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## But Still They Blog: The Liblog Landscape 2007-2009

What can you say about liblogs and how they're changing?

I asked that question in 2008 as the first sentence of *The Liblog Landscape 2007-2008*—and I've been asking the first part of the question for years, trying to answer it through various studies.

That book attempted to answer the question for 2007 and 2008, at least for English-language blogs with a little visibility. It covered more than 600 blogs in all.

Since that study, the world of blogs by library people (liblogs, or the biblioblogosphere if you prefer) has continued to change. A number of veteran libloggers have explicitly shut down their blogs or walked away. Many short posts moved to Twitter; others moved to FriendFeed, Facebook or some other social medium—and some bloggers found nothing left to blog about. Others post less frequently and quite a few comment on the state of blogging.

### But still they blog.

Just as many of us felt there had been significant changes in liblogs between 2007 and 2008, many of us sense ongoing changes from 2008 to 2009. I felt the need to study those continuing changes—but in a simpler manner than the lengthy, difficult study behind *The Liblog Landscape 2007-2008*. Thus, this study.

### What Might Be Happening

The 2007-2008 study began with “naïve hypotheses” based on blogging having moved from Shiny New Toy to useful, but less enticing, tool. I thought the creation of new blogs and posting to liblogs peaked around 2006—but bloggers, while posting less frequently, were probably writing longer posts and maybe getting more comments per post.

I believe the trends I thought were at work in 2008 have continued into 2009, with one addition:

A fair number of libloggers have walked away from their blogs, finding they no longer have anything to say for which a blog is the best medium.

Here's a summary of what *might* be happening:

- **Fewer new liblogs and maybe fewer liblogs in general:** Not only aren't blogs “hot,” it's now increasingly clear that it's hard to make a name for yourself with a new blog. Some people feel there's no room for new liblogs—that old hands have taken all the attention. That's not entirely true, but it's not entirely false either.
- **Somewhat fewer posts:** I'd expect to see further reduction in number of posts per blog—but maybe not *much* further.
- **Somewhat longer posts:** With Twitter continuing to be hot, and with FriendFeed and expanded Facebook capabilities providing more venues for short items, blogs seem more and more suited to longer essays.
- **Possibly fewer comments:** Last year, I thought there might be more comments per post. This year, I wouldn't be surprised if there are *fewer*—partly because people now comment on a post indirectly, via Twitter, FriendFeed and other channels.

It's not that simple—and, with changes in methodology to keep this project manageable, I'm even less inclined to claim that what's true of the 521 blogs in this study is true of liblogs as a whole.

### Changes in Methodology and Inclusion

The universe of liblogs analyzed and described here is *not* complete. I don't believe it is possible to gather the complete universe of liblogs, particularly since new liblogs appear and vanish each month.

I *do* claim this is a broadly representative sample of more visible and robust English-language liblogs, including most liblogs that meet the set of criteria established for this project. (I'm sure I've missed some. I doubt that I've missed most.) The

criteria are slightly different from those used for the 2008 study, resulting in a smaller universe.

### *Initial inclusions and exclusions*

I began with the set of 607 liblogs studied for *The Liblog Universe 2007-2008*. I won't repeat the methodology used to discover that set. You can find it in the book or *Cites & Insights* June 2009 under "Discovering Liblogs."

Given the small audience and large time requirements for this investigation, I reduced the size of that universe as follows:

- **Non-English:** I eliminated 19 blogs that aren't in English.
- **Defunct:** Fifteen blogs were no longer available as of August 2009—not including cases where bloggers moved to a new address and left a visible trail. Three more now require passwords to read. I eliminated all 18.
- **Lack of posts:** If a blog didn't have at least three posts in *either* March-May 2007 or March-May 2008, I eliminated it for lack of posting activity. That removed 37 blogs from the list (some of which didn't have *any* posts in either year).
- **Lack of visibility:** Here, I raised the bar—but also simplified it. The only simple measure of blog visibility at this point seems to be Google Page Rank. I required a Google Page Rank of at least 4 in *either* late fall 2008 or August 2009. As applied in fall 2008, that should have removed 97 blogs—but some of those would have disappeared for other reasons. This wasn't as effective as hoped in reducing the size of the universe: I removed 50 blogs for low Google Page Rank.
- **Not a liblog:** In three cases, looking at all the visible posts for March-May 2007 and March-May 2008, I could see no relationship to libraries, librarianship or any library-related issue. I removed those three blogs.

In all, I removed 127 of the 607 blogs in the 2008 study, leaving a baseline of 480—and, frankly, I'd hoped to get it closer to 400. Because of the higher bar for "visibility," I make no claims that this study represents the active universe of liblogs—but it's broadly representative of the more visible and robust portions of that universe *that continue to be visible*. The study is deliberately biased toward the kind of liblogs I'd expect to see continue, and I think those are more valuable than the ones that flower briefly and then fade away.

### *Additions*

For additions to the universe, I required the same criteria as for the other 480—but a new blog *also* had to have at least three posts during March-May 2009.

Just as the 2008 study only included blogs that began before 2008 (because the mortality rate for new liblogs is so high), I only included new blogs that began before 2009.

I prepared a list of candidates from blogs on the LISWiki weblogs list and the source list for LISZen, removing blogs that were in the 2008 study. That left 401 blogs. Most of those were either defunct or not in English. Some had low Google Page Rank or didn't have enough recent posts to qualify. I added 34 blogs (most of them not actually *new*—that is, not inaugurated in 2008) to the list.

While doing metrics for those 514 blogs, I checked many (but not all) blogrolls. I found about 86 blogs that weren't been among those already checked. Of those, 42 had low visibility (Google Page Rank below 4—but *very* few blogs have GPRs of 1, 2, or 3). Another 27 had disappeared or were defunct and five more lacked the three posts in March-May 2009. A few weren't library blogs or weren't blogs at all. I added seven new blogs, for a universe of 521.

### *Metrics, Quintiles and Triplets*

I've tried to structure this study as a narrative—the story of reasonably visible English-language liblogs that are still visible in September 2009 and how they've evolved between 2007 and 2009.

That narrative includes some comments from bloggers themselves and 521 profiles of individual blogs [*omitted here*].

Mostly, however, I rely on metrics: Quantifiable measures of a blog that can be determined by an outside observer. Overall qualitative analysis would be much more interesting, but I don't have the vaguest idea how you could do such analysis on a universe of blogs. Nor do I have any intention of trying.

I use *quintiles* extensively in looking at metrics. Quintiles break a population down into five groups based on a particular metric. So, for example, when looking at number of posts in March-May 2009, the first quintile is the (roughly) 20% of blogs with the most posts, the second quintile the 20% of blogs with more posts than average (60%-80%), the third quintile (40%-60%) blogs with

roughly average number of posts, fourth quintile (20%-40%) blogs with fewer posts than average, and fifth quintile (0%-20%) blogs with the fewest posts. I say “roughly” because it makes no sense to split two blogs with the same number of posts between two quintiles, so quintiles can vary in size.

Why quintiles? Because they provide a compact picture of a universe that’s not *too* compact—one that allows for a meaningful “average” range. When you split a population into four parts, the average is split badly. No matter how little an individual differs from the median, it’s forced into the second or third quartile. With quintiles, there’s a broad “average group”—the third quintile.

Thirty-one quantitative metrics come into play in this book:

- Age of blog
- Number of posts in March-May 2007
- Total length of posts in March-May 2007
- Words per post—average post length in March-May 2007
- Number of comments in March-May 2007
- Comments per post in March-May 2007
- The five metrics above (excluding age) for March-May 2008
- The five metrics for March-May 2009
- Percentage changes in the five metrics from March-May 2007 to March-May 2008
- Percentage changes in the five metrics from March-May 2008 to March-May 2009.
- Percentage changes in the five metrics from March-May 2007 to March-May 2009.

If you’ve read the 2008 study, you may notice something missing: metrics on figures or illustrations. After measuring and analyzing them in 2008, I didn’t see much worth in the results—and they’re a *lot* of work to measure.

### *Why March-May?*

When measuring blog activity, you need to strike a balance between a long enough sample period to be meaningful and a short enough period so it’s feasible to do the metrics. Three months seems to be a good compromise.

You want a three-month period when most bloggers are reasonably likely to be active, regardless of the type of library or activity. That argues against the summer months (June-September) and heavy vacation months (November and December).

January’s problematic, both because it’s partly a vacation month and because of ALA Midwinter, one of two megaconferences that can skew blogging

activity. That leaves two possible three-month slots: February through April or March through May. The latter period is a little longer, and in the U.S. each of those three-month periods has one three-day weekend, so I chose the longer quarter. (Yes, there are significant library conferences in the March-May period, but that’s true for every quarter.)

### *Missing metrics*

Every blog in this study has a metrics table, since blogs that didn’t have at least three posts in at least one year’s study period were eliminated. But some have as few as two reported metrics, and quite a few have fewer than 30. Why?

- A number of blogging platforms and blog templates interfere with length measurements. I tried a number of simple stratagems to get around such difficulties, but if it was too much work, I left out the length calculations. How bad is this problem? Of 434 blogs with countable posts in 2009, 40 don’t have length metrics. Similarly, 36 of the 486 with countable posts in 2008 and 37 of the 449 with countable posts in 2007 lack length metrics.
- Some blogs make it difficult to count *either* length *or* number of comments, although that’s a smaller number: 8 in 2007, 11 in 2008 and 20 in 2009.

While I used last year’s figures for existing blogs *where they existed*, I went back to retry blogs where metrics were missing—and in a number of cases, I succeeded. Thus, while 47 of 523 blogs with posts in 2007 (in last year’s study) lacked length metrics (9%), that was down to 37 of 449 this time around (8%); for 2008 posts, the number was 45 of 533 last year (8%) and 36 of 486 this time around (7%).

### *Triplets*

Quintiles are great for looking at overall distribution and for pointing up how an individual blog fits into the universe of blogs. They’re not so great for certain other purposes, including change patterns involving more than one metric or more than one change period.

When looking at some of those patterns, I’ll use triplets rather than quintiles, where a triplet divides the universe into three parts: Significantly increased, Roughly unchanged, and Significantly decreased. I use 20% as the cutoff point for significance. So, for example, for post counts from 2008 to 2009, the triplets would be blogs that had at

least 21% more posts in 2009 than in 2008, those that had 80% to 120% as many, and those with 79% or less.

I also look at averages, generally misleading for heterogeneous populations, in a short section of Chapter 9—but only averages for a somewhat normalized subset of “common” liblogs, and only for a few metrics.

### Age of Liblogs

When did liblogs begin?

Year	Blogs	Percentage
1998	1	0.2%
1999	1	0.2%
2001	6	1.2%
2002	20	3.8%
2003	58	11.1%
2004	71	13.6%
2005	127	24.4%
2006	123	23.6%
2007	103	19.8%
2008	11	2.1%

Table 1.1: Blogs by year of origin

Comparing this table to the same table for last year’s larger set of blogs, I note that two of three blogs from 1998 are gone, as are one of two from 1999 and the only one from 2000. Other than that, the pattern is similar—with, again, the peak for new liblogs being in 2005, declining slightly in 2006 and somewhat more in 2007. There’s a *huge* decline in 2008, down almost 90%. That may mean that few new blogs gain readership, that bloggers aren’t bothering to add their blogs to LISWiki—or that there are simply a lot fewer new liblogs.

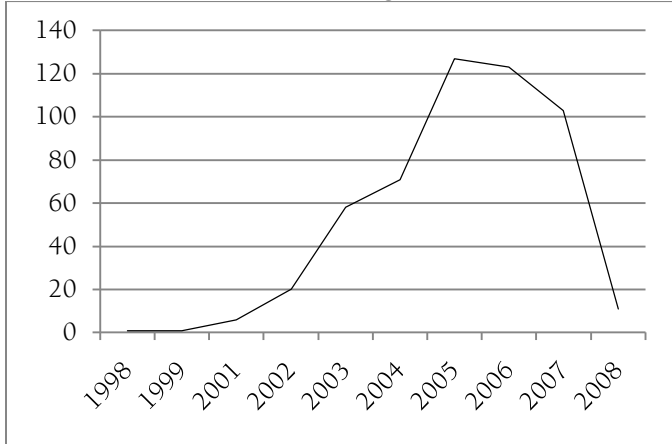


Figure 1.1: Blogs by year of origin

### Blogging Platforms and Programs

How do library people blog? Any blanket statement will be wrong, particularly since the *whole* universe of liblogs may be unknowable. For the blogs in this study, here’s the breakdown.

Program	Blogs	Percentage
WordPress	245	47.2%
Blogger	190	36.6%
TypePad/MovableType	48	9.2%
Other	24	4.6%
Drupal	7	1.3%
LiveJournal	5	1.0%

Table 1.2: Blogging platforms and programs

WordPress is close to a majority and certainly accounts for a large plurality of the blogs. Oddly enough, as compared to the 2008 study, Blogger has *precisely* the same percentage (36.6%) albeit of a smaller universe, but WordPress has jumped from roughly 38% to roughly 47% (and increased in real numbers), while TypePad and MovableType decreased in real numbers and increased from 8.8% to 9.2%. (I’ve lumped MovableType and TypePad together since both are similar products from the same company.) “Other” includes a few identified programs and platforms with no more than two blogs each—and a number of blogs that are either handcrafted or shorn of brand identity.

My guess—and it’s only a guess—is that a broader study, including short-lived and less visible blogs, would show a higher percentage of Blogger blogs, most of them on blogspot.com. While it’s trivially easy to set up a hosted blog at Blogspot.com, Wordpress.com or Typepad.com, I believe Blogspot is *perceived* as being the fastest and easiest of the three.

There has been a slow migration of blogs to WordPress. I believe it’s safe to say that WordPress software is the preferred blogging platform for most long-term “serious” bloggers. I see very few people migrating elsewhere (except, for example, forced migrations to MovableType because people move blogs to shared services such as ScienceBlogs). But I have nothing more than anecdotal evidence—that, and the near-majority numbers above.

If you’re a numbers person, you may note that the numbers above don’t add up to 521. In the two weeks between completing the scan of blogs for metrics and doing a second scan for blogging plat-

forms, two blogs had become unavailable, temporarily or permanently.

## Currency

How current are liblogs? I used March-May 2009 for metrics—but I *recorded* those metrics in September 2009. To get a checkpoint, I checked each blog on September 30, 2009, looking for the most recent post but rounding down to week intervals—and beyond that, to spans that seem indicative.

Here are the results.

Weeks	Blogs	Percentage	Cumulative
1	218	42.0%	42.0%
2	51	9.8%	51.8%
4	56	10.8%	62.6%
8	49	9.4%	72.1%
13	24	4.6%	76.7%
17	14	2.7%	79.4%
26	22	4.2%	83.6%
52	34	6.6%	90.2%
99	29	5.6%	95.8%
Ceased	22	4.2%	

Table 1.3: Currency as of September 30, 2009

I marked a blog as Ceased if there was an *explicit* declaration that there would be no new posts—no matter how recent that declaration was. (Here again, the universe is 519, missing two blogs that seem to have vanished.) Other than that:

- More than 40% of the blogs are *robust*—they had a post within the most recent week.
- Just over half the blogs are *active*—with a post somewhere within the most recent fortnight.
- Stepping back at larger intervals, it's interesting that the number with posts sometime during the month (but not in the most recent fortnight) and those with posts sometime in August are fairly close to the “week before last” group.
- “13” indicates sometime within the last quarter (13 weeks). More than three-quarters of the blogs had a post within the summer quarter (July-September).
- I include “17” (actually four months) because Technorati uses that cutoff for blogs that could be considered alive. Roughly 80% of liblogs had a post between June 1 and September 30, 2009.
- The next two levels are half-year and year marks—in both cases representing blogs that are neither active nor clearly dead.

- “99” really means “more than 52”—that is, blogs that haven't explicitly ceased but haven't had a post in more than a year.

## Conclusions

What can we say about visible liblogs based on the facts in this chapter?

- Either there were a *lot* fewer new liblogs in 2008 than in previous years, or the bloggers failed to add their blogs to the LISWiki page or gain significant readership. Probably a little of each, resulting in a dramatic 90% drop.
- It's not *quite* true that most liblogs use WordPress, but it increasingly seems to be the platform of choice.
- As of September 30, 2009, most libloggers posted within the fortnight and more than three out of six posted within the month—but one out of seven hadn't posted within six months.

[Omitted: 86 blog profiles]

## 2. Posting Frequency

Some blogs are rivers of posts—and if you subscribe to several, you may come to think of them as firehoses. Others, including most liblogs, are streams or rivulets: Writers and groups of writers letting you know when they have something to say that works best as a blog post.

How often do posts appear on a blog?

Until feeds and aggregators became common, that was an important question. If you didn't provide a reasonably steady stream of posts, people wouldn't have reason to come back to your blog or bookmark it. Few posts, few readers. Some people advised trying to do at least one post a day. Others offered less strenuous advice.

These days, when most readers see posts indirectly, a steady stream of posts is only important for certain kinds of blogs. Indeed, too many posts can work *against* readership, particularly if posts appear to be for the sake of posting.

This chapter considers frequency of posts among the 521 liblogs for 2007, 2008 and 2009—and changes in the overall picture. The next chapter considers changes on a blog-by-blog basis, a somewhat different consideration.

## Quintiles

Figures 2.1 through 2.3 provide concise pictures of posting frequency for March-May 2007, 2008 and 2009. After those quick comparisons, we'll look at each year in different ways.

### Quintiles for 2007

In all, 449 liblogs had countable posts in March-May 2007, ranging from one post over the 92 days (13 weeks) to 1,161 posts.

Postso7	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Total
All	1,161	1	449	25	20,820
Q1	1,161	59	91	85	13,067
Q2	58	32	92	43	3,987
Q3	31	18	90	24	2,171
Q4	17	8	90	12	1,236
Q5	7	1	86	5	359

Table 2.1: Post quintiles for 2007

### Quintiles for 2008

In all, 486 liblogs had countable posts in March-May 2008, ranging from one post to 919 posts.

Postso8	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Total
All	919	1	486	20	18,876
Q1	919	46	97	68	12,080
Q2	45	28	96	35	3,447
Q3	27	15	97	20	1,976
Q4	14	7	98	10	1,030
Q5	6	1	98	2	343

Table 2.2: Post quintiles for 2008

### Quintiles for 2009

In all, 434 liblogs had countable posts in March-May 2009, ranging from one post to 909 posts.

Postso9	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Total
All	909	1	434	13	15,286
Q1	909	39	85	59	10,893
Q2	38	19	89	26	2,447
Q3	18	10	86	13	1,171
Q4	9	5	82	7	563
Q5	4	1	92	2	212

Table 2.3: Post quintiles for 2009

### Quick differences

The group as a whole shows obvious declines from year to year.

- Although there were 8% more blogs with posts in 2008, total posts were down 9%.
- While total posts were down *more* in 2009 (19% less than in 2008), blogs were also down by almost 11%.
- Blogging was *much* more concentrated in 2009, with the top quintile representing

more than 70% of all posts (compared to 63% and 64% for 2007 and 2008).

- While the median blog in 2007 had two posts per week (25) and the median in 2008 was 1.5 per week, by 2009 the median was one post per week (13).

[Graph versions omitted]

## Other Ways of Looking at Posting Frequency

Consider other ways of looking at this universe of liblogs and the frequency of posts. Maybe you'll find one of these more meaningful.

### *The rivers and the streams*

There are only a handful of "river" blogs—blogs with *several* posts per day. In each year, five blogs averaged six or more posts per day—and for 2008, no other blogs had more than four posts per day. In 2007, one more blog had at least five posts per day—but no more had more than three. In 2008 also, only half a dozen blogs had more than three posts per day. In 2009, posting was more concentrated: While there were no blogs with more than five but fewer than six posts per day, two more blogs (a total of seven) have more than four posts per day, and another (a total of eight—two higher than in 2007 or 2008) have more than three posts per day.

If you take the five most prolific blogs in each year, those five totaled 3,765 posts in 2007 (18% of the total), 3,715 in 2008 (20% of the total), and 3,906 in 2009 (26% of the total). That's a considerable increase in concentration. If you take the six or eight blogs with more than three posts per day, it gets worse: 20% in 2007, 21% in 2008—and a full third, 33%, in 2009. That's 1.8% of the blogs with *any* posts—representing a third of *all* the posts.

### *Going halfway*

Starting with the most prolific blogs, how many would you have to include to get half of the posts?

In 2007, that would require 52 blogs (12% of the total). In 2008, it would require 51 (10% of the total). But in 2009, even though (as in 2008) the *most* prolific blog was down almost 20% from its 2007 numbers, it would require a mere 26 blogs (5.9% of the total). That's concentration.

### *Frequency—posts per day or per week*

Note, for all of these, that a blog *had* to have at least one post per month in one of the three March-May quarters to be included in this survey. Those with

one or two posts in one year had more in at least one other year. Note also that “at least x posts per x” is an average: A blog could have 13 posts in one day and nothing for the rest of the quarter and still count as “at least one post per week.”

#### **In 2007:**

- 39 blogs had at least one post per day.
- 64 more had at least one every other day.
- 95 more had at least two posts per week.
- 103 more had at least one post per week.
- 66 more had at least one post per fortnight.
- 55 more had at least one post per month.
- Six had one or two posts in the quarter.

#### **In 2008:**

- 33 blogs had at least one post per day.
- 64 more had at least one every other day.
- 109 more had at least two posts per week.
- 106 more had at least one post per week.
- 76 more had at least one post per fortnight.
- 71 more had at least one post per month.
- 29 had one or two posts in the quarter.

#### **In 2009:**

- 26 blogs had at least one post per day.
- 39 more had at least one every other day.
- 69 more had at least two posts per week.
- 88 more had at least one post per week.
- 85 more had at least one post per fortnight.
- 73 more had at least one post per month.
- 54 had one or two posts in the quarter.

If you define “active” as at least one post every other week (fortnight) averaged over three months, the active population was 367 blogs in 2007 and 388 in 2008—but only 307 in 2009. If you define “robust” as at least one post per week, then the count is 301 in 2007 and 312 in 2008—but only 222 in 2009.

## **Most Prolific Blogs in 2009**

### *More than two posts per day (11)*

<b>Blog</b>	<b>Posts</b>
ResourceShelf.....	909
Open Access News .....	892
Peter Scott's Library Blog .....	765
beSpecific .....	733
Library Stuff .....	607
Law Librarian Blog.....	457
DigitalKoans.....	387
Slaw .....	355
The Kept-Up Academic Librarian.....	268
Stephen's Lighthouse.....	230
The Centered Librarian.....	209

### *Between one and two posts per day (15)*

The Rabid Librarian's Ravings in the Wind.....	176
A Fuse #8 Production.....	171
Library Chronicles.....	171
Free Government Information (FGI) .....	147
bookshelves of doom .....	135
Beyond the Job .....	131
Kids Lit .....	125
Out of the Jungle.....	121
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy .....	118
Bluestalking.....	117
Library Boy .....	110
iLibrarian.....	103
What I Learned Today.....	100
Head Tale .....	94
Library Link of the Day .....	92

### *Five to 6.2 posts per week (12)*

poesy galore.....	81
Information Literacy Weblog.....	80
Tame the Web .....	80
MaisonBisson.com.....	79
Knowbodies.....	78
Phil Bradley's weblog .....	77
ACRL Insider .....	74
Catalogablog .....	72
Bad Librarianship Now! .....	71
The Good Library Blog.....	66
Libology Blog .....	66
Typo of the day for librarians .....	65

### *Four to 4.9 posts per week (17)*

Crazy Quilts .....	63
Digitization 101.....	62
Infotoday Blog.....	61
Information Junk.....	60
The Blue Skunk Blog.....	59
David Lee King.....	59
Science Library Pad .....	58
Government Info Pro .....	56
TangognaT.....	56
ricklibrarian.....	55
Librarian.....	54
OUseful.Info, the blog.....	54
PLA Blog.....	54
The Distant Librarian.....	53
Lorcan Dempsey's weblog.....	53
School Librarian in Action.....	53
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	52

### *Three to 3.9 posts per week (30)*

librarian.net .....	51
LibraryBytes .....	51
walking paper.....	50
Walt at Random .....	50
Confessions of a Science Librarian .....	49
NeverEndingSearch.....	49

Library Juice .....48
ResearchBuzz.....48
Killin' time being lazy.....47
Pegasus Librarian.....47
Library Blog Buzz .....45
OPL Plus (not just for OPLs anymore).....45
Caveat Lector .....44
the.effing.librarian.....44
Library clips .....43
SemiConscious Dot Org .....43
The "M" Word - Marketing Libraries .....42
The Misadventures of Super\_Librarian.....42
UK Web Focus .....42
LibrariAnne.....41
The Mlxperience .....41
Travelin' Librarian.....41
UK Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Blog.....41
lauren's library blog.....40
Shelf Check.....40
ACRLog .....39
Christina's LIS Rant .....39
Open Sesame .....39
Paul Miller .....39
Tom Roper's Weblog.....39

Conclusions

Averages are generally meaningless for heterogeneous populations. How meaningless? Consider posting frequency: The "average blog" (dividing number of posts by number of blogs) had 46 posts in 2007, 39 posts in 2008 and 35 posts in 2009—in each case, a number that would put a blog well into the second quartile. In 2007, 124 blogs, 28% of those with any posts, had 46 posts or more. In 2008, 134 blogs, 28% of those with any posts, had 39 posts or more. In 2009, 101 blogs, a mere 23% of those with any posts, had 35 posts or more.

