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The Front

About The [Nearly Complete] OA Landscape 2011-2014

Pardon the awkward title. This essay replaces my earlier status updates regarding the “rest of” project and its outcome—that is, the process of going through 4,218 journals in the *Directory of Open Access Journals* (DOAJ) as of early June 2015 that didn’t match up to titles already studied for the *Library Technology Reports* report and graded A-D.

Here’s what I said on *Walt at Random* on July 26, 2015—think of it as the tl;dr version of what follows.

The Post

This note replaces my earlier discussions of what might/might not happen in terms of completing the scan (of those DOAJ listings not included in the earlier study) and its outcome. A much longer version will (probably) appear in the August/September 2015 *Cites & Insights* (if there is one), but this one has the gist.

The Obvious

- Nobody forced me to take on the extra 4,200 journals or promised any funding. It’s my own idea, and it’s interesting enough that I’ve watched almost no old movies and written nothing for *C&I* while doing it.
- Obviously, I’ll finish the scan. (About 918 left to go—but I’ll revisit 300-400 “not able to analyze fully” cases, so call it 1,300.)
- Obviously, I won’t entirely hide the results unless people pay for it.

The Plan

- I will prepare a detailed analysis of the results—a very-nearly-entirely-complete view of *The Open Access Landscape 2011-2014*. It will be a 6×9” paperback involving some new ways of

looking at the data that may provide better insights, along with the methods I’ve used so far.

- A shorter and simpler version of the analysis—lacking any graphs—will probably make up most or all of the October 2015 (or October/November 2015, or if I’m really feeling burned out the Fall 2015) issue of *Cites & Insights*, probably out in mid to late September, possibly not until October (the same time the book appears, since the issue will be derived from the book).
- The book will be available in PDF ebook and paperback print forms.

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The Deadline and Terms

- From now through September 1, 2015, a \$50 (or more) donation to [Cites and Insights](#) (the Paypal link is on the home page) will yield three perquisites:
 1. A link to the PDF ebook for the Interim Open Access Landscape Subject Approach, with working hotlinks for chapters, tables and graphs.
 2. A link to a special Lulu page where you can buy the paperback version of the same book (186 p., 6×9”) for \$7 plus shipping.
 3. Most importantly, once the book is ready, a link to an **exclusive** PDF ebook version with working hotlinks for chapters, tables and graphs.
- After September 1, 2015, this offer is void.
- When the full book is available, the PDF ebook version (without working hotlinks) will be at least \$55; the paperback (probably around 250 pages) will be at least \$60.

The Unknown

What about the dataset itself, which will certainly include full details for more than 9,000 journals in DOAJ as of early June 2015, and is likely to include 9,500 or more journals?

If donations and sales warrant, or if somebody can make a convincing case, an anonymized version will be posted to Figshare.

Otherwise, not.

(In practice, while the Figshare version of the partial dataset has been viewed more than 300 times, I've seen no indication that anybody has credited it in any further work—or that it's actually been used by anybody, with the possible exception of DOAJ itself, which asked for and received a special version.)

As for a five-year overview (2011-2015):

- I'd love to do it, if there's strong indication that it will be worthwhile.
- It would be reasonably "easy," as I'd "just" have to recheck journals for APC changes, add journals added in 2015, and revisit journals to pick up 2015 article counts. Best guess is that I could finish it by the end of March 2016, assuming that I picked up a DOAJ list in early January 2016.
- As always, I'm open to proposals: waltcrawford@gmail.com

Revisions

Before going on to some background, a couple of revisions to that post—not because it was in error but because time has passed.

- I've completed "pass one" of the study, yielding 9,711 journals that I could fully analyze, publishing 506,392 articles in 2014. (There's one bottom line: there were *at least* half a million articles in gold OA journals in 2014. That number is low.)
- I've set aside that project while I do this odd issue of *Cites & Insights*. When I come back to it, I'll revisit some or all of 97 journals where Google translate didn't yield text that allowed me to analyze the journal, 221 cases where the journal's archive was too "opaque" for me to count articles without spending an inordinate amount of time, and 242 cases where the journal appeared to be unavailable or just didn't work. I'm guessing that effort will yield 20 or 30 more fully-analyzed journals—possibly fewer, possibly more.
- Deadlines, etc., haven't changed.

The Background

After preparing *The State of Open Access Journals: Idealism and Opportunism* for *Library Technology Reports*, I updated the 6,490 journal records for that study to

include *all* 2014 articles (the *LTR* report only included January-June 2014), but also simplified and modified the grading scheme.

Curiosity got the better of me: I wondered whether Chrome's translation capability (Google-powered) would allow me to analyze some of the more than 2,000 journals I'd skipped because they didn't show English as one option.

DOAJ has also grown since May 2014 (it may shrink over the next year as the new listing rules are enforced—or it may not). I downloaded the .csv data as of June 8, 2015, which included 10,611 rows of journal information. I looked at possible duplicates in that dataset, adding disambiguation where the same title appeared with two or more URLs. There were three cases where the same journal appeared twice with the same URL; I eliminated those. I also eliminated five journals that began in 2015, leaving a total of 10,603 journals.

In the process of re-grading the *old* dataset, I found 25 apparent duplicate journals, leaving 6,465 journals of that 6,490.

Matches

Thanks to our friend Vlookup, I was able to match 6,167 URLs in the old and new datasets, saving off a baseline set. Deleting matched rows, I now had 4,436 journals in the June 2015 set and 298 journals in the May 2014 set.

Title matches (done partly by hand to eliminate normalization issues) added another 218 cases where the June 2015 and May 2014 sets had the same journal titles (but the URLs had changed). I now had 6,385 journals as a baseline along with 80 journals from 2014 not matched in 2015 and 4,218 June 2015 journals not in the 2014 (A-D) set.

