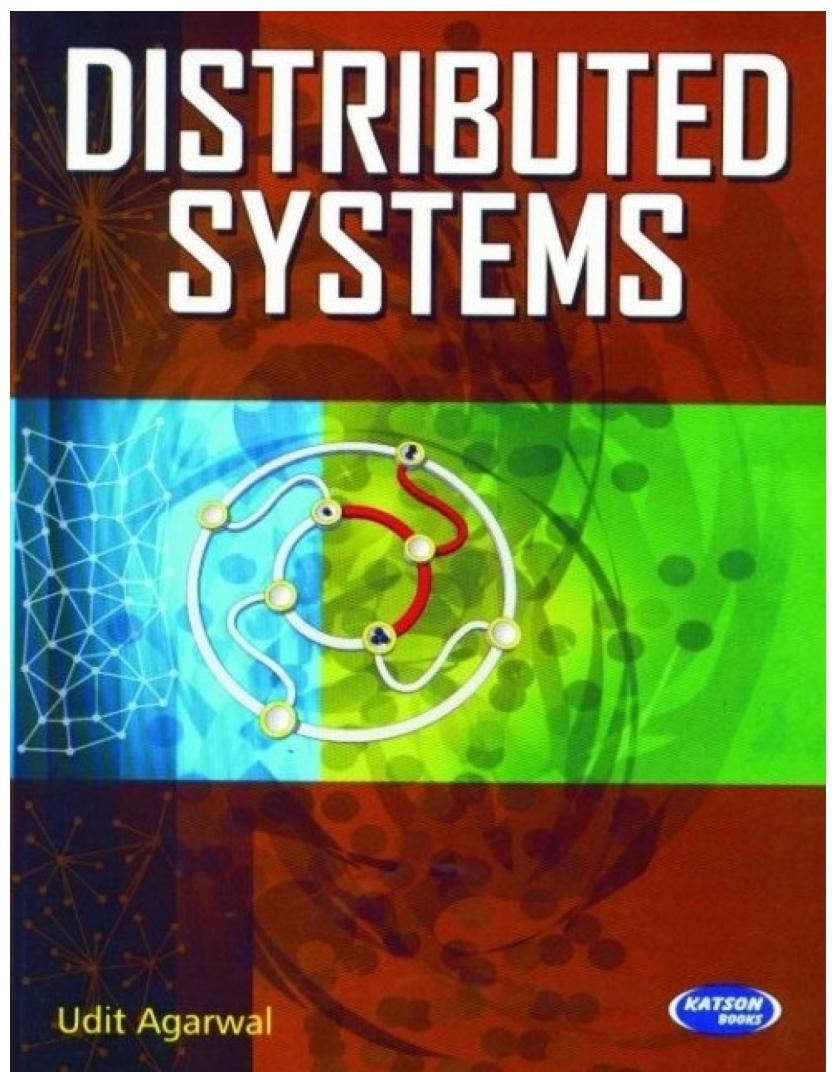
Conference and journal papers

Dissertations, theses and technical reports

Patents

Technological standards

Books



Conference and Journal Papers

IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON PARALLEL AND DISTRIBUTED SYSTEMS, VOL. X, NO. X, X 201X

1

Loop Tiling in Large-Scale Stencil Codes at Run-time with OPS

István Z. Reguly, Member, IEEE, Gihan R. Mudalige and Michael B. Giles

Abstract—The key common bottleneck in most stencil codes is data movement, and prior research has shown that improving data locality through optimisations that optimise across loops do particularly well. However, in many large PDE applications it is not possible to apply such optimisations through compilers because there are many options, execution paths and data per grid point, many dependent on run-time parameters, and the code is distributed across different compilation units. In this paper, we adapt the data locality improving optimisation called tiling for use in large OPS applications both in shared-memory and distributed-memory systems, relying on run-time analysis and delayed execution. We evaluate our approach on a number of applications, observing speedups of 2× on the Cloverleaf 2D/3D proxy applications, which contain 83(2D)/141(3D) loops, 3.5× on the linear solver Tealeaf, and 1.7× on the compressible Navier-Stokes solver OpenSBLI. We demonstrate strong and weak scalability on up to 4608 cores of CINECA's Marconi supercomputer. We also evaluate our algorithms on Intel's Knights Landing, demonstrating maintained throughput as the problem size grows beyond 16GB, and we do scaling studies up to 8704 cores. The approach is generally applicable to any stencil DSL that provides per loop nest data access information.

Index Terms—DSL, Tiling, Cache Blocking, Memory Locality, OPS, Stencil, Structured Mesh

1 INTRODUCTION

MODERN architectures now include ever-larger on-chip caches to help exploit spatial and temporal locality in memory accesses: latency and energy benefit of accessing data from cache can be up to 10x compared to accessing it with a load from off-chip memory. Unfortunately, most scientific simulations are structured in a way that limits locality: the code is structured as a sequence of computations, each streaming a number of data arrays from memory,

on the stencil pattern, leading to wavefront schemes. There is a large body of research on the combination of fusion and loop schedule optimisations [4], [5], [6]: techniques that extend loop blocking to work across subsequent loop nests, generally called *tiling*. Tiling carries out dependency analysis similar to what is required for loop fusion, but instead of fusing the bodies of subsequent loops, it

Beyond 16GB: Out-of-Core Stencil Computations

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resident for the entirety of the application - yielding the aforementioned size limitation.

In data streaming type applications, where a chunk of data is uploaded, processed, then downloaded, the workload (usually larger than GPU memory) is partitioned into small chunks, so it's possible to overlap copies in both directions and computations. To efficiently utilise accelerator bandwidth, this also means that any data uploaded has to be accessed about as many times as this ratio between upload bandwidth and accelerator bandwidth; otherwise performance will be limited by upload speed. To efficiently utilise the accelerator's computational resources, the ratio is even more extreme: for a P100 GPU one would need to carry out about 2500 floating point operations for every float variable uploaded (10 TFlops/s, 16 GB/s PCI-e BW, 4 bytes/float).