Using my rule of thumb for significant changes, the change in overall posting is significant for 2007 to 2009, at -27%, but other changes don't quite rise to "significant." Still, it's fair to say that fewer people were blogging in 2009 than in 2008 and that, by and large, there were fewer posts.

[Omitted: 56 blog profiles]

3. Changes in Frequency

It's clear from Chapter 2 that, on the whole, visible liblogs had considerably fewer posts in 2009 than in 2007, with fewer liblogs having any posts and fewer posts per blog.

But blogs don't all change in the same way. This chapter considers changes in posting frequency on a blog-by-blog basis.

Quintiles

Tables 3.1 through 3.3 show quintiles for changes in posting frequency. The universe for Table 3.1 is blogs with at least one post in 2007. The universe for Table 3.2 is blogs with at least one post in 2008. The third table, showing changes from 2007 to 2009, excludes blogs that had posts in 2007 but none in either 2008 or 2009.

"Percent," the rightmost column, is the percentage of all posts in the first year of the comparison represented by that quintile. So, for example, nearly a third of all posts in 2007 were in the 20% of blogs in the second quintile—those that, in this case, either had slightly fewer posts or slightly more posts in 2008 than in 2007.

Table with 6 columns: Change, High, Low, Blogs, Median, Posts7. Rows include All, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5.

Table 3.1: Changes in posting frequency from 2007 to 2008

Table with 6 columns: Change, High, Low, Count, Med, Posts8. Rows include All, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5.

Table 3.2: Changes in posting frequency from 2008 to 2009

Table with 6 columns: Change, High, Low, Count, Median, Posts7. Rows include All, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5.

Table 3.3: Changes in posting frequency from 2007 to 2009

Notes on these changes

Quite a few libloggers did significantly more blogging in 2008 than in 2007—all of Quintile 1 and part of Quintile 2. The median blog in Quintile 1 had 75% more posts. The next year, the median increase was only 50% and, while the entire first quintile included more posts, the change ranged down



to barely noticeable (8%). Over the two-year period, the top quintile includes a number of blogs with slightly *fewer* posts in 2009 than in 2007. Still, as listed later in this chapter, there were dozens of blogs with more posts in each successive year.

The second quintile, representing blogs with somewhat better year-to-year records than average, almost exactly matches my “relatively unchanged” definition (+20% to -20%) for 2007-2008, but ranges from tiny increases to losing a quarter of posts for 2008-2009—and, for the two-year period, includes blogs dropping four out of ten posts over two years.

The median for each change period is telling. While the median blog was off by a third from 2007 to 2008 and by 40% from 2007 to 2009, it was down more than half—55%—over two years.

Note also the “-100%” median for Q5 in tables 3.2 and 3.3, which means at least half of the blogs in that quintile had no posts at all in 2009. Table 3.3 would be even worse if I included the 23 blogs with posts in 2007 but none in either 2008 or 2009.

## Growth Blogs, 2007 to 2009

This list includes 77 blogs with more posts in 2009 than in 2007—not quite all of Q1 (which goes down to -3%). (Note: Order in the list is in actual decreasing percentages, including fractional percentages.)

Blog .....	Growth
Open Sesame.....	3800%
iLibrarian.....	2475%
The Centered Librarian.....	2222%
ishush .....	700%
zCoolTools.....	500%
pafa.net.....	350%
Thoughts from a Library Administrator .....	340%
Library Grants .....	300%
DigitalKoans.....	291%
poesy galore.....	268%
The Search Principle blog.....	263%
Paul Miller.....	225%
Government Info Pro .....	211%
I, Reader .....	200%
Creating the One-shot Library Workshop.....	200%
LibCasting .....	200%
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia.....	200%
Librarians for Human Rights .....	183%
the.effing.librarian .....	175%
Information Literacy meets Web 2.0 .....	169%

Tennant: Digital Libraries.....	150%
Library spring.....	150%
A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette .....	143%
Library Stuff .....	143%
ALA TechSource Blog.....	138%
libraryassessment.info .....	133%
ellie <3 libraries.....	120%
The PlanetEsme Plan .....	113%
Plinius.....	100%
hangingtogether.org.....	89%
Love the Liberry .....	83%
Stephen's Lighthouse .....	81%
archivemata .....	80%
Dilettante's Ball.....	75%
Knowbodies.....	73%
TangognaT.....	70%
walking paper.....	67%
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	63%
Be openly accessible or be obscure .....	60%
A Library Writer's Blog.....	57%
Typo of the day for librarians .....	51%
DIY Librarian.....	50%
Confessions of a Mad Librarian .....	50%
rambleonsylvie .....	50%
School Librarian in Action.....	47%
Cheeky Librarian.....	47%
PLA Blog.....	46%
Open Access News .....	43%
reeling and writhing.....	42%
Librarian of Fortune.....	41%
Out of the Jungle.....	38%
The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics .....	37%
Slaw .....	35%
Library Voice .....	32%
Books to curl up with: a librarian's musings.....	29%
The "M" Word - Marketing Libraries.....	27%
The Leary Letter .....	25%
Digital Eccentric.....	25%
Extensible Librarian .....	25%
Books, Bargains, & Beer .....	25%
Terry's Worklog.....	25%
Infotoday Blog.....	24%
Attempting Elegance .....	23%
Peter Scott's Library Blog .....	23%
The Distant Librarian.....	20%
Kids Lit .....	20%
Library Monk.....	18%
explodedlibrary.info .....	17%
Christina's LIS Rant .....	15%
BlogJunction.....	14%
ArchivesNext .....	12%
RUSA Blog .....	11%
Catalogablog .....	11%

Crazy Quilts .....	11%
The Kept-Up Academic Librarian .....	9%
The Sheck Spot .....	8%
Please Be Quiet .....	4%

Another Way to View Changes

Another good way to look at changes over time is to split the universe into three parts: Those with significant increases (at least 21%), those with significant decreases and those staying about the same. This analysis ignores blogs with no posts at all—and, for three-year triplets, ignores blogs that don't have at least one post in each year.

Year-to-year distribution

Comparing 2007 to 2008, there are 419 blogs with posts in both years. Of those, 96 (23%) had more than 20% more posts in 2008 than in 2007. 84 (20%) had roughly the same number of posts (from 20% more to 20% fewer). That leaves 239 (57%) that dropped in frequency by more than 20%.

Comparing 2008 to 2009, there are 422 blogs with posts in both years. Of those, 78 (18%) grew by more than 20%; 98 (23%) stayed about the same; and 246 (58%) dropped by more than 20%. The only real difference between 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 is that a very slightly smaller proportion of blogs had substantial growth from 2008 to 2009, with slightly more staying about the same.

Compare 2007 to 2009—for the 373 blogs with posts in both years (seven of which had no posts in 2008). 64 (17%) grew significantly—roughly the same percentage as in the other years—but only 46 (12%) stayed about the same, leaving 263 (71%) dropping more than 20% in frequency.

Three-year patterns

Table 3.4 breaks down changes over all three years—that is, 2007-2008, 2008-2009 and 2007-2009—into a of permutations.

2007-08	2008-09	2007-09	Blogs	Percentage
More	More	More	8	2%
More	Same	More	16	4%
More	Same	Same	1	0%
More	Fewer	More	21	6%
More	Fewer	Same	9	2%
More	Fewer	Fewer	34	9%
Same	More	More	6	2%
Same	More	Same	1	0%
Same	Same	More	2	1%
Same	Same	Same	18	5%
Same	Same	Fewer	2	1%

Same	Fewer	Same	1	0%
Same	Fewer	Fewer	49	13%
Fewer	More	More	9	2%
Fewer	More	Same	15	4%
Fewer	More	Fewer	29	8%
Fewer	Same	Same	1	0%
Fewer	Same	Fewer	46	13%
Fewer	Fewer	Fewer	98	27%

Table 3.4: Posting frequency patterns, 2007-2009

This table includes 363 blogs with at least one post in each year. There are theoretically 27 patterns (three cubed), but realistically, these are almost all of the *feasible* patterns—e.g., if a blog grows by more than 20% in each year, it can't *possibly* show less than 20% growth for the two-year period.

Consider the largest groups:

- By far the largest group dropped by more than 20% each year.
- Two groups are almost tied for second place (13%), both dropping by more than 20% from 2007 to 2009: Those that were about the same in 2007-2008 and those that were about the same in 2008-2009.
- The fourth largest group (9%) grew significantly from 2007 to 2008, but dropped enough from 2008 to 2008 to represent an overall drop of more than 20% from 2007 to 2009—and its mirror case, blogs shrinking from 2007 to 2008 and growing from 2008 to 2009, but shrinking overall—was the only other case with more than 6% of the blogs.

Growing Patterns

The blogs below, all of them part of the top quintile for 2007-2009, show the possible patterns that result in overall growth. As elsewhere above, the three words refer to change in 2007-2008, 2008-2009 and 2007-2009 respectively.

Continuous growth (more, more, more)

<b>Blog.....</b>	<b>Growth 2007-2009</b>
DigitalKoans .....	291%
poesy galore .....	268%
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia .....	200%
Librarians for Human Rights.....	183%
A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette.....	143%
Library Stuff.....	143%
The PlanetEsme Plan.....	113%
Stephen's Lighthouse.....	81%

Mixed growth

More, same, more:

iLibrarian .....	2475%
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Government Info Pro .....	211%
LibCasting .....	200%
Tennant: Digital Libraries.....	150%
hangingtogether.org.....	89%
Dilettante's Ball.....	75%
TangognaT.....	70%
Typo of the day for librarians .....	51%
rambleonsylvie .....	50%
Cheeky Librarian.....	47%
Open Access News .....	43%
reeling and writhing.....	42%
Librarian of Fortune.....	41%
Library Voice .....	32%
Books to curl up with: a librarian's musings.....	29%
Terry's Worklog.....	25%

#### Same, more, more:

Library Grants .....	300%
Information Literacy meets Web 2.0 .....	169%
ALA TechSource Blog.....	138%
Knowbodies.....	73%
walking paper.....	67%
Slaw .....	35%

#### Same, same, more:

The "M" Word - Marketing Libraries.....	27%
Peter Scott's Library Blog.....	23%

#### *Ups and downs, but eventually up*

#### More, fewer, more:

Open Sesame.....	3800%
ishush .....	700%
2CoolTools.....	500%
pafa.net.....	350%
Thoughts from a Library Administrator .....	340%
The Search Principle blog.....	263%
Creating the One-shot Library Workshop.....	200%
I, Reader .....	200%
the.ffmpeg.librarian .....	175%
ellie <3 libraries .....	120%
Love the Liberry .....	83%
A Library Writer's Blog.....	57%
Confessions of a Mad Librarian .....	50%
DIY Librarian.....	50%
PLA Blog.....	46%
The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics .....	37%
Books, Bargains, & Beer .....	25%
Extensible Librarian.....	25%
Digital Eccentric.....	25%
The Leary Letter .....	25%
Attempting Elegance .....	23%

#### Fewer, more, more:

Paul Miller.....	225%
libraryassessment.info .....	133%
Plinius.....	100%
archivematica .....	80%
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	63%
Be openly accessible or be obscure .....	60%

School Librarian in Action.....	47%
Out of the Jungle.....	38%
Infoday Blog.....	24%

## Conclusions

Most ongoing blogs—roughly three out of five—had significantly fewer posts in each year, with nearly three-quarters dropping by at least 21% over the two-year period. That's the primary conclusion.

[Omitted: 41 blog profiles]

## 4. The Long and Short of Blogs

Last year, it seemed reasonable to suppose that, on the whole, liblogs would have fewer posts but longer posts, as Twitter, FriendFeed, Facebook and others replaced many of the uses for very short posts.

If anything, that's even more true in 2009, even as a number of bloggers simply stopped blogging. One new liblog is an extreme case: *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*, a group blog that's essentially an essay magazine done in blog form, with each (reviewed and edited) entry the length of a typical magazine or journal article.

While more of the remaining libloggers seem likely to write essays rather than quick posts, there are still blogs for which the single sentence or two is the norm, including link blogs and some others.

### Blog Length Quintiles

We discuss overall length first. These are observations, not judgments: There's no "right length" for a blog or for individual posts.

Last year, I attempted to deduct large quantities of "link overhead"—sets of link network icons that turn into groups of words when copied for length evaluation. This year, I made no such attempt. Most blogs don't include link networks with each post; where they do, the readable text may be anywhere from one to 30 words shorter than the reported text.

#### *Quintiles for 2007*

I was able to calculate word counts for 412 blogs for March-May 2007.

Len07	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	186,467	179	412	6,216	19,720
Q1	186,467	16,854	83	27,155	11,496

<b>Q2</b>	16,849	8,073	83	11,090	3,997
<b>Q3</b>	8,035	4,580	82	6,163	2,331
<b>Q4</b>	4,554	1,938	82	3,111	1,161
<b>Q5</b>	1,922	179	82	1,119	735

Table 4.1: Total word count quintiles for March-May 2007

This table should be self-explanatory—e.g., the shortest blog in the longest quintile (Q1) had 16,854 words while the longest had 186,467. The median was 27,155 words; 83 blogs fell into this category; they include 11,496 posts—58% of the total for all 412 blogs.

### Quintiles for 2008

I was able to calculate lengths for 452 blogs for March-May 2008.

<b>Leno8</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Blogs</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Posts</b>
<b>All</b>	204,517	46	452	5,536	17,824
<b>Q1</b>	204,517	14,945	91	21,580	10,443
<b>Q2</b>	14,832	7,661	90	10,536	3,395
<b>Q3</b>	7,571	3,770	90	5,536	2,351
<b>Q4</b>	3,699	1,553	90	2,484	1,046
<b>Q5</b>	1,544	46	91	821	589

Table 4.2: Total word count quintiles for March-May 2008

### Quintiles for 2009

I was able to calculate lengths for 394 blogs for March-May 2009.

<b>Leno9</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Blogs</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Posts</b>
<b>All</b>	239,351	17	394	3,621	13,437
<b>Q1</b>	239,351	11,728	79	20,919	8,920
<b>Q2</b>	11,713	5,317	79	7,839	2,351
<b>Q3</b>	5,248	2,587	79	3,621	1,180
<b>Q4</b>	2,555	1,003	78	1,728	673
<b>Q5</b>	990	17	79	540	313

Table 4.3: Total word count quintiles for March-May 2009

### Changes from 2007 to 2008

Tables 4.4 through 4.6 show changes in total word counts for 2007-2008, 2008-2009 and 2007-2009. In each case, changes are only shown if word counts were available for both years—and the post count is for the *first* year.

<b>Ch78</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Blogs</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Posts</b>
<b>All</b>	5714%	-98%	385	115%	18,953
<b>Q1</b>	5714%	43%	77	111%	1,344
<b>Q2</b>	42%	-6%	75	14%	6,684
<b>Q3</b>	-7%	-34%	78	-23%	4,041
<b>Q4</b>	-35%	-62%	78	-50%	4,254
<b>Q5</b>	-63%	-98%	77	-79%	2,630

Table 4.4: Changes in total word count from 2007 to 2008

<b>Ch89</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Blogs</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Posts</b>
-------------	-------------	------------	--------------	---------------	--------------

<b>All</b>	5777%	-100%	380	-31%	13,056
<b>Q1</b>	5777%	40%	77	96%	3,031
<b>Q2</b>	38%	-16%	75	1%	5,786
<b>Q3</b>	-17%	-44%	76	-31%	2,414
<b>Q4</b>	-45%	-70%	76	-57%	1,365
<b>Q5</b>	-71%	-100%	76	-86%	460

Table 4.5: Changes in total word count from 2008 to 2009

There was, in fact, one blog where the total length of all posts was down so much that it rounds off to -100%—that is, it was at least 201 times as long in 2008 as in 2009.

<b>Ch79</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Blogs</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Posts</b>
<b>All</b>	4545%	-100%	331	-41%	17,314
<b>Q1</b>	4545%	13%	66	80%	3,430
<b>Q2</b>	12%	-27%	64	-11%	4,279
<b>Q3</b>	-29%	-54%	67	-39%	4,421
<b>Q4</b>	-55%	-81%	66	-66%	2,673
<b>Q5</b>	-82%	-100%	68	-89%	2,511

Table 4.6: Changes in total word count from 2007 to 2009

For the graphically oriented, Figure 4.1 shows word counts for each blog in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

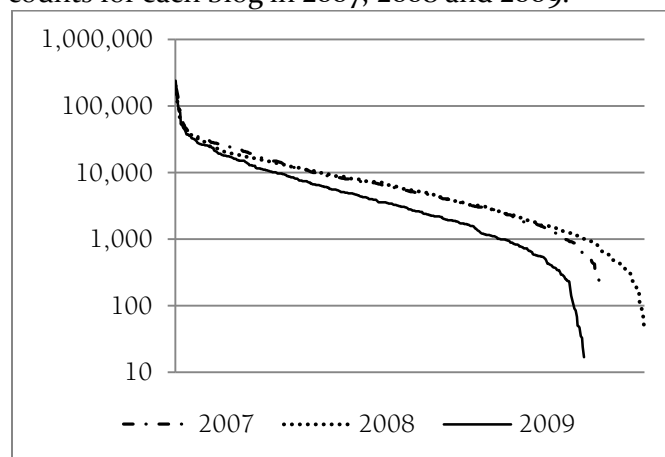


Figure 4.1: Word counts for liblogs, 2007, 2008 and 2009

Figure 4.1 shows word counts (vertical axis) for each blog in each year, plotted on a logarithmic scale. (The horizontal axis is one increment for each blog.) As with most total-length metrics, this may not be particularly meaningful.

### Averages and totals

As usual, averages can be misleading. For example:

- The 412 blogs with measurable word count in 2007 had a total of 4.8 million words in March-May 2007, for an average length of 11,659 words each—but only 121 blogs (29%) were at least that long.
- In 2008, blogs with measurable word counts totaled 4.47 million words—down a mere 7%—but there were roughly 10% more blogs,

so the average length was down to 9,883 words (15% down from 2007). Still, only 143 blogs (32%) had at least 9,883 words.

- In 2009, total word count was down to 3.47 million—a 22% decline from 2008—but measurable blogs were also down to 395, yielding an average of 8,810 words per blog (down 11%). 109 of the blogs—28%—had at least 8,810 words each.

## Longest Blogs in 2009

Here's the list of blogs in Q1 for length in 2009.

<b>Blog</b>	<b>Total Words</b>
Open Access News	239,351
ResourceShelf	131,655
beSpecific	100,570
Law Librarian Blog	82,726
DigitalKoans	81,216
Out of the Jungle	56,552
Peter Scott's Library Blog	52,921
Bluestalking	46,805
Stephen's Lighthouse	46,004
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy	42,651
Beyond the Job	37,784
Head Tale	37,634
Library clips	37,558
The Centered Librarian	36,088
The Rabid Librarian's Ravings in the Wind	35,881
Free Government Information (FGI)	33,279
The Kept-Up Academic Librarian	32,915
Library Chronicles	32,373
OUseful.Info, the blog	32,219
Christina's LIS Rant	30,804
Bibliographic Wilderness	29,308
David Lee King	28,160
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian	27,366
always learning	27,138
UK Web Focus	26,922
Kids Lit	26,679
The Information Literacy Land of Confusion	26,189
Digitization 101	26,153
bookshelves of doom	25,953
The Blue Skunk Blog	25,802
Science Library Pad	25,748
Walt at Random	25,242
Borderland Tales	25,010
Museum 2.0	24,853
Library Boy	24,755
In the Library with the Lead Pipe	23,743
Info Career Trends	23,375
UK Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Blog	21,608

Confessions of a Science Librarian	21,028
The Good Library Blog	20,919
Phil Bradley's weblog	20,104

lauren's library blog	19,531
Tame the Web	19,497
TangognaT	19,252
The PlanetEsme Plan	18,511
ACRL Insider	18,397
ResearchBuzz	18,212
The Gypsy Librarian	18,107
Caveat Lector	17,962
ricklibrarian	17,911
LibraryTechNZ	17,606
PLA Blog	17,541
Pop Culture Librarian	17,365
What I Learned Today	17,315
The Krafty Librarian	16,894
Librarian In Black	16,511
The Itinerant Librarian	16,239
the.effing.librarian	16,208
Paul Miller	16,059
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore Liblogarian	15,647
Librarilly Blonde	15,399
Infotoday Blog	15,280
hangingtogether.org	15,200
Libology Blog	15,088
Nodalities blog	15,032
Crazy Quilts	15,024
Swiss Army Librarian	15,015
Emerging Technologies Librarian	14,553
iLibrarian	14,168
Library Juice	13,789
Thoughts from a Library Administrator	13,455
Information Literacy Weblog	13,080
info-fetishist	13,073
Librarian	12,986
Librarians Matter	12,729
Baby Boomer Librarian	12,712
Library Alchemy	12,606
The Distant Librarian	11,786
ArchivesNext	11,728

## Words per Post

Blog length is generally less interesting than *post* length—the average words per post within a blog. For the tables that follow, the universe for each words-per-post table is the same as for the comparable overall-length table.

### Quintiles for post length, 2007

Words7	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	1,521	10	412	259	19,720

<b>Q1</b>	1,521	408	82	500	2,259
<b>Q2</b>	407	291	82	340	3,046
<b>Q3</b>	289	224	82	260	4,075
<b>Q4</b>	223	154	83	180	5,403
<b>Q5</b>	152	10	83	118	4,937

Table 4.7: Words per post for 2007

The three central quintiles are small ranges: In each case, the low number is at least 69% of the high number. If you characterized blogs in those quintiles as having “around 340 words per post,” “around 260 words per post” and “around 180 words per post” respectively, you wouldn’t be far off. You could also state those as roughly two paragraphs, one long paragraph and one paragraph.

#### Quintiles for post length, 2008

Words8	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
<b>All</b>	1,645	11	452	255	17,824
<b>Q1</b>	1,645	445	90	621	1,892
<b>Q2</b>	444	302	90	368	2,487
<b>Q3</b>	301	225	90	256	4,494
<b>Q4</b>	224	160	92	195	3,633
<b>Q5</b>	158	11	90	116	5,318

Table 4.8: Words per post for 2008

It may be noteworthy that, for three of the five quintiles, the median is higher than for 2007—*significantly* higher for the first quintile. Blogs with short posts represented a larger proportion of all posts—which also makes sense, since current awareness and linkblogs have many brief entries.

#### Quintiles for post length, 2009

Words9	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
<b>All</b>	2,968	10	394	270	13,437
<b>Q1</b>	2,968	493	79	647	1,137
<b>Q2</b>	492	334	79	398	1,879
<b>Q3</b>	333	230	78	270	2,568
<b>Q4</b>	229	160	79	192	3,756
<b>Q5</b>	159	10	79	111	4,097

Table 4.9: Words per post for 2009

Note that, for all but Q5, the ranges are slightly higher than in 2008.

This particular metric is one where the average isn’t that misleading. The average post length across all blogs was 244 words in 2007, 251 words in 2008 and 258 words in 2009, all within 6% of the median—although the average grows very slightly each year, while the median drops (almost imperceptibly) in 2008.

Prefer a graph?

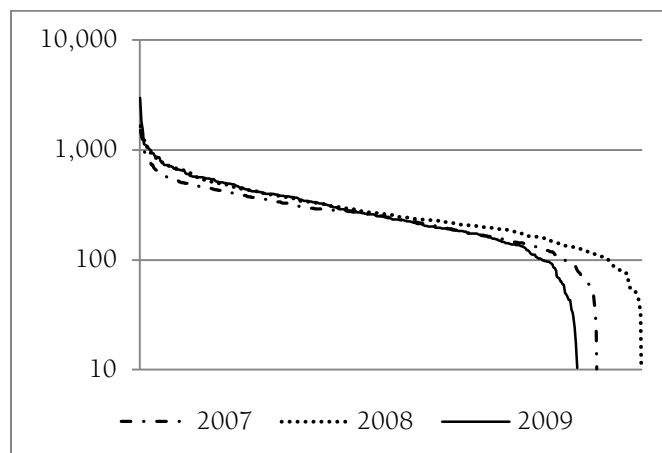


Figure 4.2: Words per post, 2007, 2008 and 2009

The vertical axis here (words per post) is logarithmic, largely because the extremely long posts in one 2009 blog tend to obscure other data in a linear graph.

