

Book: *Wittgenstein Flies a Kite: A Story of Models of Wings and Models of the World*
by Susan G. Sterrett
Published November 2005 Penguin Books (Pi Press)



“ . . . Sterrett's compelling history of ideas offers a new glimpse of this perennially difficult philosopher and his intellectual milieu.” --- *Publisher's Weekly* December 2005

“Wittgenstein Flies a Kite focuses on intellectual developments in philosophy, physics, aeronautics, and engineering in the years just prior to the First World War. Sterrett points out that certain thinkers were involved simultaneously in more than one of these fields, and argues for conceptual cross-pollination among them. In particular, she wishes to make a case for connections between the modeling of heavier-than-air flight and Wittgenstein's views in the *Tractatus*. [. . .]

. . . Sterrett's research, particularly into the relevant parts of the history of engineering, is detailed and thorough; and what she has uncovered about convergent thought in physics, engineering, and philosophy of science is fascinating. Her style can be engaging, especially in the historical sections, and is, I believe, accessible to intelligent lay readers. .

. . . It should definitely be considered as a text for courses in the history and philosophy of technology or science, and as recommended reading for analytically-oriented students of the early Wittgenstein.

--- *Journal of the History of Philosophy* October 2007