In this paper, we investigate different implementations of Tealeaf, a mini-application from the Manteye suite that solves the linear heat conduction equation. Tealeaf has been ported to use many parallel programming models, including OpenMP, CUDA and MPI among others. It has also been re-engineered to use the OPS embedded DSL and template libraries Kokkos and RAJA. We use these different implementations to assess the performance portability of each technique on modern multi-core systems.

ACM Reference format:
István Z. Reguly, Gihan R. Mudalige, and Michael B. Giles. 2017. Beyond 16GB: Out-of-Core Stencil Computations. In *Proceedings of XXX, XXX, XXX, XXX*.

Achieving Performance Portability for a Heat Conduction Solver Mini-Application on Modern Multi-core Systems

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Abstract—Modernizing production-grade, often legacy applications to take advantage of modern multi-core and many-core architectures can be a difficult and costly undertaking. This is especially true currently, as it is unclear which architectures will dominate future systems. The complexity of these codes can mean that parallelisation for a given architecture requires significant re-engineering. One way to assess the benefit of such an exercise would be to use mini-applications that are representative of the legacy programs.

In this paper, we investigate different implementations of Tealeaf, a mini-application from the Manteye suite that solves the linear heat conduction equation. Tealeaf has been ported to use many parallel programming models, including OpenMP, CUDA and MPI among others. It has also been re-engineered to use the OPS embedded DSL and template libraries Kokkos and RAJA. We use these different implementations to assess the performance portability of each technique on modern multi-core systems.

Auto-Vectorizing a Large-scale Production Unstructured-mesh CFD Application

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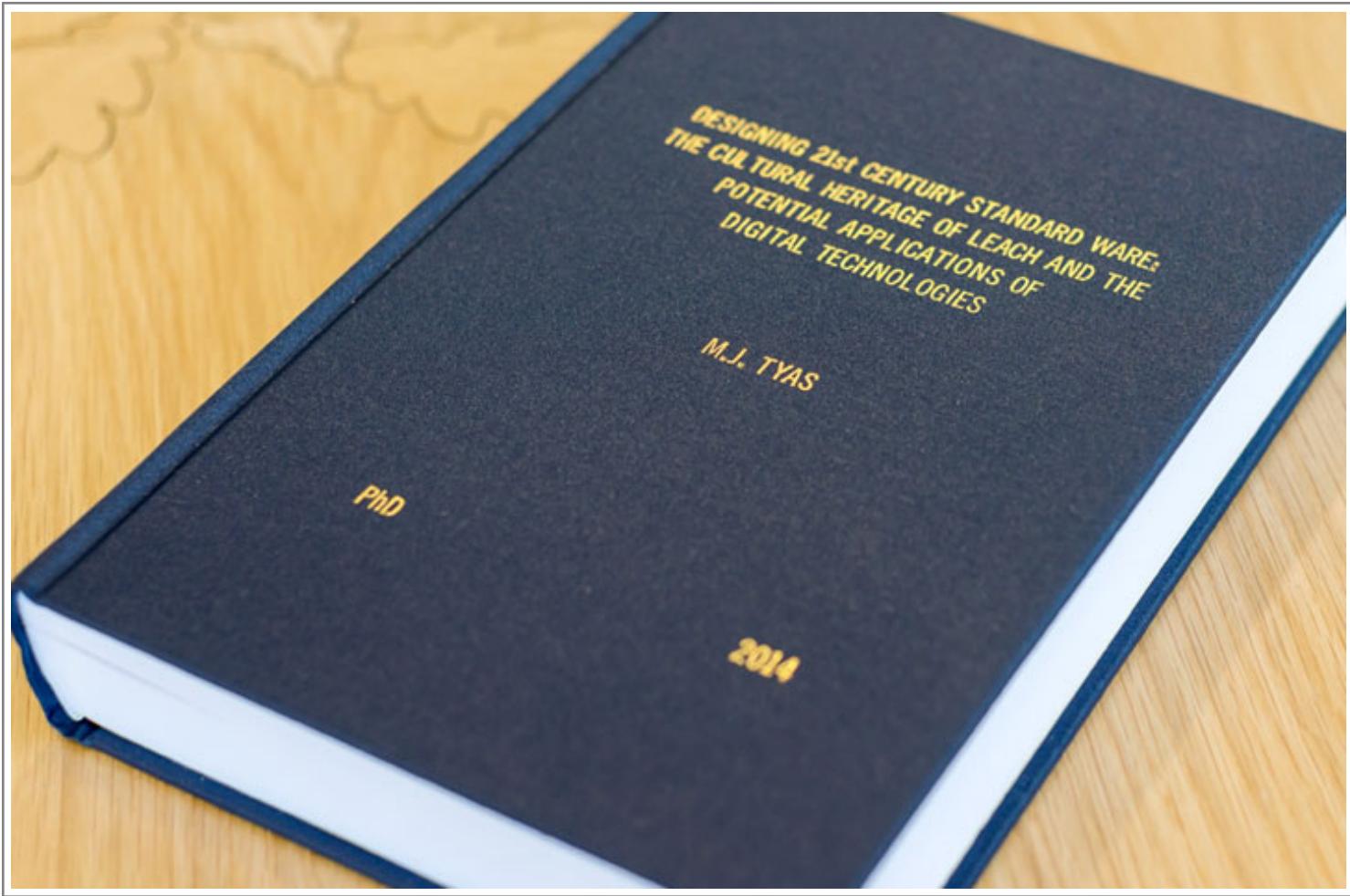
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Keywords
Automatic Vectorization, SIMD, OP2, Unstructured mesh, GPU