### Blogs with Essay-Length Posts in 2009

Blog.....	Words per Post
In the Library with the Lead Pipe.....	2,968
InfoSciPhi .....	1,815
The Information Literacy Land of Confusion .....	1,541
Academic Librarian .....	1,142
The Zenformation Professional.....	1,113
©ollectanea.....	1,099
The PlanetEsme Plan.....	1,089
Museum 2.0 .....	1,081
Librarian on the edge.....	1,019
habitually probing generalist.....	1,008
The Gypsy Librarian .....	953
always learning .....	936
Borderland Tales.....	926
LibraryTechNZ.....	880
Library clips .....	873
Info Career Trends.....	866
rachelvacek.com .....	859
Weibel Lines .....	858
Guardienne of the Tomes .....	791
Christina's LIS Rant .....	790
The Itinerant Librarian.....	773
The Cool Librarian.....	735
Coyle's InFormation .....	733
Tinfoil + Raccoon.....	730
Au Courant .....	729
meg kribble.....	726
Commentary from Carl Grant .....	713
Information Wants To Be Free.....	709
The Ubiquitous Librarian .....	705
Overdue Ideas.....	704

The Other Librarian .....	681
Dilettante's Ball .....	673
SciTech Library Question.....	664
Joeyanne Librarianne .....	664
Everybody's Libraries .....	662
Obnoxious Librarian from Hades .....	661
Connecting Librarian .....	654
info-fetishist .....	654
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian .....	652
Scholarly Electronic Publishing Weblog .....	647
UK Web Focus.....	641
Thoughts from a Library Administrator .....	612
Silversprite.....	603
Epist.....	601
OUseful.Info, the blog.....	597
Open Libraries .....	583
Pop Culture Librarian .....	579
Metalogger .....	574
Library Alchemy .....	573
Library Garden .....	571
shimenawa .....	569
Emerging .....	568
Inherent Vice.....	567
Librarian 2 .....	565
Manage This!.....	565
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	564
Coffee Code.....	563
Emerging Technologies Librarian.....	560
Enquiring Minds Want to Know .....	557
Free Range Librarian .....	553
the pod bay door .....	553
025.431: The Dewey blog .....	552
QQ*librarian .....	547
MemberBlog.....	545
Musings from Vermont .....	543
Connie Crosby.....	543
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore Liblogarian .....	540
UK Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Blog .....	527
The Singing Librarian Talks (or Writes.....)	521
Gather No Dust .....	516
library webhead.....	515
Your Neighborhood Librarian.....	508
The Medium is the Message.....	508
Walt at Random .....	505
EBM and Clinical Support Librarians@UCHC .....	504
eFoundations.....	504
Llyfrgellydd.....	502

## Blogs with Terse Posts in 2009

Library Link of the Day .....	10
Library Angst.....	17
David's Random Stuff.....	24
Shelf Check .....	30

Readers' Advisory Knapsack .....	33
userslib.com .....	35
Angels have the phone box .....	43
Information Junk.....	43
BentleyBlog .....	44
schenizzle.....	47
The Laughing Librarian .....	49
Stephen Gallant Review .....	50
A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette .....	60
The Vital Library .....	60
Feral Library Tales .....	63
digitizationblog.....	63
LibraryPlanet.com.....	68
Peter Scott's Library Blog .....	69
Practical Katie .....	71
Bad Librarianship Now! .....	80
It's not easy being a George.....	84
Library Computer Guy's Weblog .....	85
drupalib.....	91
HappyGeek's CodeX.....	92
AbsTracked.....	93
Libraries in the NHS .....	96
The Invisible Web Weblog .....	96
Darth Libris .....	96
SPLAT .....	97
Library Monk.....	97
New Jersey Academic Librarian .....	99

## Post Length Changes

The next three tables show the distribution of post-length changes.

Ch78	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts7
All	436%	-81%	385	5%	18,953
Q1	436%	43%	77	73%	3,080
Q2	42%	13%	77	24%	3,503
Q3	12%	-5%	77	5%	5,486
Q4	-5%	-25%	75	-13%	4,674
Q5	-26%	-81%	79	-39%	2,210

Table 4.10: Changes in post length from 2007 to 2008

Ch89	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts8
All	522%	-96%	380	2%	16,386
Q1	522%	48%	76	92%	2,088
Q2	47%	14%	75	28%	4,221
Q3	13%	-7%	78	2%	4,933
Q4	-8%	-26%	75	-17%	3,552
Q5	-27%	-96%	76	-42%	1,592

Table 4.11: Changes in post length from 2008 to 2009

Ch79	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts7
All	537%	-96%	331	8%	17,314
Q1	537%	58%	67	99%	2,687
Q2	57%	20%	65	36%	3,471
Q3	19%	-4%	68	8%	4,612

<b>Q4</b>	-5%	-26%	66	-12%	4,662
<b>Q5</b>	-27%	-96%	65	-42%	1,882

Table 4.12: Changes in post length from 2007 to 2009

In all three cases, note the median for the entire universe. It means that more blogs had longer posts than had shorter posts, although the posts may not have been *much* longer.

## Blogs with Longer Posts in 2009

Here, we'll limit the list to blogs with posts at least 50% longer in 2009 than in 2008 that had at least four posts in March-May 2009.

### Blog ..... Change in words per post, 2008-2009

LibrariAnne.....	361%
Social Justice Librarian .....	336%
Information Research - ideas and debate.....	219%
infodoodads .....	209%

Nowhere North .....	199%
Libraryman .....	197%
Libraries Build Communities .....	184%
Youth Services Corner .....	180%
The Information Literacy Land of Confusion .....	169%
Buffalo Wings and Toasted Ravioli.....	167%
LITA Blog .....	160%
The Ubiquitous Librarian .....	153%
Simon Chamberlain's library weblog .....	150%
meg kribble.....	139%
Card Catalog of Creativity .....	136%
Books, Bargains, & Beer .....	135%
Librarian In Black .....	123%
UK Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Blog.....	116%
zCoolTools .....	108%
Paul Miller .....	105%
ResearchBuzz.....	104%

Silversprite .....	99%
Llyfrgellydd .....	93%
Tom Roper's Weblog.....	93%
The Life of Books .....	91%
Love the Liberry.....	88%
Libraries in the NHS.....	82%
mamamusings .....	82%
Information Literacy meets Web 2.0.....	81%
Thoughts from a Library Administrator.....	79%
Chez Shoes.....	79%
ALA Marginalia.....	77%
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian.....	73%
rachelvacek.com .....	72%
Manage This!.....	72%
The Liminal Librarian.....	70%
Digital Eccentric .....	69%
Head Tale .....	69%
Crazy Quilts .....	69%

Librarian by Day .....	69%
Out of the Jungle .....	68%
Phil Bradley's weblog.....	68%
Baby Boomer Librarian.....	68%
Digital Serendipities .....	65%
the New Cybrary .....	63%
Your Neighborhood Librarian .....	63%
The Medium is the Message .....	58%
OPL Plus (not just for OPLs anymore).....	58%
QQ*librarian.....	56%
Borderland Tales.....	54%
Science Library Pad .....	54%
Christina's LIS Rant .....	54%
in forming thoughts .....	53%
geeky artist librarian.....	52%
Joeyanne Librarianne .....	50%

## Change Patterns

Consider the three-year patterns, using the same methodology as in Chapter 3 and noting that three-year patterns could only be done when lengths were available for all three years.

For 2007-2008, where 385 blogs could be compared, 125 of them (32%) had significantly longer posts in 2008, 162 (42%) had posts of roughly the same length, and 98 (25%) had significantly shorter posts.

For 2008-2009, where 380 blogs could be compared, 131 (34%) had significantly longer posts, 154 (41%) were about the same, and 95 (25%) had significantly shorter posts.

Finally, for 2007-2009, comparing 331 blogs (six of which didn't have calculable lengths in 2008, which is why the following table represents 325 blogs), 129 blogs—39%—had significantly longer posts, 121 (37%) were about the same and 81 (24%) had significantly shorter posts.

### Three-year patterns

2007-08	2008-09	2007-09	Blogs	Percentage
Longer	Longer	Longer	24	7%
Longer	Same	Longer	33	10%
Longer	Same	Same	4	1%
Longer	Shorter	Longer	8	2%
Longer	Shorter	Same	28	9%
Longer	Shorter	Shorter	13	4%
Same	Longer	Longer	32	10%
Same	Longer	Same	11	3%
Same	Same	Longer	9	3%
Same	Same	Same	55	17%
Same	Same	Shorter	7	2%
Same	Shorter	Same	3	1%
Same	Shorter	Shorter	19	6%



Shorter	Longer	Longer	21	6%
Shorter	Longer	Same	14	4%
Shorter	Longer	Shorter	8	2%
Shorter	Same	Same	3	1%
Shorter	Same	Shorter	22	7%
Shorter	Shorter	Shorter	11	3%

Table 3.13: Three-year patterns for post length

## Blogs with Longer Posts Over Time

### Longer each year (24)

#### Blog ..... Change in words per post, 2007-2009

The Information Literacy Land of Confusion.....	537%
©ollectanea .....	316%
Libraries in the NHS .....	271%
meg kribble .....	231%
Christina's LIS Rant .....	219%
rachelvacek.com.....	198%
lauren's library blog .....	191%
Librarian In Black.....	189%
geeky artist librarian .....	183%
Paul Miller.....	173%
Manage This!.....	144%
Musings from Vermont .....	141%
The Eeyore Librarian.....	131%
Information Literacy meets Web 2.0 .....	128%
Borderland Tales .....	125%
always learning.....	119%
pafa.net.....	113%
025.431: The Dewey blog .....	111%
Libology Blog .....	108%
Librarian on the edge .....	104%
The Itinerant Librarian .....	93%
Carolyne's pages of interest.....	84%
LibraryLaw Blog .....	70%
The Running Librarian.....	59%

### Longer, same, longer (33)

Inherent Vice.....	149%
The Letter Z.....	127%
MemberBlog.....	122%
uncaged librarian .....	115%
The Singing Librarian Talks (or Writes... ).....	105%
copy this blog .....	101%
the pod bay door .....	92%
Library clips.....	84%
Sites and Soundbytes .....	75%
The Other Librarian.....	74%
the wee librarian.....	61%
User Education Resources for Librarians.....	58%
eclectic librarian.....	54%
Emerging .....	54%
Citegeist.....	51%
DigiCMB.....	51%
ishush .....	47%
Loomware - Crafting New Libraries .....	43%

Z666.7.L364 (www.jenniferlang.net) .....	41%
Free Range Librarian .....	41%
RSS4Lib .....	39%
The Gypsy Librarian.....	39%
Tombrarian.....	37%
LibCasting .....	36%
Librarian Idol .....	36%
mélange .....	35%
j's scratchpad .....	34%
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore Liblogarian .....	31%
Library Grants .....	26%
Into the Stacks.....	25%
Open Libraries .....	24%
Canuck Librarian .....	24%
Librarians Matter .....	21%

### Longer, shorter, longer (8)

Confessions of a Mad Librarian .....	99%
Remaining Relevant .....	69%
Dewey & Main.....	58%
Librarians Helping Canadian Genealogists Climb Family Trees.....	56%
Filipino Librarian .....	46%
Metalogger .....	45%
RUSA Blog.....	38%
Not So Distant Future .....	32%

### Same, longer, longer (32)

infodoodads .....	194%
The Ubiquitous Librarian .....	184%
Online Insider .....	128%
Δigital Serendipities.....	91%
Tinfoil + Raccoon .....	89%
Phil Bradley's weblog .....	83%
OPL Plus (not just for OPLs anymore) .....	82%
mamamusings.....	78%
QQ*librarian.....	78%
Chez Shoes .....	77%
the New Cybrary .....	73%
Your Neighborhood Librarian.....	64%
The Krafty Librarian.....	62%
The Liminal Librarian .....	62%
TangognaT.....	62%
Overdue Ideas .....	61%
Marcus' World.....	61%
Science Library Pad .....	59%
Baby Boomer Librarian .....	58%
David Lee King.....	56%
Out of the Jungle.....	54%
Crazy Quilts .....	48%
New Jack Librarian.....	46%
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy .....	44%
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian .....	41%
UK Web Focus.....	33%
Dilettante's Ball.....	33%
Coyle's InFormation.....	29%

@ the library .....	28%
Tame the Web.....	28%
Peter Scott's Library Blog.....	27%
Chicago Librarian .....	21%

### Same, same, longer (9)

Catalogablog.....	42%
hangingtogether.org .....	28%
Typo of the day for librarians.....	28%
Library Garden.....	27%
The Distant Librarian .....	25%
Bluestalking.....	25%
Chronicles of the (almost) Bald	
Technology Trainer.....	23%
Library Chronicles .....	23%
Walt at Random.....	21%

### Shorter, longer, longer (21)

InfoSciPhi .....	374%
The Cool Librarian.....	132%
Daveman's Blog.....	111%
Epist .....	88%
Libraryman .....	82%
SciTech Library Question .....	81%
Enquiring Minds Want to Know .....	61%
Buffalo Wings and Toasted Ravioli.....	60%
LibrariAnne.....	57%
Nowhere North.....	57%
Tom Roper's Weblog.....	53%
Weibel Lines .....	49%
Books, Bargains, & Beer.....	49%
ResearchBuzz.....	46%
blyberg.net.....	44%
Love the Liberry.....	44%
2CoolTools .....	41%
Librarian 2.....	33%
Digital Eccentric .....	26%
The Medium is the Message .....	22%
UK Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Blog.....	21%

[Omitted: 105 blog profiles]

## 5. Conversations

Is blogging publication or conversation? Yes and sometimes. Blogging is always a form of publishing—but some posts on some blogs *become* conversations. The conversational function varies heavily from blog to blog, and newer tools—particularly FriendFeed and FaceBook—may have weakened blog conversations, with the odd result that some extended FriendFeed conversations are *based on* blog posts and might otherwise take place on the blogs.

Some blogs don't have comments, either because the blogger doesn't allow them or because the posts don't attract comments. And, there are some blogs where I couldn't determine the number of comments—although there are also blogs where I couldn't track length but *could* count comments.

I don't distinguish between blogs that don't allow comments and blogs that just don't *have* any comments. Most quintiles use Q5—the lowest range—to show blogs that have posts but no comments (excluding cases where it was impossible to count comments), using Q1 to Q4 for 25% intervals of those that have at least one comment.

Raw comment counts are less interesting than conversational intensity—comments per post—but let's look at raw counts first.

### Comment Quintiles

	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	1,689	0	441	14	20,632
Q1	1,689	57	94	130	7,242
Q2	56	22	97	32	4,696
Q3	21	7	89	11	2,543
Q4	8	1	99	3	1,558
Q5	0	0	62	0	4,593

Table 5.1: Comments for 2007

	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	1,219	0	476	13	18,521
Q1	1,219	55	101	114	6,826
Q2	53	18	101	29	2,989
Q3	17	7	106	12	3,624
Q4	6	1	96	3	1,314
Q5	0	0	72	0	3,768

Table 5.2: Comments for 2008

	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	581	0	415	9	14,179
Q1	581	45	84	92	4,503
Q2	44	15	84	24	2,872
Q3	14	6	79	11	1,742
Q4	5	1	85	2	761
Q5	0	0	83	0	4,301

Table 5.3: Comments for 2009

As with most quintiles, the percentage column refers to percentage of *posts* represented by that segment of blogs. Some noteworthy items:

- The median comments per blog dropped below 10 for the first time in 2009—and the highest number of comments plummeted by more than half (largely because one blog with

many comments moved to the LJ platform, where comments couldn't be measured).

- While about 14% of blogs in 2007 didn't have any comments, a figure that crept up to 15% in 2008, fully 20% of blogs in 2009 had no comments—a distinct change.

### Changes in number of comments

These blogs have posts in both years.

	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts7
All	4167%	-100%	372	-23%	16,737
Q1	4167%	117%	75	500%	3,035
Q2	111%	9%	74	56%	3,751
Q3	8%	-40%	73	-22%	3,299
Q4	-41%	-68%	71	-56%	3,938
Q5	-70%	-100%	79	-86%	2,714

Table 5.4: Changes in comments, 2007 to 2008

	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts8
All	2733%	-100%	366	-38%	14,047
Q1	2733%	57%	73	238%	2,106
Q2	53%	-15%	72	13%	3,428
Q3	-16%	-54%	75	-38%	3,160
Q4	-55%	-83%	72	-72%	2,594
Q5	-84%	-100%	74	-100%	2,759

Table 5.5: Changes in comments, 2008 to 2009

	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts7
All	2800%	-100%	323	-50%	14,423
Q1	2800%	64%	65	325%	3,148
Q2	60%	-30%	64	0%	2,705
Q3	-32%	-65%	65	-50%	3,584
Q4	-66%	-89%	66	-79%	2,839
Q5	-90%	-100%	63	-100%	2,147

Table 5.6: Changes in comments, 2007 to 2009

The most obvious change here: in 2008, blogs in the second quartile all had *more* comments than in 2007—where in 2009, that second quartile already included blogs with fewer comments.

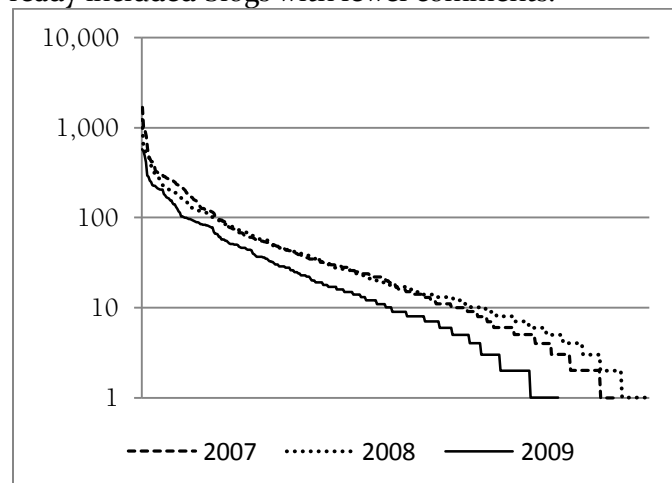


Figure 5.1: Comments per blog in 2007, 2008 and 2009

Figure 5.1 shows the comments per blog for all blogs having at least one comment in a given year—noting that the horizontal axis is one point per blog. The vertical axis is logarithmic in order to show more detail. This chart may make the drop-off in 2009 more obvious (and more dramatic) than the tables.

### Averages

Comments represent another area where averages tend to be misleading. So, for example, looking at comments per blog:

- In 2007, the average was 56 comments, or 65 if you only include blogs with at least one comment. But only 95 blogs (22%) were at least average by the first standard, and only 81 (21% of 379 with comments) by the second.
- For 2008, the average was down to 45 comments per blog—a 20% drop—or 53 if you only include blogs with at least one comment (an 18% drop). But only 114 blogs (24%) were at least average by the first standard and only 102 (25% of 404 with comments) by the second.
- For 2009, the average dropped further to 32 comments per blog (a 29% drop, or 43% from 2007) or 42 if you include blogs with at least one comment (a 21% drop, or 35% from 2007). In this case, the count of “average or better” blogs by the first standard is down to 101, which is 24% of the smaller number of blogs with posts in 2009—and 84 (26% of 323) by the second.

In other words, only about one of four blogs had more comments than average—which makes the average fairly meaningless.

### Blogs with Most Comments in 2009

Blog.....	Total Comments
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian .....	581
bookshelves of doom .....	552
Slaw .....	488
The Blue Skunk Blog.....	417
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy .....	294
always learning.....	284
LibraryThing .....	259
David Lee King.....	249
Museum 2.0 .....	230
ACRLog .....	227
Library Lovers' LiveJournal .....	227
Pop Culture Librarian .....	221
OUseful.Info, the blog.....	214
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	209
UK Web Focus.....	206

Bluestalking .....	205
librarian.net .....	205
Bad Librarianship Now! .....	184
A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette .....	178
Confessions of a Science Librarian .....	170
the.effing.librarian.....	166
walking paper .....	163
Tame the Web.....	156
ArchivesNext.....	155
Head Tale .....	149
Library Chronicles .....	141
Crazy Quilts .....	141
Confessions of a real librarian .....	132
Walt at Random.....	125
Swiss Army Librarian.....	118
Kids Lit.....	113
TangognaT .....	104
Ruminations .....	103
blyberg.net .....	102
SemiConscious Dot Org .....	100
@ the library .....	100
The Good Library Blog .....	98
Law Librarian Blog.....	96
Librarian by Day .....	96
In the Library with the Lead Pipe.....	95
Free Range Librarian.....	93
Information Junk .....	92
Closed Stacks .....	91
What I Learned Today... ..	89
"Self-plagiarism is style" .....	89
Librarian In Black .....	88
Christina's LIS Rant .....	85
Librarians Matter.....	85
Out of the Jungle .....	84
Stephen's Lighthouse.....	83
Chez Shoes.....	83
LibrariAnne.....	82
Paul Miller .....	82
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia .....	81
Thingology (LibraryThing's ideas blog) .....	80
Phil Bradley's weblog.....	78
Information Wants To Be Free.....	78
eFoundations .....	70
The PlanetEsme Plan.....	66
Attempting Elegance .....	66
Filipino Librarian.....	65
Library Juice.....	61
Everybody's Libraries.....	61
BentleyBlog.....	57
Emerging Technologies Librarian .....	57
info-mational .....	57
LibraryBytes.....	55

BookBitchBlog .....	55
Nodalities blog.....	54
Library Garden.....	52
Killin' time being lazy.....	51
lauren's library blog.....	51
The Search Principle blog.....	51
Library clips .....	50
Library Web Chic .....	50
The Shifted Librarian.....	50
Pegasus Librarian.....	49
The Krafty Librarian .....	48
Library Alchemy .....	47
Gargoyles loose in the library .....	46
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore Liblogarian.....	46
HeyJude.....	46
librariesinteract.info .....	46
Library Revolution.....	45

## Conversational Intensity

I define "conversational intensity" as number of comments per post, a more interesting number than the total number of comments. The universe for each year is the same as for total comments, and again Q5 is reserved for blogs with no comments (excluding cases where comments and length weren't countable).

### Quintiles

CIO7	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	28.9	0.0	441	0.7	20,632
Q1	28.9	2.0	94	3.4	4,150
Q2	1.9	0.9	101	1.2	4,320
Q3	0.8	0.4	96	0.6	3,247
Q4	0.3	0.03	88	0.2	4,322
Q5	0	0	62	0	4,593

Table 5.7: Conversational intensity, 2007

CIO8	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	53.0	0.0	476	0.8	18,521
Q1	53.0	2.1	96	3.5	2,651
Q2	2.0	1.1	93	1.5	3,174
Q3	1.0	0.6	99	0.8	3,284
Q4	0.5	0.01	116	0.3	5,644
Q5	0	0	72	0	3,768

Table 5.8: Conversational intensity, 2008

CIO9	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts
All	51.0	0.0	415	0.7	14,179
Q1	51.0	2.5	86	4.0	1,799
Q2	2.3	1.1	75	1.6	2,135
Q3	1.0	0.5	87	0.7	1,887
Q4	0.4	0.02	84	0.3	4,057
Q5	0	0	83	0	4,301

Table 5.9: Conversational intensity, 2009

The most active conversations in 2008 and 2009 tended to be in blogs with slightly fewer posts—thus, the 20% of blogs in Q1 for 2008, those with at least 2.1 comments per post, had only 14% of all posts. The cutoff for Q1 moved upward—from 2.0 comments in 2007 to 2.1 in 2008 and 2.5, a significant change, in 2009.

While averages for conversational intensity aren't quite as meaningless as for total comments, they're not great: 1.19 for 2007 (1.53 among all blogs with comments), 1.15 in 2008 (1.45 for blogs with comments) and 0.95 in 2009 (1.40 for blogs with comments).

## Blogs with Most Conversational Intensity, 2009

These blogs fall in Quintile 1 for 2009, having at least 2.5 comments per post. When two or more blogs have the same conversational intensity (possibly including further decimal digits), they're listed in decreasing number of overall comments in 2009.