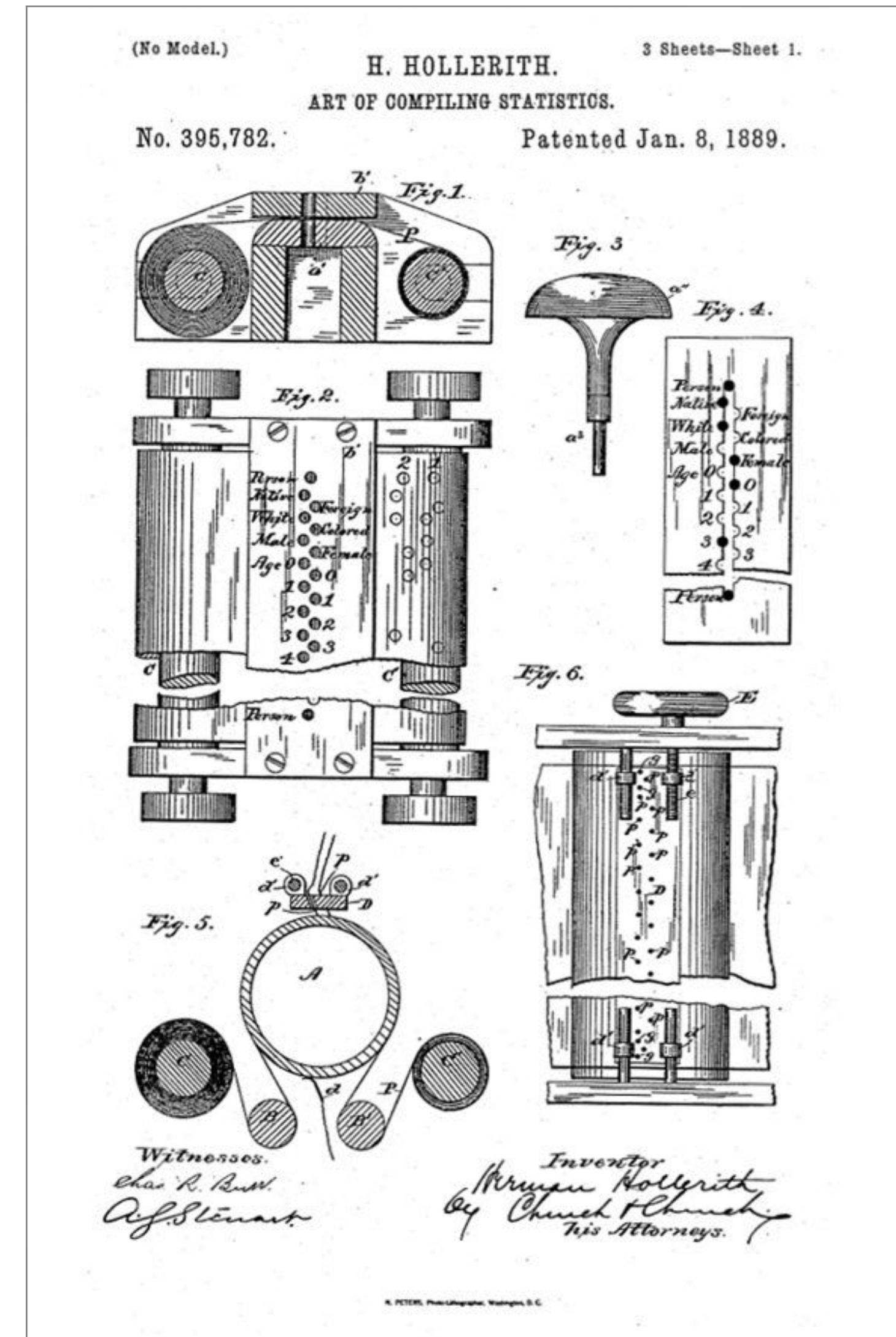
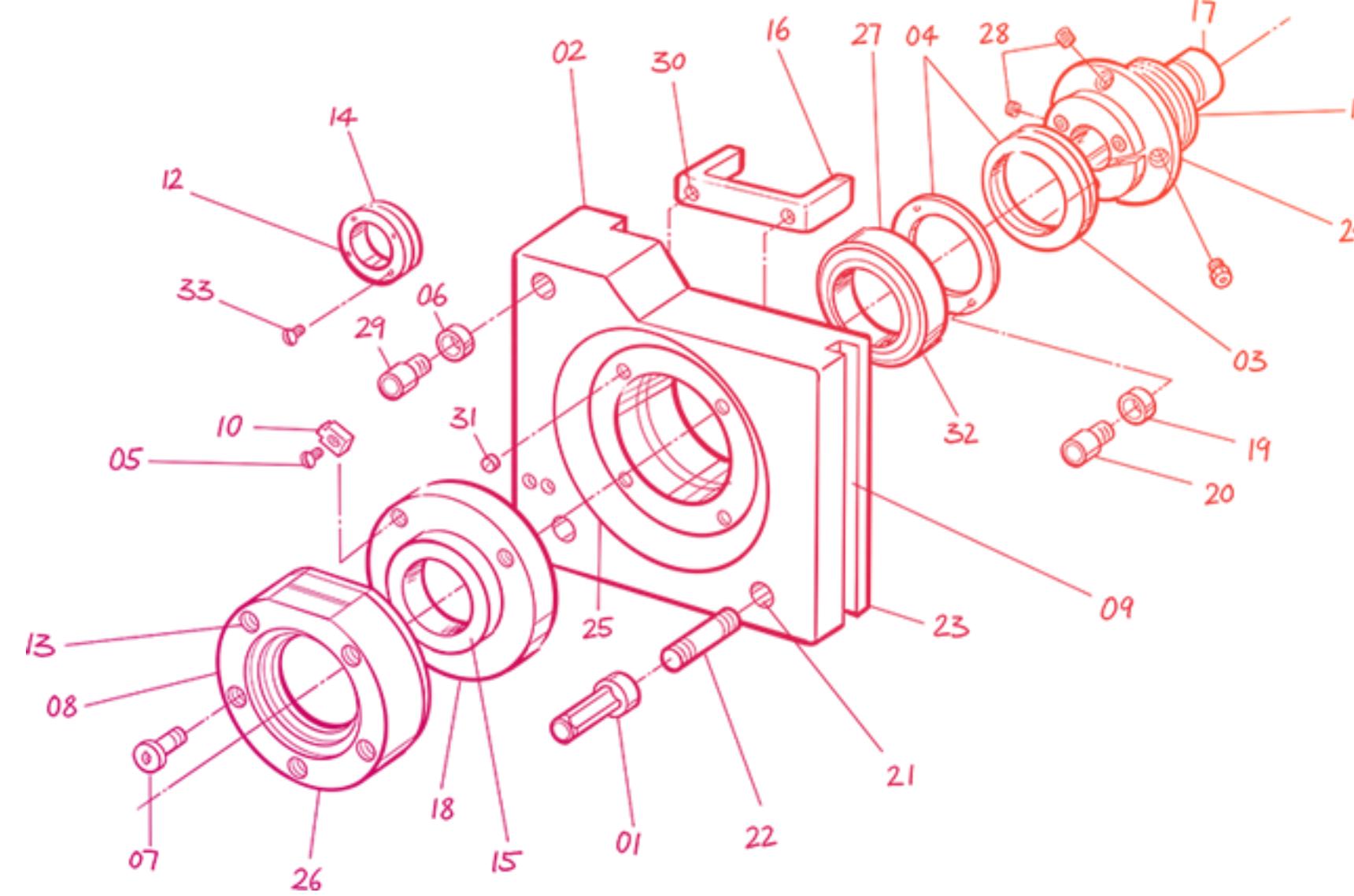
1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of achieving good vectorisation was not significant in previous generations of micro-processors. Vector lengths were short (128 bits or less) and compiler auto-vectorization was used to gain modest speedups if opportunities were present in the application code. Even then such compilers at best could only vectorize a few classes of applications that had very regular memory access and computation patterns such as from the structured-mesh or multimedia application domains. However, a significant portion of the capabilities of the latest processors depends on the utilization of their vector units. Particularly for modern x86 based CPUs with increasingly longer vector lengths, achieving good vectorization has become very important for main-