### **Blog Conversational Intensity (Comments per post)**

blyberg.net .....	51.0
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian .....	13.8
Confessions of a real librarian.....	12.0
In the Library with the Lead Pipe .....	11.9
Library Lovers' LiveJournal .....	10.8
A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette .....	10.5
Museum 2.0.....	10.0
always learning.....	9.8
The Vampire Librarian .....	8.8
LibraryThing .....	8.6
Dewey's Dartboard.....	8.5
Au Courant.....	8.0
The Cool Librarian.....	8.0
Pop Culture Librarian .....	7.4
The Blue Skunk Blog.....	7.1
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia.....	6.8
Information Wants To Be Free.....	6.5
info-mational .....	6.3
The Shifted Librarian .....	6.3
ACRLog .....	5.8
@ the library.....	5.0
Coyle's InFormation.....	5.0
The Well Dressed Librarian .....	5.0
UK Web Focus.....	4.9
Thingology (LibraryThing's ideas blog) .....	4.7
Free Range Librarian .....	4.7

Chez Shoes .....	4.6
The Ubiquitous Librarian .....	4.6
Library Revolution .....	4.5
Coffee Code.....	4.4
librarygrrrrl.net .....	4.4
Collections 2.0.....	4.3
The Singing Librarian Talks (or Writes.....)	4.3
David Lee King.....	4.2
Attempting Elegance .....	4.1
bookshelves of doom .....	4.1
ArchivesNext .....	4.1
Everybody's Libraries .....	4.1
librarian.net .....	4.0
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	4.0
Tiny Little Librarian .....	4.0
blogwithoutalibrary.net .....	4.0
The Eeyore Librarian.....	4.0
etc. ....	4.0
OUseful.Info, the blog.....	4.0
Ruminations.....	4.0
The PlanetEsme Plan .....	3.9
"Self-plagiarism is style".....	3.9
Closed Stacks .....	3.8
the.effing.librarian .....	3.8
Miss Information .....	3.7
The Other Librarian.....	3.7
The Zenformation Professional .....	3.6
Filipino Librarian .....	3.6
Circ and Serve .....	3.5
Foxylibrarian.com .....	3.5
Confessions of a Science Librarian .....	3.5
Dilettante's Ball.....	3.4
Academic Librarian.....	3.3
Larocque and Roll .....	3.3
walking paper.....	3.3
lis.dom.....	3.3
Swiss Army Librarian .....	3.2
eFoundations.....	3.2
the goblin in the library .....	3.1
Library Garden .....	3.1
Chornomore .....	3.0
habitually probing generalist .....	3.0
Loose Cannon Librarian .....	3.0
New Jersey Academic Librarian .....	3.0
Librarians Matter .....	2.9
Library Web Chic .....	2.8
Citegeist.....	2.7
librariesinteract.info .....	2.7
Librarian by Day.....	2.7
ADHD Librarian.....	2.7
The Cataloguing Librarian.....	2.6
BookBitchBlog.....	2.6
Bad Librarianship Now! .....	2.6
Libraryman.....	2.6

California Dreamin' .....	2.5
Walt at Random.....	2.5
InfoSciPhi .....	2.5
Librarians as Knowledge Managers .....	2.5
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy .....	2.5
Silversprite .....	2.5

### Changes in Conversational Intensity

Ci78	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts7
All	1868%	-100%	373	5%	16,722
Q1	1868%	175%	75	400%	3,495
Q2	174%	29%	75	81%	3,855
Q3	28%	-11%	73	5%	3,567
Q4	-12%	-50%	76	-29%	3,315
Q5	-51%	-100%	74	-75%	2,490

Table 5.10: Changes in conversational intensity 2007 to 2008

Ci89	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts8
All	1850%	-100%	366	-7%	14,047
Q1	1850%	107%	74	208%	2,075
Q2	102%	20%	73	48%	4,178
Q3	18%	-23%	72	-7%	2,787
Q4	-25%	-61%	74	-42%	2,256
Q5	-62%	-100%	73	-100%	2,751

Table 5.11: Changes in conversational intensity 2008 to 2009

Ci79	High	Low	Blogs	Median	Posts7
All	2300%	-100%	332	0%	15,450
Q1	2300%	140%	66	495%	3,164
Q2	136%	25%	66	63%	2,912
Q3	24%	-24%	66	1%	3,967
Q4	-25%	-76%	69	-49%	2,777
Q5	-77%	-100%	65	-100%	2,630

Table 5.12: Changes in conversational intensity 2007 to 2009

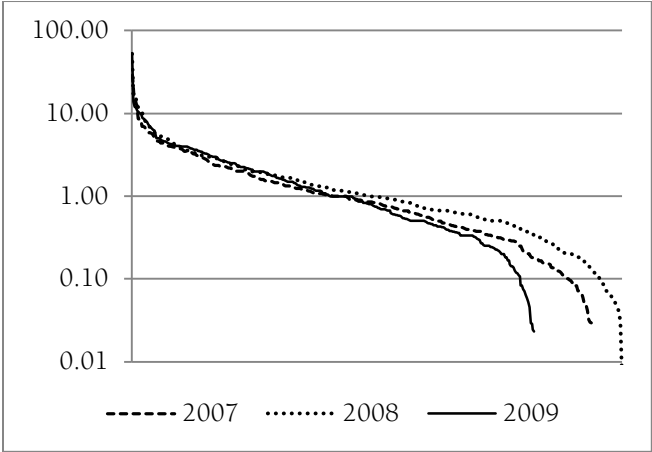


Figure 5.2: Conversational intensity, 2007 through 2009

Once again in Figure 5.2, the horizontal scale is one tiny point per blog—including only blogs that had *some* comments—and the vertical scale is lo-

garithmic. I'm not sure what conclusions you can draw from the figure.

### Liblogs Growing Most in Conversational Intensity

This list includes blogs that had at least 50% more comments per post in 2009 than in 2008, excluding ones that didn't have *any* comments in 2008. 102% is a *growth* percentage: It means the blog had slightly more than twice as many comments per post in 2009 as it did in 2008.

**Blog' Growth in Conversational Intensity, 2008 to 2009**

InfoMatters .....	1850%
blyberg.net .....	1357%
Musings from Vermont.....	1300%
OPL Plus (not just for OPLs anymore) .....	1222%

Gemini Moon.....	886%
Christina's LIS Rant .....	844%
Library Technology in Texas .....	838%
Crazy Quilts .....	747%
Everybody's Libraries.....	713%
Information Junk .....	703%
Dynamic Librarian.....	575%
The Itinerant Librarian.....	543%

InfoSciPhi .....	483%
Librarian on the edge.....	450%
AbsTracked .....	438%
Librarians as Knowledge Managers .....	400%
info-mational .....	391%
Collections 2.0 .....	376%
Kids Lit.....	352%
OUseful.Info, the blog... ..	333%
Confessions of a real librarian .....	320%
librariesinteract.info .....	292%
The Life of Books .....	250%
Loose Cannon Librarian .....	246%
The Eeyore Librarian .....	243%
Cheeky Librarian .....	236%
Books to curl up with: a librarian's musings .....	233%
Overdue Ideas.....	207%
the New Cybrary .....	206%

Au Courant .....	186%
ADHD Librarian .....	186%
Information Literacy meets Web 2.0 .....	183%
Closed Stacks .....	181%
BookBitchBlog .....	176%
Confessions of a Science Librarian .....	171%
iLibrarian .....	167%
Library Revolution.....	151%
Innovate .....	151%
Quædam cuiusdam .....	150%

Information Research - ideas and debate .....	150%
QQ*librarian .....	146%
Knowbodies.....	145%
blogwithoutalibrary.net .....	135%
Love the Liberry .....	133%
025.431: The Dewey blog .....	129%
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia.....	125%
Larocque and Roll .....	122%
Libraries & Life .....	118%
Coyle's InFormation.....	114%
The Cataloguing Librarian.....	111%
Science Library Pad .....	111%
Coffee Code.....	108%
Museum 2.0.....	107%
Infoday Blog.....	102%
Speak Quietly: Ramblings About Libraries, Writing.....	93%
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian .....	92%
commonplaces .....	92%
lis.dom.....	91%
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	90%
Nodalities blog .....	87%
BlogJunction.....	87%
Attempting Elegance .....	86%
Library Alchemy .....	86%
Librarian by Day.....	86%
Dilettante's Ball.....	85%
Librarian In Black.....	83%
The Information Literacy Land of Confusion.....	82%
LITA Blog.....	80%
eFoundations.....	80%
PomeRantz .....	78%
Dewey's Dartboard.....	74%
EBM and Clinical Support Librarians@UCHC .....	73%
The Singing Librarian Talks (or Writes.....)	73%
Spellbound Blog.....	67%
The Search Principle blog .....	67%
Bad Librarianship Now! .....	63%
Remaining Relevant.....	63%
librarygrrrl.net .....	58%
Slaw .....	58%
Academic Librarian.....	55%
the.effing.librarian .....	53%
the disorganized librarian.....	53%
Panlibus.....	52%
Walt at Random .....	52%
Laurie the Librarian .....	52%
Librarian Philosopher .....	50%
geeky artist librarian .....	50%
τεχνοςοφια .....	50%

## Three-Year Patterns

Let's look at significant changes in conversational intensity over the three years.

From 2007 to 2008, of those blogs for which I could measure patterns, 44% had significantly more comments per post; 22% were about the same; and 34% had significantly fewer comments per post.

From 2008 to 2009, 40% had significant growth in conversational intensity; 19% were about the same; and 43% had significantly less conversational intensity.

From 2007 to 2009, 42% had significant growth; 18% were about the same; and 39% had significant shrinkage. Note that the patterns for the three periods are very similar.

Table 5.13 shows the three-year patterns, but only for the 303 blogs for which data was available in all three cases.

2007-08	2008-09	2007-09	Blogs	Percent
More	More	More	33	11%
More	Same	More	27	9%
More	Less	More	29	10%
More	Less	Same	16	5%
More	Less	Less	27	9%
Same	More	More	20	7%
Same	More	Same	12	4%
Same	Same	More	2	1%
Same	Same	Same	15	5%
Same	Same	Less	2	1%
Same	Less	Less	21	7%
Less	More	More	20	7%
Less	More	Same	18	6%
Less	More	Less	14	5%
Less	Same	Same	2	1%
Less	Same	Less	14	5%
Less	Less	Less	34	11%

Table 5.13: Three-year patterns for conversational intensity

While three of the four patterns with the most blogs, representing 29% of the blogs, were all cases with significantly more conversational intensity over the three years, the *largest* group was the 34 blogs in which conversational intensity dropped steadily.

## Conclusions

Table 5.13, even more than the other tables and figures, suggests that there are no general conclusions to be made about conversational intensity. Roughly 40% of blogs increased significantly in

conversational intensity over the two years; roughly 40% of blogs *decreased* significantly—and you could say roughly the same for year-to-year changes.

Indeed, if you include only blogs that had at least one comment in March-May of each year, the range of conversational intensities is small—only 8% over two years and no more than 5% from year to year. Any sweeping conclusions are, at best, questionable.

[Omitted: 49 blog profiles]

## 6. Standouts and Standards

Before considering patterns of change (how blogs change across multiple metrics), let's look at some standouts and standards: Blogs that are within the same quintile either across all three key metrics (frequency, post length and conversational intensity) or across all three years within a given metric, and are also within the top three quintiles for the metrics in which they show consistency.

This chapter is about *consistency*—falling into the same general population across several metrics. It's not about quality, and no larger conclusions can be drawn. Think of this as a break in the narrative. You'll discover early on that no blog is in the first quintile throughout—although two come close, with consistently top rankings in two of the three years.

### 2007

Four blogs are consistently in the top quintile for 2007—that is, each had at least 59 posts, with posts averaging at least 408 words and having at least 2 comments per post. (One of those blogs had a different name in 2007.)

<b>Blog .....</b>	<b>Number of posts, 2007</b>
The Shifted Librarian.....	86
The Blue Skunk Blog .....	64
UK Web Focus .....	63
habitually probing generalist.....	62

#### Second quintile

Five blogs are consistently in the second quintile for 2007:

Not So Distant Future.....	59
Library Juice .....	51
Loose Cannon Librarian .....	50
Marcus' World .....	38

QQ*librarian.....	34
<i>Third quintile</i>	
Six blogs are consistently in the third quintile for 2007—the “standards” for that year:	
commonplaces.....	31
The Rock & Roll Librarian .....	26
o25.431: The Dewey blog.....	26
Young Librarian .....	25
The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics.....	19
The Vital Library.....	19

### 2008

Only two blogs are consistently in the top quintile for 2008, with at least 46 posts averaging at least 444 words and at least 2.1 comments per post:

<b>Blog.....</b>	<b>Number of posts, 2008</b>
The Blue Skunk Blog .....	95
Borderland Tales.....	59

#### Second quintile

Four blogs are consistently in the second quintile for 2008:

info-mational .....	31
eclectic librarian .....	38
lauren's library blog.....	39
infomusings .....	28

#### Third quintile

Three blogs are consistently in the third quintile for 2009:

meg kribble.....	15
Zzzoot .....	20
snail.....	20

### 2009

Five blogs are consistently in the top quintile for 2009, with at least 39 posts averaging at least 493 words each and at least 2.5 comments per post:

<b>Blog.....</b>	<b>Number of posts, 2009</b>
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian.....	42
UK Web Focus .....	42
OUseful.Info, the blog... ..	54
Bibliographic Wilderness .....	52
Walt at Random.....	50

#### Second quintile

Four blogs are consistently in the second quintile for 2009:

Librarian In Black .....	38
The Krafty Librarian .....	37
Nodalities blog.....	31
Not So Distant Future.....	19



### Third quintile

Two blogs are consistently in the third quintile for 2009:

The FRBR Blog .....	12
ellie <3 libraries .....	11

## Consistent Frequency

Turning from consistency *within* a year to consistency *across* years, it may not be surprising that quite a few blogs are consistently among those with the most posts—in this case, at least 59 in 2007, 46 in 2008 and 39 in 2009.

Blog .....	Number of posts, 2009
ResourceShelf .....	909
Open Access News .....	892
Peter Scott's Library Blog .....	765
beSpecific .....	733
Library Stuff .....	607
Law Librarian Blog .....	457
DigitalKoans .....	387
Slaw .....	355
The Kept-Up Academic Librarian .....	268
Stephen's Lighthouse .....	230
The Rabid Librarian's Ravings in the Wind .....	176
Library Chronicles .....	171
A Fuse #8 Production .....	171
Free Government Information (FGI) .....	147
bookshelves of doom .....	135
Kids Lit .....	125
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy .....	118
Bluestalking .....	117
Library Boy .....	110
What I Learned Today .....	100
Head Tale .....	94
Library Link of the Day .....	92
Tame the Web .....	80
Information Literacy Weblog .....	80
Phil Bradley's weblog .....	77
Catalogablog .....	72
Bad Librarianship Now! .....	71
Libology Blog .....	66
Digitization 101 .....	62
Information Junk .....	60
The Blue Skunk Blog .....	59
David Lee King .....	59
ricklibrarian .....	55
OUseful.Info, the blog .....	54
Librarian .....	54
Lorcan Dempsey's weblog .....	53
Confessions of a Science Librarian .....	49
Killin' time being lazy .....	47
Library Blog Buzz .....	45
Caveat Lector .....	44
Library clips .....	43

Travelin' Librarian .....	41
LibrariAnne .....	41
Tom Roper's Weblog .....	39

### Second quintile

Fifteen blogs fall into the second quintile for posting frequency in all three years:

ArchivesNext .....	38
Union Librarian .....	38
rawbrick.net .....	35
Gargoyles loose in the library .....	34
LibraryThing .....	30
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore Liblogarian .....	29
The Invisible Library .....	28
It's all good .....	27
Marcus' World .....	24
The Liminal Librarian .....	23
Infoblog .....	23
Panlibus .....	23
Museum 2.0 .....	23
Random Musings from the Desert .....	21
The Gypsy Librarian .....	19

### Third quintile

Eight "standard" blogs—also consistent mainstays at somewhat lower frequencies—fall into the third quintile in all three years:

Library Web Chic .....	18
Zzzoot .....	18
Emerging .....	18
the goblin in the library .....	14
Tombrarian .....	14
Superpatron - Friends of the Library, for the net .....	13
025.431: The Dewey blog .....	13
T. Scott .....	10

## Consistent Post Length

Noting that not all blogs *have* length metrics, 26 blogs have consistently long posts in all three years:

Blog .....	Words per post, 2009
The Zenformation Professional .....	1,113
The PlanetEsme Plan .....	1,089
Museum 2.0 .....	1,081
Librarian on the edge .....	1,019
habitually probing generalist .....	1,008
The Gypsy Librarian .....	953
always learning .....	936
Borderland Tales .....	926
Library clips .....	873
Coyle's InFormation .....	733
Information Wants To Be Free .....	709
Overdue Ideas .....	704
Dilettante's Ball .....	673
Connecting Librarian .....	654

Scholarly Electronic Publishing Weblog.....	647
UK Web Focus .....	641
Open Libraries .....	583
Pop Culture Librarian .....	579
Library Garden.....	571
shimenawa.....	569
Coffee Code .....	563
Connie Crosby .....	543
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore Liblogarian.....	540
Gather No Dust.....	516
library webhead .....	515
Walt at Random.....	505

## Second quintile

Ten blogs have consistently *fairly* long posts:

David Lee King.....	477
Marcus' World .....	469
hangingtogether.org .....	422
Digitization 101 .....	422
The Sheck Spot .....	420
Library Web Chic.....	414
Swiss Army Librarian.....	406
Bluestalking .....	400
One Big Library .....	399
the.ffmpeg.librarian.....	368

## Third quintile

Eight blogs have consistently midlength posts:

Miss Information .....	324
Library Cloud.....	288
Open Access News.....	268
The Invisible Library.....	267
Infotoday Blog .....	250
etc.....	250
HeyJude.....	240
The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics.....	234

## Fifth quintile

There's something to be said for consistent brevity. These 29 blogs have posts consistently in the fifth quintile for average length—and, unlike the other quintiles, these are sorted from shortest to least short for 2009 posts.

Library Link of the Day.....	10
Readers' Advisory Knapsack.....	33
Information Junk .....	43
BentleyBlog.....	44
Stephen Gallant Review.....	50
A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette.....	60
digitizationblog .....	63
Peter Scott's Library Blog.....	69
Practical Katie.....	71
Bad Librarianship Now!.....	80
drupalib .....	91
The Invisible Web Weblog.....	96
Libraries in the NHS.....	96

Library Monk.....	97
Love the Liberry.....	102
Libraries & Life .....	103
LibraryTavern.....	106
Random Musings from the Desert .....	107
User Education Resources for Librarians .....	111
Library Technology in Texas.....	111
Library Lovers' LiveJournal.....	122
The Kept-Up Academic Librarian .....	123
Chicago Librarian .....	132
uncaged librarian.....	136
beSpacific.....	137
ishush.....	137
iLibrarian .....	138
librarytwopointzero.....	142
mélange.....	147

## Consistent Conversational Intensity

It's also not surprising that some blogs tend to have quite a few comments throughout the years. These 45 blogs have consistently high conversational intensity:

<b>Blog.....</b>	<b>Conversational intensity in 2009</b>
blyberg.net .....	51.0
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian.....	13.8
Library Lovers' LiveJournal.....	10.8
Museum 2.0 .....	10.0
always learning .....	9.8
The Vampire Librarian.....	8.8
LibraryThing.....	8.6
Dewey's Dartboard .....	8.5
Pop Culture Librarian .....	7.4
The Blue Skunk Blog .....	7.1
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia .....	6.8
Information Wants To Be Free.....	6.5
The Shifted Librarian.....	6.3
ACRLLog.....	5.8
@ the library .....	5.0
The Well Dressed Librarian.....	5.0
UK Web Focus .....	4.9
Thingology (LibraryThing's ideas blog).....	4.7
Free Range Librarian.....	4.7
Chez Shoes.....	4.6
The Ubiquitous Librarian.....	4.6
Coffee Code .....	4.4
librarygrrrl.net .....	4.4
The Singing Librarian Talks (or Writes...) .....	4.3
David Lee King.....	4.2
bookshelves of doom .....	4.1
librarian.net .....	4.0
Bibliographic Wilderness .....	4.0
etc.....	4.0

Tiny Little Librarian .....	4.0
Ruminations .....	4.0
The PlanetEsme Plan .....	3.9
"Self-plagiarism is style" .....	3.9
Miss Information .....	3.7
The Zenformation Professional .....	3.6
Foxylibrarian.com .....	3.5
walking paper .....	3.3
the goblin in the library .....	3.1
Library Garden .....	3.1
habitually probing generalist .....	3.0
Librarians Matter .....	2.9
Library Web Chic .....	2.8
Libraryman .....	2.6
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy .....	2.5

### Second quintile

Fourteen blogs consistently had fairly good conversational intensity throughout the years, falling short of the top quintile:

Librarian In Black .....	2.3
Your Neighborhood Librarian .....	2.2
Enquiring Minds Want to Know .....	2.0
Tame the Web .....	2.0
Connie Crosby .....	1.9
The Search Principle blog .....	1.8
LibraryLaw Blog .....	1.6
Gargoyles loose in the library .....	1.4
Δigital Serendipities .....	1.3
Library Juice .....	1.3
The Medium is the Message .....	1.3
Pop Goes the Library .....	1.2
reeling and writhing .....	1.1
LibraryBytes .....	1.1

### Third quintile

Finally, fifteen blogs could be considered "standard" for conversational intensity—always falling within the third quintile:

Phil Bradley's weblog .....	1.0
RSS4Lib .....	1.0
geeky artist librarian .....	1.0
Remaining Relevant .....	1.0
the disorganized librarian .....	0.9
PLA Blog .....	0.8
Out of the Jungle .....	0.7
Travelin' Librarian .....	0.6
CogSci Librarian .....	0.6
ellie <3 libraries .....	0.5
The Gypsy Librarian .....	0.5
The Vital Library .....	0.5
The Bunless Librarian .....	0.5
Hip Librarians Book Blog .....	0.5
Feral Library Tales .....	0.5

## Conclusions

**Don't.** That is, don't attempt to draw too many conclusions from these consistency notes—especially since some standout blogs in one or two years couldn't be measured in other years.

[Omitted: 25 blog profiles]

## 7. Patterns of Change, 2007-2008

So far, we've looked at one metric at a time, but a blog is more than its individual metrics. This chapter and the next look at *patterns*—patterns of change from one year to the next. Three elements make up the change pattern for a blog:

- **Change in number of posts:** Were there more posts in 2008 than in 2007, fewer, or about the same number?
- **Change in post length:** Was the average post in a given blog longer in 2008 than in 2007, shorter, or about the same length?
- **Changes in comments per post:** Was the blog more conversational in 2008 than in 2007 (that is, did the average post have more comments), less conversational, or about the same?

Table 7.1 offers a simplified view of these three changes—"simplified" because it breaks blogs down into "More" or "Less" (where no change at all is counted as "More")—and that overstates the significance of small changes.

**Note:** In this *Cites & Insights* version, the Posts column has been omitted to make tables fit; "P%" is the *percentage* of all posts.

For those who read last year's study, note that there's one *significant* change this time around, for both the simplified table and the triplets: I'm leaving out blogs that lack length metrics in either of the two years being compared. That's never more than 10% of the blogs, and it means the tables can be *considerably* shorter (24 lines rather than 36 in the case of Tables 7.1 and 8.1) and easier to understand. Since every blog with a length metric has a valid comment metric (even if the comment count is zero), that further simplifies the process. Blogs are omitted if they have no posts in 2007 as usual—but not if they have posts and no comments. (Note that a blog with zero posts in both years would be

counted as having “more” conversational intensity in the second year—an example of the problems with straight up-down comparisons.)

	Blogs	B%	P%
More Posts	130	32%	49%
Longer Posts	67	16%	26%
More Conversational	42	10%	20%
Less Conversational	25	6%	6%
Shorter Posts	63	15%	23%
More Conversational	37	9%	16%
Less Conversational	26	6%	8%
More Convers. subtotal	79	19%	35%
Less Convers. subtotal	51	12%	14%
Fewer Posts	280	68%	51%
Longer Posts	142	35%	30%
More Conversational	83	20%	19%
Less Conversational	59	14%	11%
Shorter Posts	138	34%	21%
More Conversational	58	14%	12%
Less Conversational	80	20%	9%
More Convers. subtotal	141	34%	31%
Less Convers. subtotal	139	34%	20%
Longer Posts total	209	51%	56%
Shorter Posts total	201	49%	44%
More Conversational total	220	54%	66%
Less Conversational total	190	46%	34%

Table 7.1: Change patterns, 2007-2008

### Understanding Table 7.1

The first column shows the particular pattern in nested form. So, for example, the third line (below headings) is for blogs with more posts, longer posts, and more comments per post (“more conversational”).

The second column shows the number of blogs that fit that pattern. Third is the percentage of all blogs covered in this chapter.

The fourth column shows the number of posts (in 2008) in blogs that fit this pattern—included because 70 blogs each having one post over 13 weeks really aren’t equivalent to 70 blogs averaging 26 posts each. The final column shows the fourth column as a percentage of all posts in blogs analyzed in this chapter.

#### Rows

The key point here is that **rows are nested**:

- “Longer Posts” is a subtotal of the two rows below it.
- “More Posts” is a subtotal of “Longer Posts” and “Shorter Posts”
- The last two rows under “More Posts” and “Fewer Posts” offer a different slice, adding

up “More conversational” or “Less conversational” lines respectively.

- The four rows at the bottom are also additional slices, showing the totals for longer and shorter posts and for more and less conversational blogs respectively.

## A Few Highlights

There are eight patterns for change in a blog, the eight rows with the most deeply indented labels. If patterns of change across the landscape were completely random, each of those rows would have roughly 51 blogs and 1,998 posts and show 13% in each percentage column.

None of the eight patterns is close to those figures. The closest is probably fewer, shorter and more conversational: 58 blogs (14%) and 1,902 posts (12%).

Three outliers are interesting:

- The single most common pattern is blogs with fewer posts, longer posts and more conversational intensity. With 83 blogs and 3,048 posts, that pattern represents 20% of the blogs and 19% of the posts.
- The *next* most common pattern is the “discouraged” pattern: Fewer posts, shorter posts, less conversational. That pattern represents 80 blogs (20%) but only 9% of the posts.
- The pattern with fewest blogs isn’t surprising: More posts, but shorter and less conversational. That has 26 of the blogs (6%) and 1,221 posts (8%).

## A Better Model

Splitting changes into straight more/fewer, more/less oversimplifies the reality of the situation. In practice, small changes aren’t significant, particularly given that the sample only covers three months of each year.

A more realistic model has three categories for each metric:

- **Significant increase:** I’ve used a cutoff of 20%: the change metric must be at least 21% higher to represent significant increase. For a blog to grow from 100 to 110 posts in a year isn’t all that significant—but for a blog to grow from 10 to 20 posts in a year is.
- **About the same:** The area of modest and possibly irrelevant change, from gains of 20% to losses of 20%.
- **Significant decrease:** At least 21% lower.

Tables 7.2 through 7.5 show the numbers for this model. The same notes apply as for Table 7.1. Percentages are of *all* blogs in these tables, not of a specific table.

	Blogs	B%	P%
Significantly more posts	91	22%	31%
Longer posts	24	6%	4%
More conversational	10	2%	2%
About the same	7	2%	1%
Less conversational	7	2%	1%
About the same length	44	11%	20%
More conversational	17	4%	7%
About the same	12	3%	9%
Less conversational	15	4%	4%
Shorter posts	23	6%	7%
More conversational	5	1%	2%
About the same	6	1%	1%
Less conversational	12	3%	4%
More conversational	32	8%	10%
About the same	25	6%	11%
Less conversational	34	8%	10%

Table 7.2: Change patterns for blogs with more posts

	Blogs	B%	P%
<b>About the same frequency</b>	80	20%	38%
Longer posts	24	6%	10%
More conversational	12	3%	5%
About the same	5	1%	3%
Less conversational	7	2%	2%
About the same length	36	9%	25%
More conversational	14	3%	5%
About the same	11	3%	14%
Less conversational	11	3%	5%
Shorter posts	20	5%	3%
More conversational	7	2%	1%
About the same	7	2%	1%
Less conversational	6	1%	1%
More conversational	33	8%	11%
About the same	23	6%	18%
Less conversational	24	6%	8%

Table 7.3: Change patterns for blogs with the same # of posts

	Blogs	B%	P%
<b>Significantly fewer posts</b>	239	58%	31%
Longer posts	77	19%	9%
More conversational	32	8%	4%
About the same	23	6%	3%
Less conversational	22	5%	1%
About the same length	82	20%	13%
More conversational	37	9%	6%
About the same	24	6%	4%
Less conversational	21	5%	4%
Shorter posts	80	20%	9%
More conversational	19	5%	7%

About the same	15	4%	1%
Less conversational	46	11%	2%
More conversational	88	21%	17%
About the same	62	15%	8%
Less conversational	89	22%	7%

Table 7.4: Change patterns for blogs with fewer posts

All blogs	Blogs	B%	P%
Longer posts	125	30%	23%
More conversational	54	13%	11%
About the same	35	9%	7%
Less conversational	36	9%	4%
About the same length	162	40%	58%
More conversational	68	17%	18%
About the same	47	11%	26%
Less conversational	47	11%	13%
Shorter posts	123	30%	20%
More conversational	31	8%	9%
About the same	28	7%	3%
Less conversational	64	16%	7%
More conversational	153	37%	38%
About the same	110	27%	37%
Less conversational	147	36%	25%

Table 7.5: Length and conversational intensity change patterns

### Significant patterns

There are a *lot* more patterns using this model: 27 in all, at least potentially. That means a “typical” pattern in a random universe would include 15 blogs and 592 posts.

A couple of notes:

- Setting aside the “less of everything” group, which includes a fair number of blogs with no posts at all in 2008, the most populous patterns—the only ones with more than 24 blogs—are those with significantly fewer posts, significantly *more* conversational intensity, and either longer posts or posts about the same length.
- The most extreme mismatch between number of blogs and number of posts is the most stable pattern: blogs with roughly the same number of posts, roughly the same length posts and roughly the same conversational intensity. While the number of blogs is slightly less than average (11), those blogs account for 2,290 posts—14% of the whole. That’s not surprising: As you’ll see below (“Blogs in Patterns”), that set includes several established prolific blogs.

## Blogs in Patterns

Listing the blogs that fall into *some* of the change patterns may bring Tables 7.2 through 7.4 to life.

I've clustered together patterns that seem similar to me, but each pattern appears separately. Within a pattern, blogs are listed in decreasing number of 2008 posts.

## Fewer but Richer

These blogs have significantly fewer posts in 2008 than in 2007, but the blogs are "richer" in some ways: Longer posts with more conversational intensity or posts about the same length with more conversational intensity.

### *Fewer posts, longer posts, more conversational*

Borderland Tales.....	59
Sites and Soundbytes.....	49
Nodalities blog.....	43
Free Range Librarian.....	41
Pegasus Librarian.....	40
rawbrick.net.....	40
lauren's library blog.....	39
Not So Distant Future.....	33
The Gypsy Librarian.....	29
The Running Librarian.....	28
Loomware - Crafting New Libraries.....	26
Gather No Dust.....	21
©ollectanea.....	20
Emerging.....	19
always learning.....	18
LibraryLaw Blog.....	17
nirak.net - Musings of an LIS Student.....	16
Into the Stacks.....	15
meg kribble.....	15
Filipino Librarian.....	14
Citegeist.....	12
Practical Katie.....	11
shimenawa.....	10
geeky artist librarian.....	9
The Un-Cool Librarian.....	7
Dewey & Main.....	6
The Eeyore Librarian.....	6
The Vital Library.....	5
Outgoing.....	4
Circ and Serve.....	4
the pod bay door.....	4
The Handheld Librarian.....	2

### *Fewer posts, similar length, more conversational*

Free Government Information (FGI).....	195
Confessions of a Science Librarian.....	64
davidrothman.net.....	62
BentleyBlog.....	45
LibraryTavern.....	44
@ the library.....	41
Swiss Army Librarian.....	40
Heretical Librarian.....	38
Infotoday Blog.....	37

Library Garden.....	31
Museum 2.0.....	30
Information Wants To Be Free.....	30
Random Musings from the Desert.....	28
Dewey's Dartboard.....	26
Annoyed Librarian.....	23
LibrarianActivist.org.....	19
BookBitchBlog.....	19
Chicago Librarian.....	17
Coyle's InFormation.....	15
The Sheck Spot.....	14
CogSci Librarian.....	14
Miss Information.....	13
The Ubiquitous Librarian.....	13
New Jack Librarian.....	12
info NeoGnostic.....	12
Connecting Librarian.....	11
Meeting on the ledge.....	8
Librarians as Knowledge Managers.....	6
Twilight Librarian.....	5
School Libraryland.....	5
library webhead.....	5
BiblioTech Web.....	4
library+instruction+technology.....	3
@ the library.....	3
ebyblog.....	3
Senior Friendly Libraries.....	2
Library Snark.....	1

## Growth Blogs

These blogs grew significantly in at least two measures and didn't have a significant reduction in any measure. That's a more diverse set of patterns than the "naïve hypothesis" set.

### *Growth in all aspects*

<b>Blog.....</b>	<b>Posts in 2008</b>
pafa.net.....	51
Pop Goes the Library.....	41
eclectic librarian.....	38
ishush.....	35
A Passion for 'Puters.....	29
poesy galore.....	28
mélange.....	25
Library Voice.....	23
pamryan.info.....	11
Metalogger.....	6

### *More posts, longer posts, about the same conversationally*

The Search Principle blog.....	108
RSS4Lib.....	31
Librarian Idol.....	26
Loriene's Blog.....	14
Remaining Relevant.....	13
Biblioblather.....	5

Creating the One-shot Library Workshop.....	4
<i>More posts, more conversational, about the same length</i>	
Tame the Web .....	249
Bad Librarianship Now! .....	118
iLibrarian.....	104
the.effing.librarian .....	104
The Blue Skunk Blog.....	95
TangognaT.....	60
eFoundations.....	57
the New Cybrary .....	55
Misadventures of the Monster Librarian .....	54
Attempting Elegance .....	50
Library Cloud .....	32
Overdue Ideas .....	31
reeling and writhing.....	31
LACUNY Blog.....	22
yes to know.....	17
Alternative Teen Services .....	12
Books to curl up with: a librarian's musings .....	10
<i>Longer posts, more conversational, about the same number</i>	
Law Librarian Blog.....	498
The Ten Thousand Year Blog .....	53
Knowbodies.....	45
Infoblog.....	36
infomusings.....	28
walking paper.....	25
Canuck Librarian .....	25
Zzzoot.....	20
clifflandis.net .....	20
PomeRantz .....	16
Tombrarian.....	16
Hidden Peanuts.....	9

## Relatively Stable Blogs

These blogs have no significantly lower factor and are otherwise either about the same or significantly higher for 2008. Four patterns fall into this cluster.

*Stable blogs: About the same in all respects*

“Stable” doesn’t mean unchanged—it means that measurable quantitative factors didn’t increase or decrease by 20% or more. In some ways, it’s surprising so few blogs fall into this pattern.

beSpecific .....	770
Peter Scott's Library Blog .....	737
Library Chronicles.....	236
Phil Bradley's weblog .....	111
Digitization 101.....	98
Library Link of the Day .....	92
Caveat Lector.....	65
infodoodads .....	62
David Lee King.....	56

LibraryThing .....	41
Darth Libris .....	22

*More posts, about the same length and conversations*

Open Access News .....	791
PLA Blog.....	96
Killin' time being lazy .....	84
Catalogablog .....	82
Government Info Pro .....	65
michael e casey.....	60
Please Be Quiet .....	49
A Library Writer's Blog.....	45
Quiescit anima libris .....	30
The Invisible Web Weblog .....	29
checking out and checking in .....	17
The PlanetEsme Plan .....	11

*Longer posts, about the same number and conversations*

The Rabid Librarian's Ravings in the Wind.....	170
What I Learned Today.....	163
Libraries in the NHS .....	65
The Itinerant Librarian .....	27
Library Grants .....	3

*About the same length and number, more conversational*

The Kept-Up Academic Librarian.....	241
Library Boy .....	137
LibraryBytes .....	64
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian .....	62
The Krafty Librarian.....	54
Crazy Quilts .....	53
HeyJude .....	51
Connie Crosby.....	44
The Liminal Librarian .....	39
California Dreamin' .....	32
Pop Culture Librarian .....	29
LibraryTechtonics .....	17
etc. ....	10
Inquiring Librarian .....	4

## Mixed Cases

These blogs have one (but only one) significantly lower metric, with others about the same or significantly higher. There are ten individual patterns within this cluster.

*More posts, longer posts, less conversational*

LibCasting .....	6
DigiCMB.....	47
Confessions of a Mad Librarian .....	8
Right Wing Librarian .....	17
Info Junkie.....	6
Librarian on the edge .....	11
InfoMatters.....	13

*More posts, about the same length, less conversational*

Stephen's Lighthouse.....	159
Library Technology in Texas.....	75
Walt at Random.....	68
Typo of the day for librarians.....	65
Open Sesame.....	65
The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics.....	63
Chronicles of the (almost) Bald Technology Trainer.....	48
Innovate.....	32
hangingtogether.org.....	31
Librarian of Fortune.....	26
SPLAT.....	22
Online Insider.....	22
Extensible Librarian.....	18
A Librarian's Guide to Etiquette.....	13
Dilettante's Ball.....	7

*More posts, shorter posts, more conversational*

DigitalKoans.....	157
Digital Eccentric.....	46
The Well Dressed Librarian.....	27
The Leary Letter.....	26
Prairie Librarian.....	18

*More posts, shorter posts, about the same conversationally*

I, Reader.....	47
The Medium is the Message.....	27
drupalib.....	20
DIY Librarian.....	10
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia.....	8
Librarians for Human Rights.....	8

*About the same number, longer, less conversational*

Librarian In Black.....	216
j's scratchpad.....	87
The Information Literacy Land of Confusion.....	31
Gemini Moon.....	23
The Singing Librarian Talks (or Writes...).....	11
Information Literacy meets Web 2.0.....	11
Musings from Vermont.....	7

*About the same number and length, less conversational*

Coffee Code.....	8
QQ*librarian.....	29
Panlibus.....	35
The Distant Librarian.....	38
alliance virtual library.....	39
librariesinteract.info.....	42
Marcus' World.....	43
Libraries & Life.....	71
Information Literacy Weblog.....	86
bookshelves of doom.....	172
Slaw.....	234

*About the same number, shorter, more conversational*

The Invisible Library.....	45
ArchivesNext.....	39
The "M" Word - Marketing Libraries.....	39
userslib.com.....	12
The Vampire Librarian.....	10
The Illustrated Librarian.....	5
Weibel Lines.....	3

*About the same number and conversationally, shorter posts*

Tom Roper's Weblog.....	55
ResearchBuzz.....	50
Library Juice.....	45
Gargoyles loose in the library.....	38
The Hot Librarian.....	15
Ref Grunt.....	10
Scholarly Electronic Publishing Weblog.....	3

*Fewer posts, longer, about the same conversationally*

Travelin' Librarian.....	134
Information Junk.....	110
Library clips.....	52
Librarian.....	51
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore.....	30
Librarians Matter.....	27
commonplaces.....	23
The Other Librarian.....	17
025.431: The Dewey blog.....	17
User Education Resources for Librarians.....	16
Loose Cannon Librarian.....	15
Feral Library Tales.....	10
uncaged librarian.....	10
lis.dom.....	10
rachelvacek.com.....	8
copy this blog.....	6
Library etc.....	5
MemberBlog.....	4
REAL PUBLIC LIBRARIAN.....	3
LibraryPlanet.com.....	3
Librarian Ire.....	3
Mary Ellen Bates - Info-Entrepreneur Tip of the Month.....	2
Open Libraries.....	1

*Fewer posts, about the same length and conversation*

Library Lovers' LiveJournal.....	64
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy.....	56
Your Neighborhood Librarian.....	48
Out of the Jungle.....	44
UK Web Focus.....	43
Blog on the Side - Darlene Fichter.....	35
Chez Shoes.....	33



DrWeb's Domain.....	32
Cataloging Futures.....	26
Thingology (LibraryThing's ideas blog) .....	25
David's Random Stuff.....	25
Life as I Know It.....	25
Library Stories: Libraries & Librarians in the News.....	25
Library Web Chic .....	21
ADHD Librarian.....	15
Book Kitten .....	12
Saving the world daily through information .....	11
Δigital Serendipities.....	11
Stephen Gallant Review .....	6
HappyGeek's CodeX.....	6
Continuing Education! .....	5
The Gay Librarian.....	3
Library Angst.....	1
Wigblog - Things Internet and Otherwise by Richard Wiggins .....	1

## Conclusion

I haven't listed all the blogs included in this part of the study. Some blogs had a "down year" in general—some disappearing, some simply reduced in general (or partly not measured). Others were down in two of three metrics.

Is a down year a bad thing? That depends on the blogger's intentions. A dozen blogs had more posts—but the posts were significantly shorter and less conversational. That might suit the needs of the bloggers and represent success stories.

*[Omitted: 55 blog profiles]*

## 8. Patterns of Change, 2008-2009

This chapter looks at patterns of change from 2008 to 2009. I won't repeat the introductory and explanatory material from Chapter 7. If I had a naïve hypothesis for this year, it might be: Fewer posts, *slightly* longer, maybe less conversational.

There's one peculiarity for 2008-2009 that wasn't present in 2007-2008: Half a dozen blogs that went from no posts to some posts—and are included because they also had posts in 2007. Since moving from nothing to something is an infinite increase, these show up as having significantly more and longer posts with significantly more conversational intensity.

As in Ch. 7, P% means Posts percentage.

	Blogs	B%	P%
<b>More Posts</b>	113	25%	45%
Longer Posts	67	15%	35%
More Conversational	43	10%	24%
Less Conversational	24	5%	11%
Shorter Posts	46	10%	10%
More Conversational	26	6%	6%
Less Conversational	20	4%	4%
More Convers. subtotal	69	15%	30%
Less Convers. subtotal	44	10%	15%
<b>Fewer Posts</b>	335	75%	55%
Longer Posts	139	31%	32%
More Conversational	77	17%	16%
Less Conversational	62	14%	15%
Shorter Posts	196	44%	23%
More Conversational	71	16%	12%
Less Conversational	125	28%	11%
More Convers. subtotal	148	33%	28%
Less Convers. subtotal	187	42%	27%
Longer Posts total	206	46%	66%
Shorter Posts total	242	54%	34%
More Conversational total	217	48%	58%
Less Conversational total	231	52%	42%

Table 8.1: Change patterns, 2008-2009

## A Few Highlights

If patterns of change across the landscape were completely random, each of the fully-indented rows would have roughly 56 blogs and 1,660 posts and show 13% in each percentage column.

None of the eight patterns is close to those figures.

Three outliers are interesting:

- The most common pattern by far is the "discouraged" pattern: Fewer, shorter posts with less conversation. That pattern represents 125 blogs (28%) but only 11% of the posts.
- The *next* most common patterns are two with fewer posts and *more* conversation—77 blogs with longer posts and 71 with shorter posts. Combined, those represent a third of the blogs and 28% of the posts.
- The pattern with fewest blogs is the same as for 2007-2008: More posts, but shorter and less conversational. That has 20 of the blogs (4%) and 564 posts (4%).
- It's interesting that two-thirds of blogs had (slightly) longer posts—and that a solid majority had more conversation.

## A Better Model

See Chapter 7 for introductory and explanatory material.

	Blogs	B%	P%
<b>Significantly more posts</b>	70	16%	22%
Longer posts	31	7%	8%
More conversational	18	4%	5%
About the same	8	2%	3%
Less conversational	5	1%	1%
About the same length	27	6%	12%
More conversational	11	2%	3%
About the same	8	2%	3%
Less conversational	8	2%	6%
Shorter posts	12	3%	3%
More conversational	1	0%	0%
About the same	4	1%	1%
Less conversational	7	2%	2%
More conversational	30	7%	8%
About the same	20	4%	6%
Less conversational	20	4%	8%

Table 8.2: Change patterns for blogs with more posts

	Blogs	B%	P%
<b>About the same frequency</b>	89	20%	50%
Longer posts	26	6%	11%
More conversational	13	3%	3%
About the same	8	2%	8%
Less conversational	5	1%	1%
About the same length	45	10%	33%
More conversational	13	3%	6%
About the same	14	3%	16%
Less conversational	18	4%	11%
Shorter posts	18	4%	6%
More conversational	5	1%	4%
About the same	5	1%	1%
Less conversational	8	2%	1%
More conversational	31	7%	12%
About the same	27	6%	25%
Less conversational	31	7%	13%

Table 8.3: Change patterns for blogs with the same # of posts

	Blogs	B%	P%
<b>Significantly fewer posts</b>	289	65%	27%
Longer posts	80	18%	9%
More conversational	37	8%	5%
About the same	17	4%	2%
Less conversational	26	6%	2%
About the same length	82	18%	13%
More conversational	25	6%	3%
About the same	21	5%	5%
Less conversational	36	8%	5%
Shorter posts	127	28%	5%
More conversational	17	4%	2%

About the same	26	6%	1%
Less conversational	84	19%	3%
More conversational	79	18%	10%
About the same	64	14%	7%
Less conversational	146	33%	10%

Table 8.4: Change patterns for blogs with fewer posts

All blogs	Blogs	B%	P%
Longer posts	137	31%	28%
More conversational	68	15%	12%
About the same	33	7%	12%
Less conversational	36	8%	4%
About the same length	154	34%	58%
More conversational	49	11%	12%
About the same	43	10%	24%
Less conversational	62	14%	22%
Shorter posts	157	35%	14%
More conversational	23	5%	6%
About the same	35	8%	2%
Less conversational	99	22%	6%
More conversational	140	31%	30%
About the same	111	25%	38%
Less conversational	197	44%	32%

Table 8.5: Length and conversational intensity change patterns

### Significant patterns

A “typical” pattern in a random universe would include 17 blogs and 492 posts.

- Although relatively few blogs had about the same number of posts (only 20%), these blogs represented *half* of the posts.
- Setting aside the “less of everything” group, which includes a fair number of blogs with no posts at all in 2009, the most populous patterns—the only ones with more than 30 blogs—are those with significantly fewer posts that are either longer and more conversational or about the same length and less conversational. I’m not sure what meaning you can derive from that—other than that there really were no clear patterns between 2008 and 2009 except for fewer posts in two-thirds of blogs.
- The most extreme mismatch between number of blogs and number of posts is once again the most stable pattern: blogs with roughly the same number of posts, roughly the same length post and roughly the same conversational intensity. These blogs account for 2,129 posts—16% of the whole.

## Blogs in Patterns

Listing the blogs that fall into *some* of the change patterns may bring Tables 8.2 through 8.4 to life.

I've clustered together patterns that seem similar to me, but each pattern appears separately. Within a pattern, blogs are listed in decreasing number of 2009 posts.

## Growth Blogs

These blogs grew significantly in at least two measures and didn't have a significant reduction in any measure.

### *Growth in all aspects*

Note that this includes blogs that had posts in 2007 and 2009 but none in 2008.

<b>Blog .....</b>	<b>Posts in 2009</b>
The Centered Librarian.....	209
Libology Blog .....	66
Science Library Pad .....	58
OPL Plus (not just for OPLs anymore) .....	45
Paul Miller.....	39
Christina's LIS Rant .....	39
Information Literacy meets Web 2.0 .....	35
LITA Blog.....	25
"Self-plagiarism is style" .....	23
Youth Services Corner.....	21
Ramblings on Librarianship, Technology, and Academia12	
Library spring.....	10
Manage This!.....	7
Aaron the Librarian.....	4
All Things Amy.....	2
Distracted Truffle Pig.....	1
schenizzle.....	1
The Laughing Librarian .....	1

### *More posts, longer posts, about the same conversationally*

Out of the Jungle.....	121
A Chair, A Fireplace & A Tea Cozy .....	118
always learning.....	29
The Uncommon Commons .....	29
Chicago Librarian.....	23
New Jack Librarian.....	15
Simon Chamberlain's library weblog.....	10
Nowhere North .....	5

### *More posts, more conversational, about the same length*

Kids Lit .....	125
Knowbodies.....	78
Infotoday Blog.....	61
Bibliographic Wilderness.....	52
Union Librarian.....	38
Everybody's Libraries .....	15
Library Grants .....	12
Obnoxious Librarian from Hades .....	11
Inherent Vice.....	5
Dynamic Librarian .....	4

The Letter Z.....	2
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### *Longer posts, more conversational, about the same number*

Head Tale .....	94
Crazy Quilts .....	63
UK Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Blog.....	41
Going Green @your library .....	38
Librarian by Day .....	36
Info Career Trends.....	27
Emerging Technologies Librarian.....	26
Library Alchemy .....	22
Information Research - ideas and debate .....	14
the disorganized librarian.....	12
Dilettante's Ball.....	7
blyberg.net .....	2
New Jersey Academic Librarian .....	1

## Relatively Stable Blogs

These blogs have no significantly lower factor and are otherwise either about the same or significantly higher for 2009. Four patterns fall into this cluster.

### *Stable blogs: About the same in all respects*

Note that "about the same" can mean a change of up to 20% in either direction—and that, not surprisingly, this group includes some (not all) of the most prolific blogs.

Open Access News .....	892
beSpecific .....	733
Beyond the Job .....	131
Library Link of the Day .....	92
Typo of the day for librarians .....	65
ricklibrarian.....	55
Library Juice .....	48
Swiss Army Librarian .....	37
Librarians Matter .....	29
librarytwopointzero .....	25
rambleonsylvie .....	9
LibCasting .....	6
MemberBlog.....	4
Scholarly Electronic Publishing Weblog .....	3

### *More posts, about the same length and conversations*

Stephen's Lighthouse.....	230
The Good Library Blog.....	66
The Distant Librarian.....	53
User Education Resources for Librarians.....	24
Librarians for Human Rights .....	17
The PlanetEsme Plan .....	17
Wigblog - Things Internet and Otherwise by Richard Wiggins .....	11
Open Libraries .....	2

## *Longer posts, about the same number and conversations*

Peter Scott's Library Blog.....	765
David Lee King.....	59
ResearchBuzz.....	48
UK Web Focus .....	42
lauren's library blog.....	40
Gargoyles loose in the library .....	34
Baby Boomer Librarian.....	33
Digital Serendipities .....	10

## *About the same length and number, more conversational*

The Kept-Up Academic Librarian .....	268
The Rabid Librarian's Ravings in the Wind .....	176
iLibrarian .....	103
Library clips .....	43
Ruminations .....	26
Loomware - Crafting New Libraries.....	22
BookBitchBlog .....	21
LibraryTechNZ.....	20
Library Web Chic.....	18
The Cataloguing Librarian .....	14
the goblin in the library .....	14
Books to curl up with: a librarian's musings .....	9
Coffee Code .....	7

## **Fewer but Richer**

These blogs have significantly fewer posts in 2008 than in 2007, but the blogs are “richer” in some ways: Longer posts, more conversational intensity or both.