Dissertations, Theses and Technical Reports



Patents



Technological Standards



The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) website homepage is shown. The header includes the ISO logo, the text "International Organization for Standardization", and the tagline "When the world agrees". A navigation bar at the top offers links to "Standards", "All about ISO", "Taking part", "Store", "Benefits", "Popular standards", "Certification & conformity", and "SDGs". A search bar is also present. Below the header is a blurred image of a control panel with numerous buttons and knobs. The main content area features the heading "We're ISO: we develop and publish International Standards". Below this, a paragraph explains what ISO does, mentioning "documents that provide requirements, specifications, guidelines or characteristics that can be used consistently to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose." Another paragraph states that 22309 International Standards have been published and can be bought from members or the ISO Store. To the right, a sidebar contains the text "Like a symphony, it takes a lot of people working together to develop a standard."

The Importance of Peer Review

Peer reviews subjects an author's scholarly work, research or ideas to the scrutiny of others who are experts in the same field

It has many benefits but two primary purposes

1. A filter to ensure that only high quality research is published, especially in reputable journals, by determining validity, significance and originality
2. A mechanisms to improve the quality of manuscripts that are deemed suitable for publication

Peer review is at the heart of scientific research

Reputable Sources

Publication in peer-reviewed conferences and journals ensures a certain level of confidence in research quality

Magazines, websites, blogs, news articles and similar sources can be useful in scientific research but their role is not to form the basis of a sound argument

It may alert the reader to the existence of reputable work, but is rarely worth citing

Learning might be built on a wider literature, but the arguments in the write-up should be based on knowledge from refereed sources

Reputable Sources?

The screenshot shows a search result for a paper titled "Predictive Performance Analysis of a Parallel Pipelined Synchronous Wavefront Application for Commodity Processor Cluster Systems". The page includes navigation links like "Browse", "My Settings", "Get Help", and "Subscribe". A search bar at the top has "All" selected. Below the title, there are citation metrics: "3 Paper Citations" and "29 Full Text Views". The abstract section discusses the development and application of a model for predictive performance analysis of a pipelined synchronous wavefront application running on commodity processor cluster systems. It mentions extensions for modern commodity processor architectures and the impact of applying modern optimising compilers. The paper is published in the 2006 IEEE International Conference on Cluster Computing.

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia article "Supercomputer". The sidebar on the left contains a navigation menu with links such as "Main page", "Contents", "Featured content", "Current events", "Random article", "Donate to Wikipedia", "Wikipedia store", "Interaction", "Help", "About Wikipedia", "Community portal", "Recent changes", "Contact page", "Tools", "What links here", "Related changes", "Upload file", "Special pages", "Permanent link", "Page information", "Wikidata item", "Cite this page", "Print/export", "Create a book", "Download as PDF", "Printable version", "In other projects", "Wikimedia Commons", and "Languages". The main content area defines a supercomputer as a computer with a high level of performance compared to a general-purpose computer. It notes that nearly a hundred quadrillion FLOPS are used by supercomputers as of November 2017. The article also covers the history of supercomputers, mentioning Seymour Cray's work at Control Data Corporation, the introduction of vector computing, and the dominance of Cray computers in the 1990s. It highlights China's rise in the supercomputer field, with over 200 Chinese computers in the TOP500 list by June 2018. The sidebar also includes a "Contents [hide]" section with links to various sub-sections of the article.

Reputable Sources?

stackoverflow **NEW** Search...

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How to make thread in C without using POSIX library <pthread.h>

I want to implement the multiple threading in C without using any of the POSIX library. Any help would be appreciated.

Not : Don't use fork() or vfork().

c multithreading unix systems-programming

8 share improve this question asked Nov 8 '12 at 5:53 by Rahul Kumar 1,130 ● 8 ● 24

closed as too localized by paxdiablo, Jeegar Patel, brimborium, Ryan Bigg, Matt Handy Nov 8 '12 at 10:35

This question is unlikely to help any future visitors; it is only relevant to a small geographic area, a specific moment in time, or an extraordinarily narrow situation that is not generally applicable to the worldwide audience of the internet. For help making this question more broadly applicable, visit the help center.

If this question can be reworded to fit the rules in the help center, please edit the question.