### *Fewer posts, longer posts, more conversational*

Tame the Web.....	80
Phil Bradley's weblog.....	77
The Misadventures of Super_Librarian.....	42
LibrariAnne.....	41
Tom Roper's Weblog.....	39
Librarian In Black .....	38
Closed Stacks.....	24
Love the Liberry.....	22
eFoundations .....	22
The Itinerant Librarian.....	21
QQ*librarian.....	18
librariesinteract.info .....	17
Innovate .....	17
The Information Literacy Land of Confusion .....	17
025.431: The Dewey blog.....	13
Silversprite .....	13
The FRBR Blog.....	12
in forming thoughts .....	11
Confessions of a real librarian .....	11
Llyfrgellydd .....	10
infodoodads .....	9

The Life of Books.....	8
Overdue Ideas.....	7
Coyle's InFormation .....	7
The Ubiquitous Librarian .....	7
the New Cybrary .....	6
geeky artist librarian .....	5
Buffalo Wings and Toasted Ravioli.....	5
Musings from Vermont.....	3
The Eeyore Librarian .....	3
τεχνοςοφια.....	3
InfoSciPhi .....	2
Librarian on the edge.....	2
Foxylibrarian.com .....	2
Creative Librarian .....	1
Au Courant .....	1
The Cool Librarian.....	1

### *Fewer posts, longer posts, same conversational intensity*

The Krafty Librarian .....	37
pafa.net .....	36
Marcus' World .....	24
Chez Shoes.....	18
2CoolTools .....	18
Libraries in the NHS.....	18
Digital Eccentric .....	15
Your Neighborhood Librarian .....	12
The Medium is the Message .....	12
LibraryLaw Blog.....	11
ALA Marginalia.....	6
rachelvacek.com .....	5
habitually probing generalist.....	4
Librarian 2.....	3
Professional-Lurker: Comments by an academic in cyberspace .....	2
Enquiring Minds Want to Know .....	1
Weibel Lines .....	1

### *Fewer posts, similar length, more conversational*

InfoMatters .....	8
The Other Librarian .....	3
The Invisible Web Weblog.....	11
Library Technology in Texas .....	8
Librarians as Knowledge Managers.....	2
Collections 2.0 .....	7
Library Revolution.....	10
blogwithoutalibrary.net.....	5
Libraries & Life .....	38
Museum 2.0 .....	23
Speak Quietly: Ramblings About Libraries, Writing.....	29
Nodalities blog.....	31
Attempting Elegance .....	16
Dewey's Dartboard .....	2
EBM and Clinical Support Librarians@UCHC.....	21
The Singing Librarian Talks (or Writes...) .....	4

Academic Librarian.....	9
Panlibus.....	23
Walt at Random .....	50
RSS4Lib .....	5
Please Be Quiet .....	29
Library Lovers' LiveJournal .....	21
Chronicles of the (almost) Bald Technology Trainer.....	10
DigiCMB.....	14
The Blue Skunk Blog.....	59

## Mixed Cases

These blogs have one (but only one) significantly lower metric, with others about the same or significantly higher. There are ten individual patterns within this cluster.

### *More posts, longer posts, less conversational*

The Running Librarian.....	37
The Sheck Spot.....	26
Libraryman.....	9
Libraries Build Communities.....	8
Card Catalog of Creativity.....	8

### *More posts, about the same length, less conversational*

DigitalKoans.....	387
Bluestalking.....	117
MaisonBisson.com .....	79
ACRL Insider .....	74
Shelf Check .....	40
libraryassessment.info .....	21
library webhead.....	17
Library Monk.....	13

### *More posts, shorter posts, more conversational*

RUSA Blog.....	20
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### *More posts, shorter posts, about the same conversationally*

librarian.net .....	51
Filipino Librarian .....	18
A LIBRARIAN AT THE KITCHEN TABLE .....	15
The Galecia Group .....	7

### *About the same number, longer, less conversational*

TangognaT.....	56
Social Justice Librarian.....	12
Alone in the Archives .....	12
Carolyn's pages of interest.....	9
@ the library.....	3

### *About the same number and length, less conversational*

ResourceShelf.....	909
Library Boy .....	110
Information Literacy Weblog.....	80

Catalogablog .....	72
LibraryBytes .....	51
The "M" Word - Marketing Libraries .....	42
hangingtogether.org.....	36
reeling and writhing.....	34
Librarilly Blonde .....	34
Rambling Librarian :: Incidental Thoughts of a Singapore Libloga .....	29
DrWeb's Domain.....	28
Librarian of Fortune.....	24
Emerging .....	18
A Wandering Eyre .....	15
Terry's Worklog .....	15
Tombrarian.....	14
The In Season Christian Librarian .....	8
the pod bay door .....	4

### *About the same number, shorter, more conversational*

Law Librarian Blog.....	457
Cataloging Futures.....	25
Cheeky Librarian.....	22
lis.dom.....	8
Continuing Education! .....	5

### *About the same number and conversationally, shorter posts*

Librarian.....	54
ArchivesNext .....	38
OA Librarian .....	19
Mary Ellen Bates - Info-Entrepreneur Tip of the Month.....	2
The Handheld Librarian .....	2

### *Fewer posts, about the same length and conversation*

Library Chronicles.....	171
bookshelves of doom .....	135
PLA Blog.....	54
Killin' time being lazy .....	47
Caveat Lector.....	44
A Library Writer's Blog.....	33
The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics .....	26
Random Musings from the Desert.....	21
info-fetishist.....	20
The Gypsy Librarian.....	19
ishush .....	16
Connie Crosby.....	12
Into the Stacks.....	9
The Shifted Librarian .....	8
uncaged librarian .....	7
digitizationblog.....	6
Hectic Pace.....	6
Semantic Library.....	5
Deepening the Conversation .....	4
LIS :: Michael Habib .....	3
Stephen Gallant Review .....	1

## 9. Correlations and Averages

Are there significant correlations between pairs of metrics?

Any time you look at correlations, there are two meanings of “significant” to consider:

- **Statistically significant:** There’s a good statistical “fit” between the two factors.
- **Meaningful:** There’s some plausible reason to believe that the two factors *would* be correlated—that one has an effect on the other or that they somehow work in tandem.

As a humanist who’s numerate and somewhat statistically aware, I don’t much care for random correlations. Show me that the change in average height of women in Boston during the 20<sup>th</sup> century correlates with the change in acreage devoted to vinifera grapes in Chile during the period, and I’ll say there’s either some other factor influencing both of them or you’re spouting statistical nonsense.

I tested correlation on various pairs of metrics that *might* have meaningful relationships—and, in fact, on most possible pairs. The ones that emerged appear here. I did *not* look at correlations involving 2007 data or changes from 2007-2008, since Chapter 8 of *The Liblog Landscape 2007-2008* includes such correlations. Yes, the universe is different; no, it’s not different enough to justify doing a new set of correlations.

### Methodology

In addition to removing all blogs with no posts in either year (and, as noted below, all blogs with fewer than two posts in either year), I removed seven “fringe cases”: Five blogs with more than 400 posts in either year, one with more than 600 comments (actually more than 1,200 comments) in one of the years, and one with a conversational intensity higher than 15 (actually higher than 50). The fringe cases needed to be removed for potential graphs to be readable—and, as it turns out, removing the fringe cases consistently *lowered* correlations. That makes the starting population 383 blogs—all those with at least two posts in 2008 and in 2009, minus seven fringe cases.

For each pair of metrics, I:

- Removed blogs with no data for the pair of metrics.
- Had Excel calculate Pearson’s product-moment coefficient, the correlation between the two metrics.
- If either correlation is medium or strong (absolute magnitude between 0.3 and 0.5 for medium, absolute magnitude over 0.5 for strong), I include the correlation. I don’t consider small “correlation” (with an absolute magnitude between 0.1 and 0.3) meaningful enough to bother mentioning—almost any two sets of numbers will show *some* correlation.
- *The Liblog Landscape 2007-2008* included scatterplots for seven medium and strong correlations. The more I looked at those scatterplots, the less I saw useful information: There are too many data points and too little that you can infer from them. So I’m not including scatterplots in this book. If you love visual representation, buy the other book. (If you *really* love scatterplots, contact me; for a nominal fee, I can send you the two columns and you can make your own scatterplots in Excel or another .xlsx-compatible program.)

### Age Correlations

Does the *age* of a blog correlate with its key metrics or changes? Last year, the clear answer was *no*: Every correlation was between -0.15 and 0.22.

For 2008 and 2009, the results were even worse: Every correlation was between -0.1 and +0.13. There doesn’t appear to be any meaningful correlation between how long someone’s been blogging and *any* other aspect of their blog.

### Count Correlations

There *should* be a strong correlation between the number of posts in 2008 and the number of posts in 2009, as there was between 2007 and 2008.

So there is: For 384 blogs with at least two posts each year, the correlation is a strong 0.766. You could say the number of posts during 2008 is a strong predictor of the number of posts during 2009. The correlation isn’t as strong as between 2007 and 2008.

There’s no correlation between posting frequency in either year and the *change* in posts between 2008 and 2009.

### *Count and comments*

There's a weak positive correlation (0.426) between number of posts in 2008 and number of comments in 2008, among the 332 blogs with at least two posts and at least one comment. There is, however, *no* real correlation between number of posts and conversational intensity in 2008. The first is to be expected. The second, if it existed, might be interesting.

There's a similar, if slightly weaker, positive correlation (0.409) between number of posts in 2009 and number of comments in 2009, among 339 blogs with at least two posts and at least one comment. Once again, there's no real correlation between number of posts and conversational intensity in 2009.

There are no correlations between number of posts in either year and either the change in number of comments or the change in conversational intensity.

Last year, there was some correlation between the *change* in post count and the change in comment count. The correlation is also there for 2008-2009, but it's weaker at 0.398. There continues to be no correlation between change in number of posts and change in conversational intensity.

### *Count and length*

You'd expect a fairly strong correlation between number of posts and total length of a blog, even though blogs vary widely in the average length of a post. For 2008, among 353 blogs with comparable metrics, the correlation is 0.775. For 2009, with 349 blogs included, it's slightly stronger—0.811.

You wouldn't necessarily expect any correlation between number of posts and *average* length of a post, although a mild negative correlation might seem reasonable (blogs with large numbers of posts might tend to have shorter posts). Leaving out the few cases with *very* large numbers of posts, the 2008 correlation is too small to be considered a correlation, although it is negative: -0.192. The 2009 correlation is also negative and even smaller.

There are no significant correlations between post count in either year and the change in length or average length—but there is a *very* strong correlation between *change* in post count and change in total length, 0.938. That may be natural—unless the style of a blog changes sharply, chances are its overall length will change in rough proportion to

its number of posts. (This is a case where the correlation increased from 2007-2008, when it was 0.882.)

## Length and Comment Correlations

Are there correlations between length of blogs (total or per post) and comments or changes in length or comments? In this case, blogs where length couldn't be calculated are omitted, along with blogs with fewer than two posts—and blogs with no comments, when looking at comment correlations.

### *Length and length, length and average length*

Not surprisingly, there's a strong correlation between total length of a blog in 2008 and total length in 2009, for those blogs where it could be measured in both years (346 of them): 0.683, not *enormously* strong but still strong.

There are no correlations between total length of a blog (in either year) and either the change in length or the change in average words per post. I also don't find correlations between total length and average length in either year.

### *Length and comments*

For those blogs with measurable length and at least one comment, there's a weak correlation (0.510) between total length and number of comments in 2008, but not between total length and conversational intensity. There's also no real correlation between average post length and conversational intensity (average comments per post)—that is, longer posts don't tend to have either more or fewer comments than shorter posts, at least not on a blog-by-blog level—or between average post length and total number of comments.

For 2009, there is a weaker correlation between total length and number of comments (0.472), and there's also a weak correlation (0.398) between average length of post and changes in conversational intensity.

### *Comments and conversational intensity*

Here's one that may be mildly interesting: For 2008, there's a strong correlation (0.715) between total number of comments and conversational intensity (average comments per post). The correlation for 2009 is weaker but still (barely) strong, at 0.609. In other words, blogs that have more com-

ments per post also tend to have more comments overall—perhaps not an astonishing finding.

There's also a strong correlation (0.664) between conversational intensity for 2008 and conversational intensity for 2009—one that's not surprising. Blogs with more comments per post tend to stay that way. If anything, the relatively low correlation might be interesting.

Finally, there's a strong correlation (0.708) between change in total comments from 2008 to 2009 and change in conversational intensity—which makes sense, given that the two metrics are strongly correlated each year.

## Conclusions

Of the correlations strong enough to be worth noting, most seem intuitively likely. They're correlations that “make sense.”

## Averages and Everyday Blogs

Most of this book avoids averages because averages for as heterogeneous a group as liblogs don't tell you very much. But there is a place for averages—and maybe, by trimming the universe considered, we can see some overall trends a little more clearly.

Table 9.1 provides all the averages (and supporting figures) that seem to make sense to provide, including year-to-year changes. The notes that follow the table are essential to making sense of it.

	2007	2008	2009	Ch78	Ch89
Posts	20,820	18,876	15,826	-9%	-16%
Active blogs	449	486	434	8%	-11%
Posts/blog	46	39	36	-16%	-6%
Active in 2007	449	419	373	-7%	-11%
Posts act. 2007	20,820	16,950	14,192	-19%	-16%
P/B act. 2007	46	40	38	-13%	-6%
Active 2008		486	422		-13%
Posts 2008		18,876	15,029		-20%
P/B act.2008		39	36		-8%
Blogs w/length	412	452	394	10%	-13%
Total length	4,803,373	4,467,215	3,470,958	-7%	-22%
Posts	19,720	17,824	13,437	-10%	-25%
Ave. length	244	251	258	3%	3%
Posts/blog	48	39	34	-18%	-14%
Blogs w/comments	379	404	323	7%	-20%
Tot comments	24,586	21,356	13,426	-13%	-37%
Tot posts	16,039	14,753	9,574	-8%	-35%
Ccomments/post	1.5	1.5	1.4	-6%	-3%
Comments/blog	65	53	42	-19%	-21%

Table 9.1: Averages and supporting figures

Notes on Table 9.1:

- The first three lines aren't new. The first is total posts across all blogs in the study, with percentage changes—and note that, although there's a decline each year, it's not all that dramatic. The second and third line tell slightly different stories: The decline in posts *per blog* was sharper from 2007 to 2008 than from 2008 to 2009, because there were significantly fewer blogs. Indeed, 6% really isn't much of a decline.
- The next six lines take subsets of the data, omitting *new* blogs from year to year. Thus, the first three lines include only blogs that had at least one post in 2007 (noting that a handful of blogs had posts in 2007 and 2009, but not in 2008). The next three lines ignore 2007 and include blogs that were new to 2008 (or had no posts in 2007).
- The next five lines look at blogs for which length could be measured—and the only new figures are total length, average length per posts across all blogs, and average posts per blog *among blogs with length metrics*. Notice that the last line is never that different than the overall posts per blog—at most 3% higher or 7% lower. The interesting number here is average length across all blogs, and note that it increases each year—but not by much, roughly 3%.
- The last five lines look at blogs with at least one comment. The drop in total comments of more than 1/3 from 2008 to 2009 is interesting; on the other hand, comments per post are nearly unchanged.

### Everyday blogs

What happens to these figures if we reduce the set of liblogs to include only those that have been around since December 2006 or earlier, that have posts in each year and that have measurable length? Further, what happens if we eliminate some “special cases”—blogs that are atypical by design?

Removing those blogs with no length metric in one or more years—either because there were no posts or because length couldn't be measured—substantially reduces the universe, down to 325 blogs, dropping some of the most prolific blogs and some with lots of comments. That's a drop of 18% to 28% in each year as compared to blogs with length metrics in each year, taken independently. (That is: Only 325 blogs have length metrics for all three years, but anywhere from 394 to 452 have length metrics in any one year.)



On the other hand, the number of posts in those blogs doesn't drop as much—anywhere from 11% to 17%. Comments drop by 20% to 24%.

Now we remove a few atypical blogs—noting that some atypical blogs such as *Library Stuff* and *Slaw* already disappeared because of length metrics problems. Here are the blogs removed—and why.

- ResourceShelf, beSpacific, Law Librarian Blog, Peter Scott's Library Blog, Open Access News, Free Government Information and The Kept-Up Academic Librarian are all very prolific blogs with either sponsorship, team effort, or a firm commitment to serve as a form of current awareness service.
- *Library Link of the Day* is a pure link and headline with no copy and operates on a fixed schedule.

That's it: eight more blogs, reducing the total to 317. What happens when we look at averages and totals for these blogs (fewer for comments)?

	2007	2008	2009	Ch78	Ch89
Posts	12,924	10,519	7,762	-19%	-26%
Active blogs	317	317	317		
Posts/blog	41	33	24	-19%	-26%
Total length	3,443,472	2,942,010	2,300,059	-15%	-22%
Average length	266	280	296	5%	6%
Blogs w/ comments	275	274	246	-0%	-10%
Total comments	18,588	16,052	10,575	-14%	-34%
Total posts	11,717	9,563	6,847	-18%	-28%
Comments/post	1.6	1.7	1.5	6%	-8%
Comments/blog	68	59	43	-13%	-27%

Table 9.2: Averages and supporting figures for “everyday” blogs

Most notes for Table 9.1 also apply to Table 9.2—but since only blogs with posts and lengths in all three years are included here, there's no need for the second group of lines in Table 9.1, and some redundant lines could be removed from “Blogs with length”—since all of them have length metrics.

- Most sharply, we see a *larger* drop in posts, almost one-fifth from 2007 to 2008 and more than a quarter from 2008 to 2009. The sense that blogging has dropped off a lot is perfectly justified within this large population of blogs that don't have special circumstances—26% over one year and a combined drop of a full 40% over two years.
- Post lengths are longer in general (up from 244 words to 266 words in 2007, an increase of 11% or roughly three sentences)—and they show more growth from year to year. It's fair to say that “everyday” or “typical” liblogs did generally have slightly longer posts

from year to year, increasing by 14 words from 2007 to 2008 and 16 more from 2008 to 2009.

- Comments per post show are a little higher (not surprisingly: current-awareness blogs tend to have many posts and few if any comments) but show a little more decline from 2008 to 2009.

Two more sets of figures may be interesting: The extent of “essay-length” blogging among this subset of liblogs.

- If you define essay-length as 500 words or more, the number grows from 33 in 2007 (10%) to 51 in 2008 (16%) and 60 in 2009 (19%)—an increase of 82% in two years.
- If you define essay-length as 400 words or more, the number is much larger but the growth isn't as dramatic: 67 in 2007 (21%), 78 in 2008 (25%) and 93 in 2009 (29%)—an increase of 39% in two years.

Conclusions? If it's reasonable to think that these are the blogs most people think of as the biblioblogosphere, then it's a reasonable overall assertion to say that posting has dropped significantly, that posts have grown longer (but not dramatically so), and that the number of essayists among libloggers has increased dramatically.

## 10. Why People Blog—and How Blogs Change

This study includes 521 blogs. What they have in common is that each involves one or more “library people” as defined *very* loosely—people who have some connection to the library field and write, at least part of the time, about library-related issues.

**How** do these people blog, and how is that changing? That's largely what this book is about, on an objective, quantifiable basis. I discuss qualitative areas in *Cites & Insights* from time to time.

**Why** do these people blog—and how is *that* changing? There are many reasons for blogging, some more sensible than others. Here's my quick take on plausible and implausible reasons for starting and maintaining liblogs, followed by some comments from bloggers themselves.

### The Good, Bad and Unlikely

Here are a few reasons people have started blogs, probably missing many more:

- **Fame:** Some people start blogs to become better known, with expectations that jobs, speaking engagements, new friends, consulting gigs, or other Good Things will follow. Once in a while, this happens; frequently, people become *somewhat* better known through blogging.
- **Professional Advancement:** This can be related to “Fame” above—blogging as a way to become better known professionally. If that’s the *only* reason for blogging, libloggers these days are likely to be disappointed: There are too many other blogs out there. If it’s a secondary motivation, it can still be a winner: People still *do* become better known and loom larger in the field because of their blogs.
- **Fortune:** Make Big Bucks in Your Spare Time! Just add some HTML to your template and watch the bucks roll in through advertising, or referrals, or... Yes, there are people who make serious money through “blogs”—though in some cases I’d argue those blogs are professional publications, not personal blogs. Are there profitable liblogs? Probably, but probably not many—a few that are sponsored, a *very* few that may make enough on ads to more than cover hosting expenses.
- **Obligation:** My sense is that a fair number of liblogs still begin because they’re assignments in library school or a social-learning program. Once the assignment’s over, most of these blogs fade away—unfortunately, in too many cases, leaving LISWiki listings behind. Sometimes, the assignments result in ongoing, worthwhile blogs.
- **Projects and Topics:** Some blogs begin for specific purposes, e.g., as a place to discuss one specific topic or as a companion to a book or conference.
- **Having Something to Say:** Then there are the others, where people believe they have things to say that others will find worth reading. These libloggers—I’d guess this motive accounts for at least 80% of all active liblogs—may have secondary motives (e.g., becoming *known* for their expertise and thoughts) that could fall into the “fame” and “professional advancement” categories, but first, they have things to say and find blogging a worthwhile way to say them.

Things change, both in people’s lives and in the tools that they use. People who have relatively few things to say, or relatively short things to say, may

find themselves moving away from blogs and toward FaceBook, FriendFeed, Twitter *et al.* People who sought out fame and fortune may turn away in disappointment.

[Omitted: Material originally in *Cites & Insights* July 2009, “Thinking about Blogging 2: Why We Blog.”]

## Blogging in Decline?

Blogging is dead. That’s clear—it’s been said many times (Bing says 7,160,000; Google says 67,700; the right number is “lots”). That widespread pronouncement of death, particularly from sources such as *Wired Magazine*, may be a good thing—it means blogging has completed its transition from toy to tool, from Shiny to Useful.

Is blogging as a whole in a state of decline? Yes, no, maybe and—most of all—why does it matter? Yes, lots of people have given up blogs (including liblogs) and yes, lots of blogs have much less activity than they used to. No, some of the major blog platforms continue to see increased activity; no, many bloggers see *growing* readership; no, there continue to be exciting new blogs.

That said, it’s worth looking at some of the thoughts people have had about changes in blogging—either their own blog or blogging as a whole. Some of these are from liblogs; some aren’t. (This part of the chapter is original, but will probably appear later in *Cites & Insights*.)

### When should you stop blogging?

Kathryn Greenhill used that title for a May 18, 2008 post at *Librarians matter*: “When should you stop blogging?” She cites a post from *Problogger*, “Should I stop blogging? 20 questions to ask yourself” ([www.problogger.net/archives/2008/05/17/should-i-stop-blogging-20-questions-to-ask-yourself/](http://www.problogger.net/archives/2008/05/17/should-i-stop-blogging-20-questions-to-ask-yourself/)) and lists the questions with her own answers. But before that she offers a few other notes:

While I don’t think I have any intention of stopping *Librarians Matter*, I’ve noticed my posts are slowing down as I enter my third year. I’ve been spending more time twittering, on new work projects, blogging elsewhere, getting slowly interested in videoblogging—and even trying to go walking at 6am to spend some one-on-one time with [her 10-year-old son].

My friend Con (Ruminations) has been feeling in a pickle about whether to keep up with her blogging, Morgan (Exploded Library) has recently res-

tarted his blog after a self-imposed hiatus and Fiona (blisspix) has decided to give up her more personal library related blog in favour of continuing a couple of others. I've noticed a huge drop in the number of new posts appearing in my aggregator from librar\* blogs.

I find twitter is filling the community/comment space that was once filled reading and commenting on blogs...

Checking those three blogs in 2009, *Ruminations* is still strong (but much less frequent in 2008 and 2009 than in 2007), *explodedlibrary.info* is back in 2009—and *blisspix* is gone. *Librarians matter* is doing fine. The drop in the number of posts across the field of liblogs is clear (although not enormous) and may be a good thing. Is Twitter replacing blogs? I'd hope not, at least for serious issues—but it's probably occupying time and energy that might otherwise go into blogging, just as FriendFeed does.

### *Blogging*

Lorcan Dempsey thought about how blogging may be changing in a May 3, 2009 post at *Lorcan Dempsey's weblog*. He sees a distinction between personal blogs and traditional media in blog form (my wording, not his). Excerpts:

I seem to spend less time looking at blogs, library or otherwise. I don't know if this is just me or if it is a general experience. The demands of work, life and Twitter perhaps. No doubt Walt will inform us in due course whether the volume of library blogging, at least, is up or down, whatever about the quality or interest.

However, as soon as I say that I realise that it is probably not true. I do look at quite a lot of things that are sort of quasi-blogs/quasi-news (e.g on Cnet) which I do not tend to think of as blogs because they do not have a strong personal voice. I occasionally look at some other things which are clearly 'blogs', if in some managed space. The blogs at HarvardBusiness.org are an example, and they seem a bit flat, as if produced to order.

[He read an ad for an editor of the BBC Internet Blog, very much a corporate blog.]

This prompts me to think that perhaps the word blog has become overburdened and as a result somewhat fuzzy in use. Sometimes we use it for the mechanics, for a mode of delivery which has become a useful and general web publishing medium: a stream of messages which are individually commentable, addressible, and signed, which can be subscribed to as a stream and which can be aggregated and mixed in various ways. Other times

we may mean this, but we are principally thinking of the personal voice that comes through ...