1 You have to use some library which does that. Threading is an OS building block. You cannot create them on your own from within a program. Still You might use things like glibc which gives API for performing certain tasks as a separate thread – fayyazkl Nov 8 '12 at 5:55

You have to use some library which creates threads for you. Alternatives for pthreads can be found here gnu.org/software/pth/related.html – CCoder Nov 8 '12 at 5:59

5 Is there some *real* reason you don't want to use POSIX threads? Unless you have a valid reason, you should use them and stop wasting time (yours and ours). – paxdiablo Nov 8 '12 at 6:04

1 @paxdiablo I was asked this question in a final round of a technical event and this was the question having the highest marks. I would have won that one if I knew the answer. and I use POSIX threads in REAL

Krebs on Security In-depth security news and investigation ADVERTISING/SPEAKING ABOUT THE AUTHOR Advertisement

A Little Sunshine / Security Tools / The Coming Storm — 94 comments

12 U.S. Mobile Giants Want to be Your Online Identity

SEP 18

The four major U.S. wireless carriers today detailed a new initiative that may soon let Web sites eschew passwords and instead authenticate visitors by leveraging data elements unique to each customer's phone and mobile subscriber account, such as location, customer reputation, and physical attributes of the device. Here's a look at what's coming, and the potential security and privacy trade-offs of trusting the carriers to handle online authentication on your behalf.

Tentatively dubbed "Project Verify" and still in the private beta testing phase, the new authentication initiative is being pitched as a way to give consumers both a more streamlined method of proving one's identity when creating a new account at a given Web site, as well as replacing passwords and one-time codes for logging in to existing accounts at participating sites.

Here's a promotional and explanatory video about Project Verify produced by the [Mobile Authentication Task Force](#), whose members include [AT&T](#), [Sprint](#), [T-Mobile](#) and [Verizon](#):

projectverify

More Secure. 

Mailing List [Subscribe here](#)

SIMPLE APPLICATION SECURITY FOR FREE TRY AKAMAI NOW

Digital Libraries and Search Engines

Many sources for published research in Computer Science

ACM Digital Library, Google Scholar, IEEE Xplore Digital Library etc..

Important to carefully consider the origins of every resource used



Advice on Information Sources

Peer reviewed scientific papers, whether from a conference or journal, are the gold standard for reputability

News articles, patents, technical standards, etc. can be useful when framing work or making a particular point

Learning to reference is absolutely essential

Plagiarism

What Is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is re-use of others' ideas, words, material without appropriate acknowledgement of the sources of that information

This includes, not just copying from published papers, but from material in electronic form, such as websites, news articles, etc.

What Is Appropriate Acknowledgement?

A common way that students commit plagiarism is by using phrases taken from a published source without proper acknowledgment.

Proper acknowledgement has two requirements:

1. An indication of the source of the quotation
2. An indication of the extent of the quotation

Case Study 1

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface.

[1] B. Tognazzini, First Principles of Interaction Design, 2003, [Online] <http://www.asktog.com/basics/firstprinciples.html> [Accessed 14th September 2018]

YOUR TEXT:

The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface [1].

Case Study 1 - It's plagiarism!

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface.

[1] B. Tognazzini, First Principles of Interaction Design, 2003, [Online] <http://www.asktog.com/basics/firstprinciples.html> [Accessed 14th September 2018]

YOUR TEXT:

The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface [1].

Case Study 1 - Why?

Simply placing the source for your quote into your reference list is not sufficient

Doesn't meet the second requirement (an indication of the extent of the quotation)

The reader cannot judge exactly what has been drawn from the quoted source and what has not.

Case Study 1 - Use Quotations

Use it for a group of words taken from a text or speech.

When you quote, place the words you are using in quotation marks, and document the relevant source

Case Study 1 - Corrected

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface.

[1] B. Tognazzini, First Principles of Interaction Design, 2003, [Online] <http://www.asktog.com/basics/firstprinciples.html> [Accessed 14th September 2018]

YOUR TEXT:

“The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface” [1].



Guidelines for Using Quotations

Use direct quotations only when the author's wording is necessary or particularly effective

Don't use excessive quotations in your paper

Avoid quoting more than is needed

A quotation should add weight to what you are trying to say, not repeat a point you have made

Guidelines for Using Quotations

Be sure to integrate all quotations into your own discussion

Introduce direct quotations with your own words

YOUR TEXT WITH OWN WORDS INTRODUCTION:

Since 2003 it has been argued that “The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface” [1].

Case Study 2

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

As steam-driven companies became more visible in the eastern part of the country, they changed farm hands into factory workers, and provided jobs for the large wave of immigrants. Therefore, the increase of industry, the growth of cities, and the explosion of the population were three large factors of nineteenth century America.

Case Study 2 - It's plagiarism!

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

As steam-driven companies became more visible in the eastern part of the country, they changed farm hands into factory workers, and provided jobs for the large wave of immigrants. Therefore, the increase of industry, the growth of cities, and the explosion of the population were three large factors of nineteenth century America.

Case Study 2 - Why?

The writer has failed to cite a source for any of the ideas or facts

Easily detected by any informed reader, particularly if they're versed in the field of study

May have done deliberately or inadvertently

Case Study 3

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

As steam-driven companies became more visible in the eastern part of the country, they changed farm hands into factory workers, and provided jobs for the large wave of immigrants. Therefore, the increase of industry, the growth of cities, and the explosion of the population were three large factors of nineteenth century America [2].

Case Study 3 - It's plagiarism!

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

As steam-driven companies became more visible in the eastern part of the country, they changed farm hands into factory workers, and provided jobs for the large wave of immigrants. Therefore, the increase of industry, the growth of cities, and the explosion of the population were three large factors of nineteenth century America [2].

Case Study 3 - Why?

Although the writer has cited a source, they have only changed around a few words and phrases and/or changed the order of the original sentences

Paraphrasing

Use someone's ideas, but put them in your own words, and acknowledge the source of the information

Widely used where writers are versed in a field of study

Case Study 4

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

Steam-powered production had shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, and as immigrants arrived in the US, they found work in these new factories. As a result, populations grew, and large urban areas arose. This is how America developed in the late nineteenth century.

Case Study 4 - It's plagiarism!

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

Steam-powered production had shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, and as immigrants arrived in the US, they found work in ~~these~~ new factories. As a result, populations grew, and large urban areas arose. This is how America developed in the late nineteenth century.

Case Study 4 - Why?

Although the writer has paraphrased the text, they have failed to cite the source

Case Study 5

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

Steam-powered production had shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, and as immigrants arrived in the US, they found work in these new factories. As a result, populations grew, and large urban areas arose. This is how America developed in the late nineteenth century [2].

Case Study 5 - It's fine!

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

Steam-powered production had shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, and as immigrants arrived in the US, they found work in these new factories. As a result, populations grew, and large urban areas arose. This is how America developed in the late nineteenth century [2].



Case Study 5 - Why?

Paragraph relays the information in the original text using the own words

The source of the information is cited

Extent is clear from citation

Case Study 6

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

As steam-powered production shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, the demand for workers "transformed farm hands into industrial labourers," and created jobs for immigrants. In turn, growing populations increased the size of urban areas [2].

Case Study 6 - It's fine!

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The rise of industry, the growth of cities, and the expansion of the population were the three great developments of late nineteenth century American history. As new, larger, steam-powered factories became a feature of the American landscape in the East, they transformed farm hands into industrial labourers, and provided jobs for a rising tide of immigrants.

YOUR TEXT:

As steam-powered production shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing, the demand for workers "transformed farm hands into industrial labourers," and created jobs for immigrants. In turn, growing populations increased the size of urban areas [2].



Case Study 6 - Why?

Mixing paraphrasing and quotation where the source of the information describes in the sentence is cited

The source of the information is cited

Extent is clear from citation

Common Knowledge

No need to cite the source when the information is the **common knowledge**, i.e., the facts that are common sense, can be found in numerous places, and are likely to be known by a lot of people.

For example:

A parallel application can be run on multiple processors simultaneously

The binary search algorithm has a logarithmic complexity

Figures, Tables and Data

If you are using the figures and tables coming from the sources, you MUST cite the source in the figure caption or table title

For example:

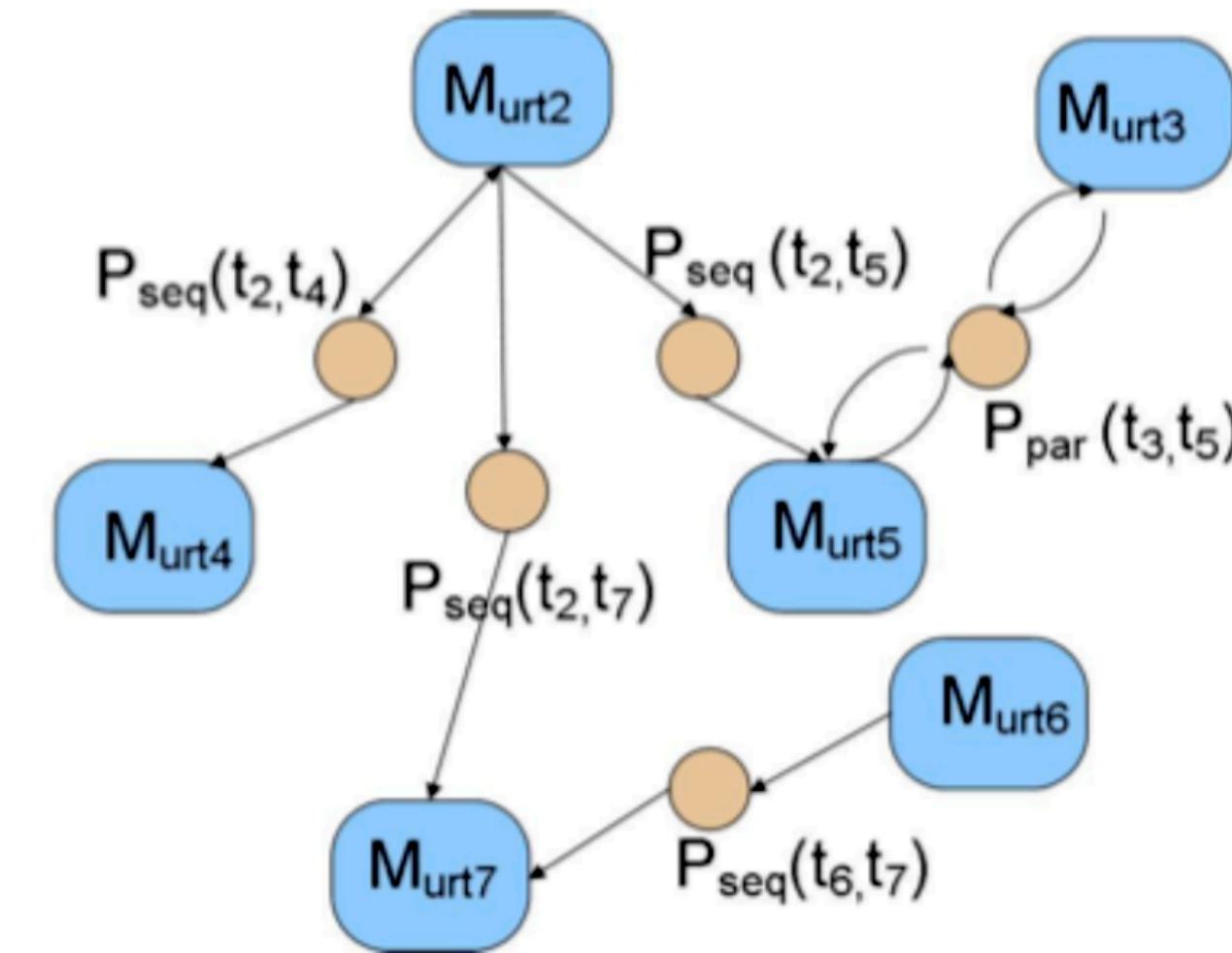
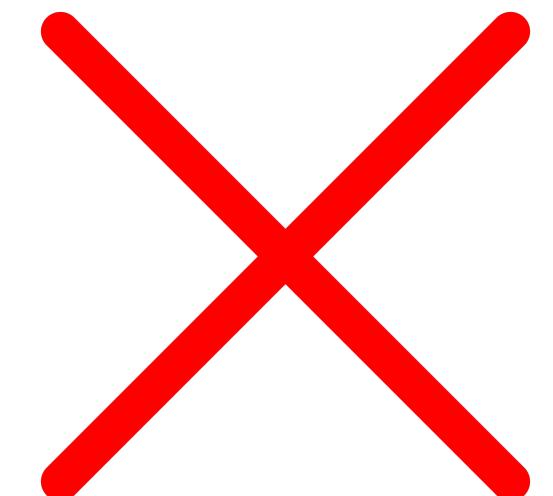