So, I probably spend as much or more time looking at blogs in that mechanical sense. But I probably spend less time listening to individual, idiosyncratic voices ...

I use the broadest definition of blogs (Dempsey's is too narrow, since it includes commenting)—but he makes a good point here. I've avoided "mainstream" blogs in almost all cases, those without strong personal voices, but I've left a few of them in these studies. That may be a mistake; maybe we really need to determine separate media even within the library space.

### *the halcyon days of blogging are over*

That's Morgan Wilson in a May 17, 2009 post at *explodedlibrary.info*. Wilson began reading liblogs almost a decade ago—*librarian.net* and *The shifted librarian*—but didn't know the word. Later, he learned about it and started his own. Excerpts directly related to blogging:

It was extremely liberating. Some of that was the technology, the blogging software combined with the rise of Google. For the first time, self-publishing was inexpensive, easy and viable as a way of reaching an audience. But it wasn't just the technology, there was the notion that the blog was your own platform, use it to express yourself and say whatever the hell you want to say. After all, most people didn't even know about blogs.

Gradually things changed, more people started blogging and more people started paying attention to bloggers, and things got more serious. But those changes were flowing on from the growth of blogging and were to be expected...

Although I have described blogging as "not difficult," publishing via [Facebook, Twitter, FriendFeed et al] is extremely easy. Although blogging has become fairly mainstream now, the ease of use factor of Twitter particularly has helped it become way more mainstream.

The difference between an old fashioned blog and somebody's Twitter or Facebook or MySpace page is that a blog is published for the whole world to see, whereas it's possible to control who can access the newer services. This may sound fairly obvious, but I think it's caused a difference in how people use these newer self-publication services...

I wonder, if more and more people can express themselves via Twitter or Facebook, does that mean that over time less people will be interested in starting or continuing blogging?

Guessing the future is always hazardous, because the things which cause the biggest change can never be predicted.

But even if blogging does go into a gradual decline, in terms of its popularity or influence (it's possible that if the mainstream news media continues in its downward spiral, blog posts may gain even more influence), I'm not worried that all of a sudden blogging will become meaningless.

It's interesting to consider the narrative arc of this post, which would be wholly impossible on the other services Wilson mentions. It goes from what appears to be a downbeat statement, a modified version of "blogging is dying"—and winds up with a reasonably positive ending, in line with my own feelings.

### *Finding the sweet spot*

Sarah Faye Cohen thought about Twitter and the extent to which it can undermine blogging in this July 9, 2009 post at *The sheck spot*. She notes some frequent libloggers (although two of the three she names aren't all that frequent these days), then draws a contrast:

I have never been like these people. I am an occasional blogger. I, like many bloggers, *mean* to blog more often. I have many blog posts I *mean* to share or thoughts on our profession that I share all the time with Andy and other co-workers but rarely do I find time to sit down and get it all out on my computer. And admittedly, I feel guilty about it. Lately, I even ask myself if I should maintain my blog at all. This, in part, is because of Twitter.

She's one of those who didn't get Twitter initially and didn't much care for the required terseness—but she found good uses for it and finds herself in Twitter "more than I ever expected," sometimes asking professional questions and getting fast responses.

Don't get me wrong. I still read many articles, blog posts, and journal articles that are through RSS, references, citations, or referrals. But the point I am making is that my input and my output is shifting. I get information in a new way and I share information in a new way. I tweet an awful lot more than I blog... While I have never felt the need to blog for others, blogging can be a lonely endeavor while Tweeting is an amazingly communal one. Increasingly I find I work well with both. I appreciate the quiet of my blog. I appreciate the opportunity to go back and review what I've said. Even as I've been writing this post, I look back at my blog and realize how long I've been blogging and how much I have thought through

things here. But on Twitter, I appreciate the ability to share without the added pressure of annotating and reflecting, or at least doing so very briefly.

So where am I? Where does this leave me in terms of my blog and my media? Thinking about how they intersect and diverge more than before. Certainly thinking about how I can use them effectively and interestingly in teaching. But also realizing the purpose and importance they both have for me. It does not need to be one or the other. There is a sweet spot to be achieved...

Cohen didn't abandon and won't abandon her blog—she's blogging at roughly the same pace in 2009 as she did in 2008, down (but not much) from 2007. I don't think there's much doubt that most of us who don't blog for money are finding a changing mix of social media. In my case, it's still not Twitter—but there's little doubt that things happen on FriendFeed that might otherwise happen on my blog or even in Cites & Insights. The last paragraph of the post is, I think, the key to the future of blogging as one of several social media for those who find essays worth writing:

Maybe I will keep the blog after all. I'd forgotten how cathartic it can be. How refreshing. How sweet.

### *W(h)ither blogging and the library blogosphere?*

That's Meredith Farkas, July 22, 2009 on *Information wants to be free*. As usual, she has worthwhile things to say—and as usual, I'm having trouble excerpting the post. Still, I'll try (but, as usual, I recommend the whole post).

I remember the first OCLC Blog Salon at ALA very fondly. It was like fangirl overload for me... There was such a great energy in the room — most of the people there had just started their blogs in the past year or two and were just discovering the community that the library blogosphere creates. Most of us had no idea when we started our blogs that these individual media would connect us to other like-minded individuals, giving us not only an outlet for our thoughts, but a distributed space in which to converse and (to an extent) socialize.

Just like previous years, there was a blog salon at this ALA Annual, but when I think about the ones I attended in 2005 and 2007, this event seems to pale in comparison. And I feel like it is symbolic of what's happened to blogging in general. And I find that depressing.

Ah, Meredith, you didn't attend ALA Midwinter 2009. *That* was a depressing blog salon—too few people in too big a room. Summer was lighter than

some past years, but I didn't find it depressing. (And I really don't miss the earlier salons held in suites, where you could barely hear anyone...loads of energy, but too much for an old fogey like me.) Still...

Microblogging, what have you done to my beloved medium??? I remember joining Twitter reluctantly (since all my friends were there) more than two years ago and thinking that it was a fad that wouldn't last. I mean, who would want to be online most of the day updating what they're doing and reading about the minutiae of other people's lives? What a time suck! Well, apparently a lot of people did, since Twitter and FriendFeed are wildly successful now. I thought, and still think, that microblogging is great for conferences — as a backchannel and to connect people to one another — but I still can't commit to doing it enough to really feel a part of things. And I never would have guessed back then what a deleterious impact microblogging would have on longer-form blogging. With Twitter (and even more easily in FriendFeed) you can have the sort of discussion one might have in the comments of a blog post, nearly in real time. And it's really cool, because you can feel much closer to the people you're conversing with since the conversation is happening so quickly and in a single space that everyone is on equal footing in. But that time element is also the problem. If a discussion went on during the work day and you find it in the evening, it's yesterday's news by then and there is often no point adding to the conversation...

To me, this is a particular disadvantage of Twitter—if you're not there, you're *really* not there, and it doesn't thread conversations. FriendFeed is tough: You *can* catch up, but sometimes you just have to recognize that the parade's gone by and you missed it. Sometimes, that's a good thing.

I used to spend hours a day on my RSS feeds, reading thoughtful blog posts by really, really smart librarians. Now, I can get through my feeds incredibly quickly since there's rarely anything from the people whose blogs I used to love. It feels to me like microblogging is more about being clever than thoughtful. You're only as good as your last quip, and everyone is trying to write something that's poignant, provocative, and/or funny in the smallest number of words possible... It's not a knock on microblogging, but I don't think it can't replace the longer, more thoughtful posts many of us love to read in the blogosphere.

I don't know that I ever spend *hours* a day, but it's possible. It's certainly the case that there are significantly fewer posts—the universe I'm currently

studying is down 20% from 2008 to 2009, after being down 10% from 2007 to 2008, and there are fewer blogs in that universe. I share the concerns about “microblogging” (and dislike the term, a losing battle though that is).

Microblogging isn't a bad thing though. I think it's brought a lot of people even closer together. I can see it when I go into Friend Feed—the connections my friends have to one another, even though some of them haven't even met in the physical world. And it's given people who never blogged before a way to connect. But I actually feel less connected to my online friends than I used to simply because I don't have the time to be there as much as I'd like... [Farkas, with teaching and a new son, find that life gets in the way of FriendFeed and Twitter.] It's great for the people who can be there a lot, but many can't. And that's something that I never saw in the blogosphere because people could be part of the community when it suited them and wouldn't miss a beat. It was easy to catch up if you were on vacation for a few weeks.

I'm wondering what I'll do after our next serious vacation. I'll certainly catch up with blogs and email. Will I simply ignore FriendFeed other than the most recent day? Probably—and that means I'm simply not part of the community for that time.

It really depresses me when I hear from people that blogging is over and when I see some of my favorite bloggers (who are now FriendFeed and/or Twitter devotees) cut their blogging down significantly to a “wow, I can't believe it's been so long since I've blogged” post every once in a long while. If it weren't for getting pregnant and having a baby, I'd still be posting a lot, so for me, it wasn't microblogging that affected the quantity of posting.

This troubles me as well. Blogging isn't dying, but I do miss posts from some thoughtful people who I believe are busy with Twitter and FriendFeed.

...Maybe this is the way communication is moving and I should just get over it and get on the train. But I really hope that both can exist (and thrive!) side-by-side. I hope people will find a balance between the two. But what I've seen over the past year makes me think that may not be possible and that most people are devoting the majority of their energies to one or the other.

I don't believe it's *most* people. I believe it's a fair number of people.

It's not like everyone has given up blogging or writing thoughtful posts. I still find some great material in my aggregator from some really great library bloggers. Maybe I'm feeling this more be-

cause I haven't added enough newer librarianship-related blogs to my aggregator, blogs from people who are still bursting with enthusiasm about this awesome medium...

She ends by asking for suggestions for newer blogs. There were 39 comments (as usual, almost all comments come in the first few days—in this case, 38 in the first three days, one more a month later). A couple of people commented on the movement of *comments* to FriendFeed. One took my silver-lining view in a slightly different way: "I think di-hard bloggers will still blog and this shakedown probably means that what's left is higher quality." Near the end of the thread, another said much the same thing: "It seems more like a natural process of separating the wheat from the chaff in the blogosphere is playing out right now with worthwhile and regular writers still shining while others without much to say are falling by the wayside." I'd like to believe that's true...

Another commenter notes that she *finds* blog posts through Twitter (and it's clear that FriendFeed points the way to posts). This person wonders whether there's room for new libloggers and speaks of established bloggers "who have staked their claim"; I'd like to think that, particularly given the number of established bloggers who've cut back, there should be *plenty* of room—but I also look at the small number of widely-read liblogs that began in 2008, and I wonder.

Some wondered whether Twitter and FriendFeed are really to blame, or whether there are other reasons for a decline in blogging—and that's almost certainly the case for some people. There's more; as noted, this was a remarkably extensive conversation for a liblog post in 2009. (There were just about as many comments on this post on FriendFeed.)

In addition to lots of comments, this post drew a followup from Rachel Singer Gordon, posted July 25, 2009 at *The liminal librarian* and titled "Meredith is more thoughtful than I." She notes the many comments on Farkas' post and wonders whether that's because Farkas is an "A-list blogger" with "a bajillion readers" or "because she's one of the few people still writing these long, thoughtful blog posts that she misses, and people want to be part of that conversation?" She also notes that her non-library blog gets a lot more comments than *liminal*—and she's not sure whether that's because she

posts more there, because of the topic or because "people who are into that type of blog tend read it directly rather than on Facebook/FriendFeed?" My guess is that "Yes" is a good answer. (The post drew four comments, including mine.)

### *Blogging after all these years*

Michelle McLean posted this at *Connecting librarian* on July 29, 2009, her fourth "blogiversary." She discusses the reasons she blogs, refers to Meredith's and other related posts and offers her own slant. Excerpts:

I've been thinking about blogging for a while now. Even considered stopping altogether, but couldn't bring myself to do it. Although I'm not blogging as regularly, I still feel I have something to say and that this is one of the places I can say it.

Some of the reasons I have been blogging less, are that I am twittering more (most days and for most of the day usually) and I have been more writing away from the online, in the form of conference papers and articles...

I'm feeling less pressure to blog too, probably because of my increased presence on Twitter and Facebook—now I try to blog at least once a month, if not once a fortnight, but only when I have something to say, not just for the sake of it. Maybe I'm finally maturing as a blogger. :)...

Connecting Librarian was intended to be the centre of my online presence, but it's now one of three main locations you will find me. It's now becoming where I do my deeper thinking, whilst Twitter is where I have more of my interactions and conversations and Facebook is mostly just about connections...

...I too miss the depth of content that comes with blogging and I have noticed a marked decrease in the frequency of blog posts arriving in my RSS reader. On the other hand however, I love the immediacy and the contact that micro-blogging brings...

I think that for now, my centre is Twitter—that's where I spend most of my time in terms of an online presence, but I am not giving up my blog. I still have many things to share and this is the ideal forum for that... Be reassured that there will still be blog posts, in the next year, although maybe not as often as I have in the past. I still want to blog though because I am still learning and discovering and find I still want to share all that I do, whilst "connecting new ideas and technologies with library service."

McLean's certainly blogging less than she used to—but those posts are substantive and worth-

while, and six good posts in a quarter is still six good posts.

### *Whither blogging?*

That's the question posed in this August 4, 2009 post by Jim Till at *Be openly accessible or be obscure* (tillje.wordpress.com). Till notes big changes in two OA-related blogs, with Peter Suber curtailing is blogging at *Open access news* and Dorothea Salo "hanging up the keyboard" at *Caveat lector*. Till, who's specifically interested in open access, finds himself searching FriendFeed and Twitter for OA-related items. He too thinks the role of blogs may be evolving "because of Twitter and FriendFeed" and notes Farkas' post (and my comment).

Then he discusses a new OA journal—and the fact that he first heard about it via FriendFeed. "This illustrates the advantage of short-form blogging as a means to disseminate news items." Maybe that's right—although, unless you rely on hashtags, Twitter's a tricky case. If all you want to do is point out a new journal, traditional blogging is probably overkill.

But the post doesn't address the question raised. I don't believe many bloggers are arguing that Twitter and FriendFeed should die or that they can't be useful complements or supplements. But what does that do to blogging itself?

### *A rejoinder to the blog backlash*

Marcus Banks chose to comment on a different aspect of blogging's changing reputation, in this October 5, 2009 post at *Marcus' world*. Which is to say, some people still regard blogging as somehow inferior to *real* writing and suggest that blogging leads to too much sharing.

Among the criticisms of blogs are that they are vessels for meaningless public narcissism...There is copious chaff among the wheat of the blogosphere. But I've felt for years now that a thoughtful, introspective blog post is just as powerful as a well-developed personal essay. What is the difference?

One of my favorite books is *The Art of the Personal Essay*. Edited by Phillip Lopate, the book was published in 1995—well before anyone knew the word "blog"—and contains essays going all the way back to ancient days.... And Michel de Montaigne deservedly gets his own section, as he is the most famous personal essayist who ever lived.

de Montaigne died in 1592. The desire for a public accounting of personal business existed well before the Web... Blogs make the impulse to share easier to achieve, but they didn't create it.

The obvious difference between a blog post and a published essay is that blogs are unvetted by anyone except their authors. Essays must pass both publisher and editorial scrutiny. This means the bar for what counts as a "good" blog should be high. And who's to say what counts as good? That's another problem.

All of these are legitimate questions about blogs, which are still a very new form of writing. But accusing blog platforms of inventing the desire to over-share is spurious...

I'm more sensitive than most, I recognize, because I've now written this blog for close to five years. Some posts are much better than others and most are decent but not great. The best posts I've written been very personal, and this candor has helped others.

Would the writing have been any different if it was printed on paper rather than etched on a screen? I hope not. The writing is what counts, in print or online.

Maybe this isn't appropriate for this section; maybe it belongs in "why we blog." Banks can be very personal in his posts—but also mixes personal and professional in some fascinating ways. His own blog is good evidence for the case he's making, and I believe it to be a strong case.

### *WHY THE HELL AREN'T YOU RESPONDING TO MY BLOG POST*

That's the title, intentionally SHOUTING, of an October 24, 2009 post by Mita Williams at *New jack librarian*. It's partly about commenting (or the lack thereof) and the unpredictability of commenting, and offers Williams' take on why seemingly trivial posts sometimes get more comments than substantive posts, but in giving her take she gets into another area that certainly changes the blogging arena:

We don't need any more information in our lives. For every subject upon which you can throw your attention to, there is so much material available that now you also have to choose which point of view you want to go with it. And we don't need any more entertainment in our lives, either. Most people have a backlog of books to read, movies to watch, TV series to catch up on DVD or PVR, and games that they can't wait to play.

So we really don't need a/nother blog to read.

The 'trivial posts' of the microblogging set, are personal—easy to write, easy to read, and—most importantly—easy to respond to. When strangers meet, they talk about the weather. When you

meet online, you make talk about Kanye or whatever. And over time, you get to know a little bit about each other...

What people need is something that makes them truly happy and that thing is community.

My primary response would be to caution against generalizations. Personally, I *do* get to know people through their blog posts—and I *do* desire thoughtful new perspectives on areas I care about, including points of view I don't necessarily agree with. I hope Williams is wrong—not about the “group hug” nature of much of FriendFeed and Twitter (she's clearly right there), but about the usefulness of less “huggy” media. If she's right, then maybe blogging is dying—and I don't believe that to be the case. (There's only one comment, a 289-word one-paragraph anonymous thing that, although I may agree with much of it, I'd have to class as a rant.)

## Other Voices: How Individual Blogs Change

To get more of a sense of how blogging may be changing or declining, let's look at a few posts from a mix of liblogs that seem to have changed recently—or gone into a state of temporary decline. (I'm omitting blogs that have disappeared for long periods; we'll deal with those a bit later.)

### *Don't just blog there—say something*

That's David Fulton in a May 17, 2009 post at *Daveman's blog*, formerly *Daveman's tech tips*.

The first rule of blogging is “have something to say.” For the last two and a half months, I've been thinking about what to say and I've concluded that the purpose of this blog has changed.

Before I started my new job as site manager at Polaris Library Systems, I tried to blog whenever I ran across something that I thought would be useful or interesting to my readers. To find these tidbits, I spent at least half an hour each day doing current awareness activities; reading blogs, newsletters, RSS feeds, listservs, websites, etc. Things move fast in library technology and I felt it was critical to keep up as best I could.

The first two weeks at Polaris were overwhelming.... [Work details omitted.] For those first two weeks at Polaris, I didn't do my current awareness at all. Partly, I didn't need it for what I was doing and, after working intensively with a computer all day, I just couldn't face one in the evening. As my comfort level with the job has increased, I've

gradually been reading my information resources more frequently. But I don't think I'm going to rely on them as a source for my blog posts.

In the past, I found things to blog about as a result of my current awareness activities. Since that's not a big part of my current job, I'm not running into them anymore. So the blog will change. Future postings will not be as frequent as they used to be and will cover other things that I'm interested in, such as folk music, acoustic guitars, books and who knows what else. I think so now, anyway.

This blog had declined substantially—from 27 posts in March-May 2007, to 14 in 2008...to two in 2009, albeit two essays rather than 14 or 27 fairly short posts. In this case, Fulton recognized what was happening, changed focus and changed the blog's name. He's still not posting a lot, but when he does post, he has something to say (even if it's less likely to be library-related).

### *A new flight*

That was the title of Nicole S. Dettmar's *first* post at *Eagle Dawg Blog* in March 2008. At the time, she had this to say:

The intended purpose of this blog is to be my starting point for the Web 2.0 101 continuing education class for the Medical Library Association, but who knows what direction the field or my studies may take me from here.

I've been blogging off and on since 1996 or so... When I first heard the term 'blog' back in those ancient days, I thought it meant a backup log of activity on web servers so I did not consider myself a blogger. I still don't think of myself as a 'real' blogger because, for the time being, I don't have practical deep and profound brain things inside my head about the medical library profession since I'm not actually in it yet. I'm full of theory as any new graduate who is considered young by our profession's standards should be, but old enough to keep quiet and observe for now without expounding in public.

Welcome aboard for the ride!

Most “class blogs” die. Some don't. Dettmar, who is now definitely part of the field, has turned this into a solid post on medical library and other topics, averaging ten posts a month this year. She writes with style and clearly adds a worthwhile new voice in a category that doesn't lack for strong personal voices.

### *Losing librarianship?*

One way blogs change is when the blogger's life changes in substantive ways—a new job, a new as-



signment, a new child, a new whatever. Steve Ob-  
erg's been doing *Family man librarian* since 2002,  
and it's always been as much about family life as it  
was about libraries and technology. But in Septem-  
ber 2008, he changed positions within a corporate  
library—and on December 28 posted this:

Since my job change at the end of September, I've  
noticed that my professional interests and reading  
habits have shifted quite a bit. In particular I've no-  
ticed that most of the library blogs to which I've sub-  
scribed don't seem as relevant any more. Consequen-  
tly I've unsubscribed from most of them. I wonder, am I losing librarianship? I'm proud to be  
a librarian, don't get me wrong. And I'm not exactly  
thrilled about all aspects of corporate life and the sil-  
ly pap that I sometimes need to consume as part of  
that. But I do really like my new, expanded role fo-  
cusing on search and taxonomy, with the opportuni-  
ties for learning new things and expanding my  
horizons. As part of that I'm looking around for oth-  
er sources of information in the blogosphere and  
elsewhere that will help me keep well informed and  
current, and I don't have as much time for keeping  
up-to-date with purely library-related things.

That's the whole post. Activity on the blog  
dropped sharply—from 42 posts in March-May  
2007 and 75 (!) in March-May 2008 to seven in  
March-May 2009. In September 2009 he noted  
that his group is leaving the corporate library en-  
tirely, moving to another part of the corporation.  
Effectively, this blog is no longer a liblog.

*Here we go! SKJ4ALA is launched*

This one's interesting: A distinct change in an estab-  
lished blog—and one that may or may not be tem-  
porary. Sara Kelly Johns has had *From the inside out*  
since January 2006, with relatively infrequent posts  
about professional associations and school libra-  
rianship. But with this post on October 2, 2009, the  
blog gained a new tagline—"Blog for SKJ4ALA  
campaign"—and a distinctly new purpose.

Well, it's public now. I am running for ALA presi-  
dent, an opportunity to represent all libraries, li-  
brarians, library workers and trustees, using the  
resources and tools of ALA to have a *loud* voice.

*School Library Journal* published an announce-  
ment yesterday and I am going to be busy here in  
DC at their Leadership Summit, but I will love to  
hear from people with their ideas for what ALA  
can do for them, how it can make a difference. I  
know ALA can.

Thanks to my son Ryan for the new picture! My  
baby website is up but more will be added to it

soon. I am hoping that between the blog and the  
website, I will hear from a lot of people with ideas  
and concerns.

Stay tuned.

Some successful ALA presidential candidates have  
launched blogs that ceased at the end of their  
presidential or past-presidential year. Some have  
shifted their blogs into campaign mode and, if  
successful, coverage of their years in office (ALA  
president is a *big* job—a later post notes that, if  
she wins, she'll retire). Frankly, I can't imagine a  
liblogger running for ALA president and *not* con-  
verting the blog into primarily a campaign vehicle.

### *All change*

Sometimes a change is terse and maybe a little  
mysterious, such as this July 12, 2009 post in *Ian  
Snowley's library management blog*:

I'm modifying this blog, to reflect some changing  
professional interests. So 'regular readers' please  
bear with me whilst I make the changes and try to  
work out a design that will accommodate the infor-  
mation I want to share.

That's it—and, so far, other than one other post on  
the same day, we're still bearing with him.

That's just a sampling. There are many reasons  
for change, some of which never turn up as posts.

*[Omitted: 6 blog profiles]*

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## 11. Stopping and Pausing

Why does a blogger pause (which I'll define as not  
blogging for at least four months) or stop alto-  
gether? I'm certain the most common reason is  
premature blogging, that is, starting a blog before  
you really know whether you have much to say. I  
suspect other reasons are all over the map, with  
the second largest probably running out of steam  
or losing interest (or, these days, finding that say-  
ing what you have to say is easier and faster on  
Twitter, FaceBook or FriendFeed).

A fair number of libloggers stopped between  
mid-2007 and mid-2008, or at least paused for so  
long that they don't have any posts—13% of those  
with enough impact to make it into *But Still They  
Blog* and probably more than that among the broad-  
er liblog population. Some returned; many didn't.

What follows is a sampling of posts on why  
people have stopped or paused blogging—or, in  
some cases, the fateful final posts that don't appear

intended to be final. Included are some “haven’t been blogging *much* lately” posts.

### *Info Career Trends on indefinite hiatus*

That appeared May 4, 2009 on *Info career trends*, a blog-based newsletter. Excerpts:

**Important announcement:** After the May 2009 issue, *Info Career Trends* will be going on hiatus indefinitely.

#### **But why, Rachel?**

After putting out bimonthly issues for nearly 9 years, it’s time for a break. I’m finding it harder to balance labors of love like *ICT* with family and with paid projects, and need to refocus some of my energies. Read Greg Schwartz’ post on priorities about putting his *Uncontrolled Vocabulary* podcast on a similar hiatus; he pretty much says it for me as well...