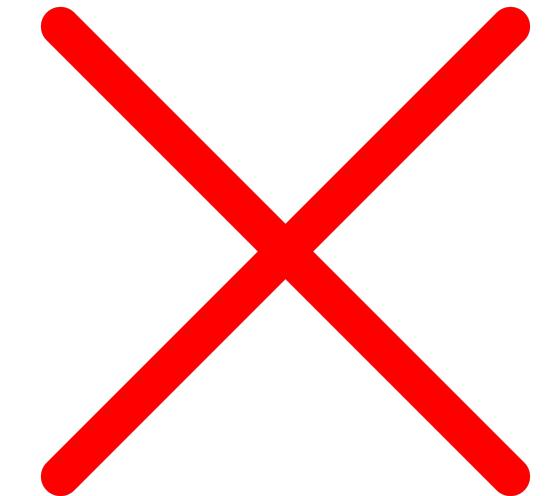
Figure 1. Hierarchy of the authorization control module for the workflow [1]

Plagiarism Summary

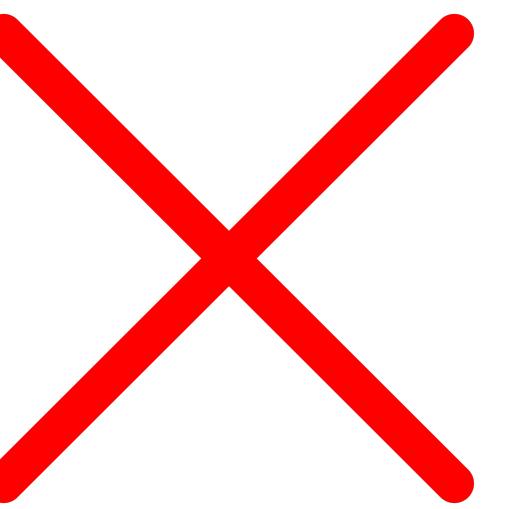
Copy without reference



Copy with reference

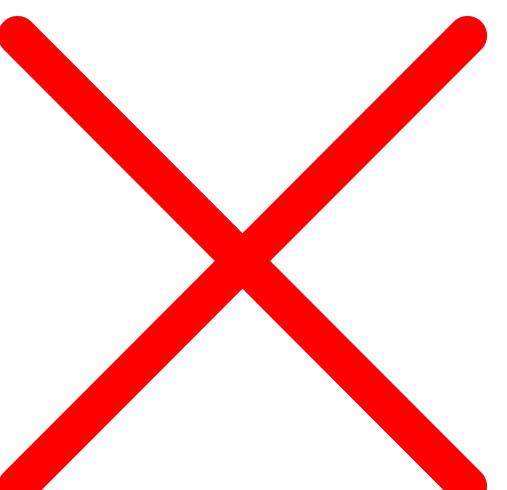


Change a few words or order without reference

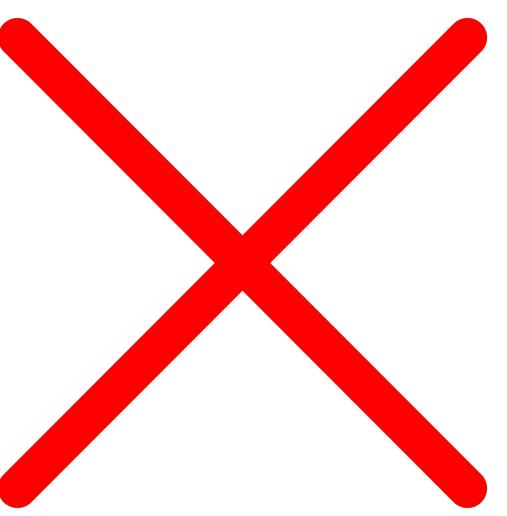


Plagiarism Summary

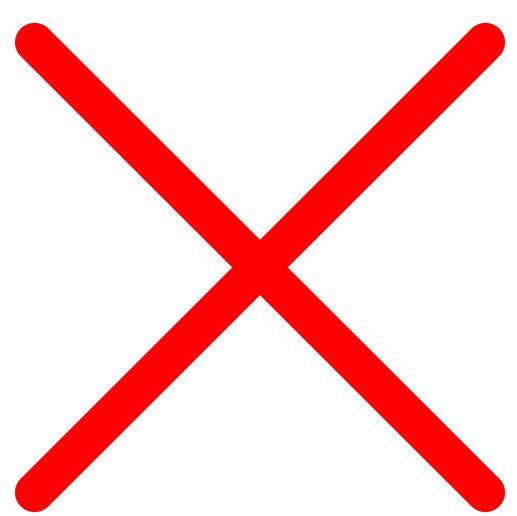
Change a few words or order with reference



Use figures and tables without reference



Paraphrase without reference



Plagiarism Summary

Quotation with reference



Paraphrase with reference



Use figure, table or data with reference



Avoiding Plagiarism

Put in quotations everything that comes directly from the text in the source, trying to provide some introduction with your own words

Paraphrase but be sure you are not just rearranging or replacing a few words

A good approach is to:

1. Read the original text
2. Close the text
3. Write out the idea in your own words

Assisting Plagiarism is Plagiarism

Assisting plagiarism is considered as serious as conducting plagiarism

To protect yourself, do not lend any part of your solution to any student until after the assignment has been marked and returned

Keep all of your old notes and drafts until after the end of the course (so that if something does happen, you have proof that you did the work yourself).

Detecting Plagiarism

Detecting plagiarism

All assignments are submitted to plagiarism detection systems, including TurnItIn

Compares your work against published articles, web pages, and student papers to generate a report

14 billion web pages

Leading libraries and academic databases

Student repositories including 150 million student papers

Detecting Plagiarism

Checks for similarity with coursework submissions at many institutions, online sources, academic repositories, etc..

Not just a bag of words - structural and thematic similarities

Returns quantified analysis for interpretation

43% SIMILARITY INDEX	31% INTERNET SOURCES	24% PUBLICATIONS	30% STUDENT PAPERS
--------------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Queen Mary and Westfield College Student Paper	8%
2	www.cse.iitk.ac.in Internet Source	6%
3	www.personal.kent.edu Internet Source	6%
4	turhancoban.com Internet Source	5%
5	students.ceid.upatras.gr Internet Source	4%
6	www.math.ucla.edu Internet Source	2%
7	www.doc.ic.ac.uk Internet Source	2%
8	archives.ece.iastate.edu Internet Source	2%



Advice on Plagiarism

No need to worry if you learn how to reference your sources and do not attempt to claim the work of others as your own

Communicate using your own words and understanding, whilst citing relevant work

If you are in doubt, speak to your supervisor

Academic Writing

Writing Coursework and Academic Papers

What is the purpose of a coursework report?

What do your readers want to find out?

How will they be reading your report?

Is there a difference between a coursework report and an academic paper?

Characterising Academic Writing

Communicates with its reader clearly and persuasively

High quality content

Logical structure

Precise style

Conventions to show how source material has been used

Language

Avoid exaggeration, colloquialisms and anecdotal language

It's nice that you think your idea is "excellent" but your reviewer may not agree

Avoid contradiction, cliches and abbreviations

At the end of the day, it's like chalk and cheese

Be specific and assertive where possible, avoiding words like 'may', 'could', 'perhaps', 'might', etc. unless you intend to be speculative

Precision and restraint are important when expressing yourself

Can You Be Precise?

Can you shorten the sentence below to no more than 17 words?

"There has been much less research in education during the past year due to the fact that there is a complete lack of public funding for it." (27 words)

Can I Be Precise?

"There has been much less research in education during the past year due to the fact that there is a complete lack of public funding for it." (27 words)

"A lack of public funding has led to less research in education this year." (14 words)

Let's Be Practical

Can we characterise what a general report might look like for a software engineering project?

Documenting a development process

Second year project

Final year project

Let's try it...

Report Structure - An Example for Software Projects

Project Report - How Should I Approach Writing?

Plan the structure of your report

Titles and subtitles

Can you write a comment on what goes in each subsection?

Do these comments tell the story that you want?

Draft. Read. Redraft. Reread. Redraft. Reread. Redraft. Reread...

A Report Structure for Software Projects

Abstract - Usually 100-300 words stating the salient points of the report. It should help your reader to decide whether the report is relevant to her or his interests.

Introduction - The introduction should provide content for the report, discuss relevant background material, identify stakeholders, and state the aim(s) of the work.

Research - This is often referred to the 'literature review' section. It is one of the most important sections of the Project Proposal and the Final Report. It is where you demonstrate that you understand the state-of-the-art in the field you're working. Towards the end of this sections it's normally a good idea to explain how your aim / work / idea / contribution differs from the nearest work in the field.

A Report Structure for Software Projects

Legal, Social, Ethical and Professional Issues - Address the legal, social, ethical, and professional issues associated with your project. Find something to say for each. For example, listening for legal, BCS Code of Conduct for professional, etc..

System Requirements - This section should detail your understanding of what you are planning to create. The section should aim to break down the overarching aims of the work into clear, measurable requirements that can be used in the evaluation of the project. This is why we often function of functional and non-functional requirements.

Design - Communicating how you think about the composition of your system and how it works. You might detail the ways in which the overall system will be broken down into subsystems. Detail should then be provided on the design of each of these subsystems.

A Report Structure for Software Projects

Implementation - This section should discuss how you went about developing a system that was consistent with your design to meet your stated requirements. The implementation of subsystems should be accurately documented, with any implementation difficulties being acknowledged. The Design and Implementation sections can be grouped in the Final Report, if these are tightly coupled. Likely omitted for the Project Proposal, though should mention your proposed implementation technologies somewhere.

Testing and Success Measurement - As well as documenting system testing, this section should also describe any unit testing or integration testing performed. If you are not familiar with unit, integration or system testing then it would be a good idea to investigate these notions and consider about how they relate to your project. This section might also detail any performance, reliability or usability testing performed, with quantification, i.e., numeric measurements, being used wherever possible. All those points are systems focused through. If you're doing something that's research focused or more of a social / analytical study then you need to think about how you'll measure success.

A Report Structure for Software Projects

Project Management - What is the timeline for your project? What software development methodology will you use? Can you identify the major milestones? These types of questions are important for project planning and should be addressed directly.

Evaluation - Usually you evaluate your project with regard to the functional and non-functional requirements you set out in the earlier chapter. This doesn't necessarily mean that your project was successful but, if these requirements were appropriately specified, you it's likely that your project was successful. You might be reiterating some points from the Testing and Success Measurement chapter in your Final Report.

A Report Structure for Software Projects

Conclusion - Generally speaking, section can take different forms - as a minimum you would normally provide a brief summary of your project work and a discussion of possible future work. You may also wish to reiterate the main outcomes of your project and give some idea of how you think the ideas dealt with by your project relate to real-world situations, etc.. For the Proposal, don't mention future work but do summarise your document.

References - Referencing is vital when building on the work of others. You may use any style of referencing but you should be consistent. All forms of plagiarism are taken extremely seriously. This is the first section that most markers will turn to when presented with a proposal or report.

A Report Structure for Software Projects

Appendices - Some information, for example program listings, is useful to include within the report for completeness, but would distract the reader from the flow of the discussion if it were included within the body of the document. Short extracts from major programs may be included to illustrate points but full program listings should only ever be placed within an appendix. Remember that the point of appendices is to make your report more readable. I don't expect to see apprentices in any Project Proposals.

Subjectively, I would hope not to see any in most reports but sometimes they're necessary.



Advice on Academic Writing

Avoid complexity, long sentences and embellishments

Focus on writing with precision and saying as much as is necessary to make your point

Structure and drafting are your friends