Rachel Singer Gordon keeps the site and, thus, the archives alive and, for a couple of columns, made sure there were ways to keep getting them. The balance is difficult, particularly for ambitious projects such as *Info career trends* (and *Cites & Insights*, for that matter).

### *the blog is quiet*

Richard Akerman posted this on June 28, 2009 at *Science Library Pad*—and it’s not about ending, but about an extended slow period.

- The blog is quiet for a number of reasons, including
- \* I have moved to using Twitter (@scilib) and FriendFeed a lot more for sharing information
  - \* I have a new iPhone and as I discussed in my Twitter modes posting, short-posting services like Twitter are a more natural match for using on mobile devices...
  - \* Reason I can’t tell you which will be announced soon

...I recognize that Twitter is a much noisier information channel, full of half-formed thoughts, asides and insider person-to-person conversations. The blog is still the best platform for long-form thoughts.

“Quiet” is not gone (Akerman had *more* posts in March-May 2009 than March-May 2008), but “gone Twittering/FriendFeeding” is clear enough. As of November 4, 2009, there’s only been one (quite substantial) post since this one, in late August—after a fairly steady stream through mid-June.

### *Blogger’s Block*

Janie Hermann posted this on June 28, 2009 at *Library garden*—a group blog on which she went quiet for a couple of months. Excerpts:

For the last few months I have been suffering from a writer’s block of sorts that has made it impossible for me to write a blog post of any length or substance. I have done other writing, just no blogging so it is a true blogger’s block. This has never happened to me before and I have spent the last few weeks honestly trying to figure out the cause is behind this blockage.

It is not a lack of ideas. I have lots of ideas for posts, they come to me at odd moments and usually when I am nowhere near a computer (or even a piece of paper and pen to jot down a quick outline). Lately, however, when I finally sit down to write a post one of three things seems to happen:

1. I start writing and suddenly I feel as if it has already been said before. What seemed like a brilliant blog post when I thought of it, now feels like it is just rehashing the same conversations that we have been having on libraryland blogs for the last few years...
2. I start writing on a timely topic but I don’t have time to finish and by the time I go back to polish it off it is no longer relevant or timely...
3. I start writing and feel like I am writing too much about MPOW and all the awesome things we do here. This is not the intended focus of Library Garden...

There’s more to Hermann’s post—she describes several pieces of advice on breaking writer’s block and uses them as the basis for a good solid post. (She’s been back since.) I’m including this partly because I believe she includes three reasons some blogs disappear: Some people *do* run out of bloggable ideas, some find that their own focus is no longer the blog’s focus—and some people feel, rightly or wrongly, that it’s all been said before.

### *Catching up*

That’s Steve Lawson in a July 3, 2009 post at *See also...* Portions:

So. I haven’t been around here much lately. I’m not sure if you noticed. I’d understand if you didn’t. The whole “blog” thing has seemed a bit underwhelming lately, no? *Caveat Lector* is dead and I’m not feeling so hot myself. Or something.

One of the reasons I haven’t written much here in the past few months is that I have been working on writing a book... The ego boost from having someone say “would you like to write a book?” doesn’t quite make up for the months of inertia, self-doubt, and ever-growing dread as the sound of the deadlines wooshing by starts to drown out the Muse of Library Science whispering in my ear.

I have also been busy fighting off depression. I have been prone to mood swings and so on since I was an adolescent, and the blues have been getting harder for me to shake...

You may be asking yourself (as, indeed, I am asking myself) “why is he telling us this?” And I’m not sure. I don’t think I have ever deleted a post after publishing it, and this could be the first.

But I guess I’m trying to say that even though I have neglected this blog (along with many other things) I’m not quite ready to give up on it. I have things I want to write, some about libraries, some about other things. So this blog may be a bit more personal or a bit more random. I sort of miss the days before Twitter and FriendFeed where blogging and commenting was the primary way to communicate publicly on the web.

And I hope that the things that have kept me away from blogging are turning around...

Writing a book is a *great* reason (reason, not excuse!) for a “blogcation”—and unless you’re blogging about the blues, it’s hard (and maybe inadvisable) to blog too much when you’re down. But also note the penultimate paragraph—Lawson, who uses FriendFeed as effectively as anybody I know, sees something missing there as well. I think.

If you don’t read *See also...* (why wouldn’t you?), Lawson’s back with reasonably frequent and usually thought-provoking posts.

### *Well hello, blog*

Frankly, I was never aware that Iris Jastram hadn’t been blogging as much in June 2009, but that’s what she says in this July 3, 2009 *Pegasus librarian* post.

Popping over here...brought me up against a sobering realization, though: I posted once last month. *Once*. And that was a post I’d outlined weeks ahead of time. I’ve had dry spells before, but never like this.

It crossed my mind that maybe I should just put this thing out of its misery, but I don’t think I’m ready to follow in CavLec’s footsteps yet. So here I am again, and here’s a bit of what I’ve been up to since last I thought much about blogging...

[Summarizing; Busy spring term. Two family marriages and a graduation in one month. And...]

Then I took two weeks off of work to do as much of Nothing At All as I could. In case you missed it, that was TWO WHOLE WEEKS off. In a row. Bliss. During that time, I became a big fan of sitting on the porch with a book, a laptop, and some iced tea....

It’s been a weird few months in which many individual good things happened but the whole felt kind of awful. I was tired. I am tired. But I think things are starting to turn around. And while I’m not sure how frequently I’ll post or what I’ll write about, it’s nice to see this space sitting here and waiting for me.

It’s true that Jastram had only one post in June, and substantially fewer in March-May 2009 than in previous springs. “Life happens”: The only reason you need for a pause in blogging. And in this case it was definitely a pause—the blog’s been back to a healthy pace of worthwhile posts beginning in July 2009 and continuing ever since.

### *My year long blogcation*

Andrew Whitis posted this on July 6, 2009 at *library+instruction+technology*. Excerpts:

For the record, I am not dead. I have been on a blogcation...or maybe that is a blog-sabbatical...or maybe life just got busy and my use of alternate communication channels increased.

I’ve read a couple of posts over the last few days from other librarians feeling guilty about not tending to their blog as they would like. I didn’t intentionally plan on taking a year off. Like most of you, a lot of my communication has dispersed into various social media streams. You know the obvious culprits...Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, FriendFeed, Flickr, and del.icio.us. I did consider abandoning this blog, until I noticed that my site visit stats show that people are still tripping across content. The stats indicate that people are mostly “reading” the posts written about conference sessions. I guess I will keep the blog up for awhile and see if I can get into another posting groove (if only to buck the dead and dying blog trend that not many people are blogging about but lamenting on those other social channels).

In case you are curious, here is what I did during my year long blogcation...

Quick summary: Job interview; ALA Annual; big work project; award; *successful* job interview and new position as a library director at a new institution; sold a house and moved to the new position *with no downtime*; accepted into a mentoring program; applied for a team workshop; purchased a house; rebuilt the new library’s website; Midwinter; and more projects and conferences...in other words, a *very* busy year.

I really do plan on getting back into writing mode. There is a lot more I would like to write about the

Learning Spaces & Technology workshop and my experiences from our learning commons project.

Since then? Two posts in July 2009, nothing since. Not clearly “the curse of the **I’m Back** post,” but we shall see...

### *It’s like talking to the wall*

Mark Lindner on July 13, 2009 at *habitually probing generalist*.

Seems I don’t have much to say anymore. We’ve all read of the death of blogging. The move to Friendfeed and Twitter. XYZ.

None of those are entirely true. I have plenty to say and a fair bit to talk about...But there are other things that I have chosen to give my time to.

Summary: Big work projects—and a renewed position. Big life changes. Personal honors.

There are going to be a few changes around here soon. Does that mean I may finally start posting again? I can’t really say...

...I like having this space in case I do want to share and get around to doing so. It’s nice to know it is here waiting on me.

Perhaps I should note that the July 13 post was on *Off the Mark*; Lindner changed the name (again) a bit later, and explained why. (He swapped tagline and name.) The blog’s still not enormously active, but Lindner *does* have things to say; he’ll return.

### *library (mon)day in the life.*

This July 27, 2009 post by char booth at *informational* is a “day in the life” post but includes booth’s thoughts about a decline in posting:

After reading Meridith Farkas’ excellent post (*see above*) on the the blogging/tweeting thoughtfulness v. frequency relationship, I was motivated to reflect for a bit on my own recent blog/microblog habits. I have begun to engage more regularly with Twitter (@charbooth) and find that it leads people to my blog posts via alternate routes, and I definitely ascribe to the notion that the relative ease/timeliness of microblogging reduces the amount of insubstantial blog posting I do by taking care of the quick/dirty job of sharing instathoughts/quips/finds. I appreciate the format-based separation it seems to be creating between lengthier and shorter reflection in professional discourse, and I also find that (particularly in the case of trending) Twitter generates a short/long-form feedback loop that is strangely satisfying to follow. Last but not least, Twitter finally achieves what I always wanted my various feed readers, etc. to, of floating interesting items I do and don’t already follow to the top of the library blog morass

in real time. While I might blog only slightly less because of tweeting, I’m absolutely following the conversation more. For me, all of the above are examples of the “balance” Meridith hopes will develop between these media.

The real reason I post to info-mational less often these days because a) I’m writing so ferociously on other projects, and b) it’s that summer zombie (as in half-dead) zone in academic libraries where so much and so little always seems to be happening at the same time...

No further comment needed.

### *Twittermonster*

So is Twitter the great blog killer? For some people, probably—such as Tara Murray, who posted this on July 29, 2009 at *DIY Librarian*:

Six months ago, I tentatively signed up for a Twitter account and started posting a few things. I figured I’d use it occasionally during conferences but that would be it.

Well. This blog has been silent for nearly two months, and I think Twitter is at least partly to blame. I keeping posting to Twitter about things I’d like to write blog posts about later...and then I just never seem to get to the blog posts. I’m also not reading as many other blogs—but I am reading a lot of librarians’ posts on Facebook and Twitter.

Rather than get all apologetic, I decided to add a Twitter widget to my blog sidebar. I do intend to continue writing somewhat longer commentary on this blog, but the reality is that most of my current chatter is on Twitter—so please do follow me there.

That post would *almost* fit on Facebook, but not quite. (Personally, I *hate* Twitter widgets because I dislike *any* moving elements on a text page—but aggregators remove that aggravation.) Murray’s still blogging now and then—and none of the posts are chatter.

### *A return to blogging?*

From 75 in 2007 to 25 in 2008 to 0 in 2009: Those are the March-May post figures for Jennifer Macaulay’s *Life as I know it*. This August 1, 2009 post explains why (omitting some detail):

Over the past year, blogging has been a nonexistent priority in my life. The major reason for this is that school wiped me out—sapped me of almost everything that I had to give. Working as a systems librarian full-time and attending library school meant that almost every waking thought that I had was about libraries... Once I finished my schooling and realized that I needed some space, I started looking for ways to take more time

for me. Given the amount of time and effort that blogging takes, I decided to let it go. And you know, it did help.

Oddly enough, I have missed blogging—quite a bit. I can't say that I am surprised by this fact. This was always a place where I worked through my own thoughts about library-related issues. When blogging, I found that I paid more attention to things that were happening in the library world. I thought about them more consciously—and I admit that I cared about them more. Since allowing myself to take a break, I have noticed that I pay less attention to things that are happening in the wider library sphere. I am much more narrowly focused in scope. This isn't bad. It was probably a good thing. I think that I needed to narrow my focus in order to make it through the past year...

I believe that things have leveled out a bit (or I have just become used to how things now are). I'm starting to care more about what is going on in the greater library world. So will I return to blogging? I hope so. I have been thinking about it for the past six months...

Macaulay didn't *promise* to return—and apparently needed a few more months (as of November 4, 2009, this is the most recent post).

#### *brief break from blogging because*

Chrystie Hill's *Libraries build communities* blog is primarily an adjunct to her book—but even topical blogs and bloggers sometimes need breaks, as this August 4, 2009 post notes:

I'm on a brief break from blogging because I just had a wedding and have yet to find my way back to normal life where one reads, writes, blogs, and generally keeps up with colleagues in library land. It has even been hard keeping up with my day job, but oh so glorious to be spending big chunks of energy on the personal (and not the work). My mom tells me that you get to be a bride for a year (really? how weird!), but I don't suppose I'll be gone that long...I agree with Meredith that when we're not here, I miss us.

I'm going to spend the next few weeks dusting off and clearing out my reader in preparation for some kind of comeback...

She's back, sort of, primarily posting reviews of the new book. Doesn't getting married earn you a few months' devotion to something more important than blogging? I'd certainly think so.

#### *the interior*

This one's particularly interesting because it's on a *supplemental* blog, *explodedlibrary bunker*, which

you'd expect to go quiet for months at a time (as it does). Morgan Wilson muses about flying across Australia over the outback, which is much emptier than America's interior.

I want to make it clear, that the interior of Australia seemed emptier is not a bad thing. Actually, seeing all that emptiness was a profound experience. I wouldn't want it to be any different.

It's been almost 3 months since I met L and my life changed. Sad to say, my blogging and writing has been one of the things which has suffered during this time. But I will not blame that on L, there have been other reasons for this. But in general I only have time for so many big things in my life, it's basically a trinity. Before I didn't have a relationship, so my life basically consisted of work, recreation and blogging. Now things are closer to this: work, relationship, recreation.

It will be interesting during this month when L is away travelling in the USA and Europe. It is an opportunity to reset things, get back into the habit of blogging, so that when she returns, I'll continue blogging—which will probably mean less gaming, which is ok.

I should ask myself why this happened. Blogging is more work than reading or playing computer games, but it's not as draining as work, and I do feel good about it afterwards. I should remember this. Then there have been other disruptive things, such as moving house and different role at work, which have made it difficult for me to blog lately.

One of the characteristics of my blogging is that is that it is prone to prolonged droughts. That said, every so often the conditions are right and I do blog more actively. I am reminded of the dry riverbeds I saw on my flight over central Australia. Most of the time they look quite dead, but when there's rain, they are full of life.

That last paragraph says a lot about the ongoing health of liblogs, in a time of apparent decline. Some people—*most* of those who've maintained liblogs for any length of time—do have things to say that make sense to say in blog form, and while the rivers can run dry, they *do* come back to life.

(For the record: There have been a *lot* of posts since then on this auxiliary blog, nearly two dozen, most of them conference reports. The main blog's still on the quiet side.)

#### *Auf Wiedersehen, Adieu!*

Eva, the "bigeneration librarian," posted this on October 15, 2008:

So here's the scuttlebutt:

I love this blog and writing it has been an amazing experience! But as my lack of posting in the last month and a half points out, my current pursuit of other projects leaves me little time to focus on this blog. So I have decided to give it a rest for a while. I can't say whether I will come back to it at some time in the future, but I will not rule it out:)

So it's pip-pip-cheerio for now, and thank you all for reading!

When life and work get in the way, you can take an unannounced pause—or you can let people know that you may never be back.

*Time for a change...The Brewin' Librarian's blog is officially closing up shop.*

That's Matt Hamiton on October 3, 2009 at *The brewin' librarian*, and the title almost says it all.

I've been thinking about this for a while, and I've decided it's time to officially close up shop on this particular blog. I've had some personal challenges in my life for the last 6 months that have kept me busy when not working and I've neglected to continue to post. More importantly, I feel that I'm in a much different place in my career and in the library world now than when I started this blog and it's time to acknowledge that shift. I feel like it's almost not fair to those who've subscribed and/or linked to this blog to pretend as if this is a viable project for me still.

However, instead of no longer writing I do in fact plan to begin writing more very soon. So look for a new project to be revealed in the coming weeks that reflects a new perspective and purpose. It may be a team blog, it may take a different form altogether...

There was an earlier post that discussed life changes that had *interfered* with blogging; this post put a formal end to this blog.

*Posts moved*

*Wireless libraries*, a topical blog on WLANs, may have outlived its usefulness, and on February 11, 2009, Bill Drew moved all the posts over to his primary blog (*BabyBoomer librarian*) and left a placeholder to prevent the blogspot name from being used by someone else.

*Virtual libraries interact update*

The final post at *virtual libraries interact* appeared December 30, 2008.

Long time readers of our blog will remember that we started the Virtual Libraries Interact blog back in late 2006 as a sister site to our blog.

Unfortunately due to a number of reasons the Virtual Libraries Interact blog has been languishing for a while and no new posts have been added.

It with some regret, and a tinge of sadness, that we have decided to merge the Virtual Libraries Interact blog into the main blog. Do not worry, all of the content has been imported into the Libraries Interact blog.

*Soaked up and squeezed out*

Mark Rabnett went missing for a year at *Shelved in the W's*—and the returning post, on June 1, 2009, noted his reasons (family illness, new job), noted his return to writing—and decided it was time to change blogs. The shift was apparently just the tonic needed, as the new blog (*Gossypiboma*) has seen a *bunch* of substantive, essay-length posts.

*I am still alive! (Final blog post)*

Jill Stover signed off on October 22, 2008 with this post at *Library marketing – Thinking outside the book*. She'd been missing since February 2008—new job, wedding, more—and eventually came to a realization:

While on my little 'break,' I realized that I couldn't devote the kind of time I need to make this blog good while also giving my best effort to my home and work lives. In the quest for work-life balance, this blog and some related projects had to give. Ultimately, I think this blog served the purpose I had in mind for it. I was able to share some of the things I learned about marketing so that it might help others make their libraries a bit better. The content that is here is still useful, I think...

*Permanent hiatus*

Short and to the point (you're not *required* to tell people why you're shutting down), from Teri Vogel on *SD Librarian*—the first post since December 31, 2007 and the last post (June 12, 2008):

This blog is no longer being updated. Feel free to unsubscribe from the RSS feed.

*reinvention*

"I'm back!" posts can be iffy things. *digital.brarian*, formerly 'Brary web diva, went quiet from September 6, 2008 to January 6, 2009 and again from then until this post appeared on July 8, 2009:

Hello subscribers,

I know it's been a while since I last posted anything significant, but my time and energy was focused on my MLIS.

You may have noticed the name of this blog has changed. (formerly 'Brary Web Diva)

I left the URLs and feeds unchanged so as not to break a lot of other weblinks about the various posts.

I plan to do some conference blogging while at ALA, wifi permitting.

Of course, it's only been four months...this may be another pause, not an ending.

### *del.icio.us and general update*

Most of this August 9, 2008 post at *omg tuna is kewl* is about *delicious* and libraries—but it leads off with this fateful paragraph:

[For those of you who have been waiting with bated breath for my next post, as an FYI, I turned all Luddite and canceled my home internet access. That means I only have my phone for home web access, meaning I won't be typing lengthy posts very much anymore. Since I've been feeling like I have very little to say anyway—writing burnout, I think—I dare say you aren't missing much.]

## When It's Over, It's Over

Sometimes blogs end because the end was planned from the beginning. So, for example, *101 tips for school librarians* (101tips.wordpress.com) posted #101 on April 18, 2008. The project was done, and the blog has remained as a resource.

Alternatively, the venue may change. Beth Galaway's May 18, 2008 post at *Game on: Gaming in libraries* announced that she'd been invited to blog for ALA, and apparently the other contributors to this group blog chose not to carry on. (The ALA blog has since gone dark, at least at the URL provided.)

*LibraryChange* was an adjunct to *Library 2.0: A guide to participatory library services*—and the supplemental information apparently wasn't needed after April 2007.

In the case of *Library 2.0: an academic's perspective*, the blogger (Laura B. Cohen) retired and so did the blog. It began as an experiment; it ended (but remains available as content).

"jess" at *Library Talk* posted "So..." on November 2, 2007, noting that the blog—planned as "a community place for 'library talk'"—never came together as hoped. Given this person's *eight* other blogs, this one went quiet, presumably permanently.

*Library Zen* by Garrett Hungerford was always primarily an adjunct to his LISZEN searchable repository of library-related blogs. The October 26, 2007 post announced a new LISZEN design, and nothing more has apparently been needed since.

*Second Life Research Journal* concluded on July 5, 2008 with "Talking, looking, flying, searching," when Margaret Ostrander—who began the blog as part of a library grad school research project—noted the conclusion of the project.

## Some Disappear

There's no reason a blogger *must* tell you they're shutting down temporarily or permanently; in fact, I've tended to prefer *not* announcing lapses (unless there's a specific reason to). So, for example:

- The most recent post at *booktruck.org* appeared January 17, 2008 and offered a brief note and pointer on an article of interest.
- *washtublibrarian's* last post, on March 9, 2008, discussed the blogger's new volunteer work as part of the Project Gutenberg "Distributed Proofreaders" team.
- Christie Brandau recognized that she wasn't blogging much. The final post (to date) on *Travels with the state librarian*—and the only post after January 22, 2008—appeared December 16, 2008 with the title "The yearly post :)" and this text: "I apologize for my posting gaps to any who follow this blog!"
- After a final conference report in June 2007, *Texadata's* complete set of 2008 posts (all the first full week of March 2008) consisted of...four recipes.
- *Slow library* was a group blog with an interesting premise—but after what appeared to be a solid start in November 2006, it simply *stopped* with a September 18, 2007 post, a review of my book *Balanced Libraries*.
- *Christopher Kupec's* weblog shows a brief item on "Overdrive for Mac," dated December 26, 2008, as its most recent post.
- Josh Boyer discussed "revealing libraries"—live streams of library research transactions, if you could deal with privacy issues—in a December 17, 2008 post at *The horseless library*: The first post since August 2008, the last one as of November 5, 2009.
- The February 28, 2008 post on *Data obsessed* discussed a *Slate* piece on public libraries. Nothing since.
- September 26, 2007, *InfoPill*: A post on "push and pull." 25 months and counting...

## Conclusion?

Blogs conclude, sometimes quietly, sometimes for stated reasons, sometimes because there's no longer the specific need.

For most people who've started liblogs, kept them going for at least six months to a year, and found enough readers and links to attain a moderate Google Page Rank, however, the final word is the title of this book: *But Still They Blog*.

[Omitted: 82 blog profiles]

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## For the Rest of the Story

Want the blog profiles and graphs in larger, more readable form? Buy the book: *But Still They Blog: The Liblog Landscape 2007-2009*. You'll find it at <http://www.lulu.com/product/paperback/but-still-they-blog/6145754> (or browse through <http://stores.lulu.com/waltcrawford>). You can purchase it as a 323-page 6x9 paperback or as a PDF download.

Also omitted in this version: Percentage columns in many tables and post-count columns in other tables—always to make the tables fit in the narrower C&I column. A few words have been omitted here and there, and a whole section of one chapter (which originally appeared in C&I June 2009) was removed.

Unfortunately, I had to reduce the type size for two complex tables to a size that may be difficult to read. I couldn't see any other way to handle these tables; the originals, in the book, are far more readable.

Because this issue has only one essay and because that essay includes graphs and a huge number of tables, I am not making an HTML version available. HTML versions of (most) essays will return in the next issue.

### Why Now? Why Here?

There are three reasons why I'm publishing about half of the book (the half that isn't blog profiles) in *Cites & Insights*:

- The book hasn't sold well and the trickle of sales seems to have stopped entirely. As of August 16, 2010, there have been no sales since June and fewer than 20 sales altogether. This is the most comprehensive analysis I've done, and I think it deserves to be seen by a few thousand people, not 20. I'm hoping that publication here will reach a much wider audience.
- At this writing, I'm working on two projects. One is a book that will *not* be on Lulu—it

will be published by ALA Editions. (It's a reasonably brief Special Report, currently entitled *Open Access: What You Need to Know Now*. Look for it in 2011.) That's getting the bulk of my energy. The other, I mention below. I've been taking a break from C&I essay writing while waiting to see whether sponsorship comes through and whether there's much evidence of continuing interest in the ejournal. This issue gives me another month or two to determine where things go from here. (The November 2010 issue will complete a decade, since the first C&I appeared in December 2000. There will definitely be a November 2010 issue.)

- The second project continues the "liblog landscape" series with a difference: I'm looking to cover as much of the English-language liblog landscape as I can discover, but without individual profiles. It's a quest that makes no financial sense (unless something happens), but one that's proving to be interesting. That project is taking whatever time and energy isn't going to the ALA Editions book or to other aspects of being [semi-]retired. Right now, it includes 1,137 blogs, and I'm nearly certain it will get bigger...

I'll probably reduce the prices on *But Still They Blog* and possibly *The Liblog Landscape* in a final effort to get more copies into the hands of readers. Incidentally, the PDF version should work beautifully on a Kindle DX or an iPad, given the 6x9 page size—it should come out "full size." If I do reduce the prices, the price reduction will be announced in *Walt at Random*.

### What Follows

Because all but the last few paragraphs ("For the rest of the story" on) comes directly from the Word document for *But Still They Blog: The Liblog Landscape 2007-2009*, and because I used Word's indexing tools to produce the index for that book (in most cases using the "index all" feature), it was trivial to produce an index of blog names and people names in this issue.

A quick query in FriendFeed's LSW room showed a general sense that including this index would be a Good Thing. So here it is, starting on the next page.



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# Masthead

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