Note that the 4,218 count includes all journals from May 2014 that were graded something other than A-D (e.g., those that I couldn't reach, those that weren't peer-reviewed journals, those that weren't really OA, etc.) and that are still in DOAJ. I decided to leave that set intact, ignoring for the moment the table of "Not A-D" journals from May 2014. In other words, I'm rechecking all the "Not A-D" cases from 2014.

There are 80 May 2014 journals unaccounted for. I'll look into those again at the end of this process, after revisiting some of the others. I'd guess most either disappeared from DOAJ or have title changes and URL changes that prevented matches.

Data Gathering

Since I'd already gone through the baseline journals adding full 2014 counts, I focused on "Part 2," the

4,218 journals that either weren't analyzed previously or that had grades other than A-D and are still in DOAJ.

As I went through the list (alphabetically), I matched each completed chunk of 100 journals against the "NotA-D" list, noting the new grade for those journals having matches—which most of them did. At the end of the process, 702 of the "NotA-D" list were accounted for—and 109 were not, which *should* mean that they're no longer in DOAJ, just as the 80 remaining May 2014 journals apparently aren't in DOAJ.

I ran into two cases where the same journal appears twice in DOAJ—definitely the same journal and either the same title or one close enough to be next to it alphabetically, but with different URLs. I omitted the two duplicates (one for each title).

Part 2 eventually yielded 3,318 journals graded A or B (almost all of them A) and 48 graded C, with the rest—around 850—graded but not analyzed, for one reason or another. Note that this count is barely higher than the "graded but not analyzed" count for the earlier study: nearly as many of those journals were now analyzable as there were new journals that couldn't be analyzed.

There were two surprises in doing this pass: one pleasant, one unpleasant. The pleasant surprise is that Chrome/Google's translation worked so well so much of the time. There are only 97 cases (out of 2,500 or more) where I didn't feel I could rely on the translated text to tell me what I needed to know: is this a peer-reviewed journal, is there an author-side charge and, if so, what is it, and how many articles appeared each year? I'm guessing I can reduce that number slightly in a second pass.

The unpleasant surprise: After encountering malware in several of the journals analyzed in 2014, I made sure that I had Malwarebytes and Windows Defender running—but also McAfee Site Adviser in the browser. In 42 cases (and 18 in the base group when adding 2014 counts), one or the other of these (or, in a few cases, Microsoft Office while passing the URL from Excel to the browser), the journal's site or something on that site was flagged as possible or probable malware. In one case, nothing caught it, and the journal home page brought up a popup window that was *clearly* a hamhanded phishing attempt, obscuring the center of the journal homepage with a lengthy "warning from Microsoft" imploring me not to close the browser but to call a handy-dandy telephone number and, get this, with a female voice *reading that same warning message*.

In other words, 61 journals listed in the *Directory of Open Access Journals* appear to have phishing, drive-by downloads, or other probable or possible malware. That's simply not acceptable. I *of course* did not look further at these journals, and am now trying to decide whether to break with my usual "it's not about individual titles" approach and list the 61 journal titles. (Advice welcome.)

The Analysis

Once I've revisited some journals, I'll start in on the analysis, producing an issue of *Cites & Insights* and a print-on-demand paperback/PDF ebook.

I'm not yet sure what will be included. I do suspect that most discussions of journal size, age, fees-free, and subject breakdowns will focus on the A and B journals (currently 9,276 journals publishing 470,882 articles in 2014, but I expect both numbers to go up slightly). C journals—those I believe should be avoided—will be noted where appropriate, but it seems sensible to focus on the 95% or so that are broadly acceptable rather than the few problematic cases. (The X journals—currently 850 or so, a number that may fall—*can't* be included in the analysis, since they either aren't OA journals, aren't accessible, or are otherwise not counted. I will discuss those in some detail, just as I'll discuss the subgrades for A and B that replace the old D subgrades.)

I believe the full report will be worthwhile for anybody who cares about OA. I'm sure it will be the most extensive and complete report available.

As to the dataset...well, see the first part of this discussion.

The Future

I could just say "see the first part of this discussion" and maybe that's appropriate. I'd love to do reliable ongoing analysis, and I think a five-year study (2011-2015) would be worthwhile—but it's hard to justify that without some clear interest and revenue.

The Precursor

The State of Open Access Journals: Idealism and Opportunism is the August/September 2015 issue of *Library Technology Reports*. It should be on its way to subscribers and available for direct sale (in full or in chapters) any day now. It's an excellent concise review of the state of gold OA in 2011 through June 2014, based on the 6,490 journals that also formed the baseline for the new report.

The Rest of This Issue

This is an admittedly odd issue. I haven't been doing the lengthy rereading-and-considering sessions that form the basis of most essays because I've been looking at thousands of journal sites and trying to make the most of unidiomatic translations.

And, of course, I plan to get back to revisiting some journals (maybe a week's work) and doing the analysis and book (maybe four to eight weeks of work) after I produce this issue.

So...

I had two ideas for fleshing out a medium-short issue. One was to complete A FEW WORDS. The other was to reprint an essay (or portion of an essay) from the very first issue of *Cites & Insights* and from the least frequently downloaded issues.

I did both. Way too many pages for a summer issues. And I couldn't decide.

So...

For the first (and probably the last) time ever, the print-oriented two-column version of *Cites & Insights* has different text than the online/tablet-oriented one-column version.

In the "standard" two-column version, [civ15i8.pdf](#), you'll find A FEW WORDS... PART 2, picking up the oddly varied story in 1995 and running through now. Take heart: I've excluded self-published material (*Cites & Insights* and 19 or 20 self-published books), which cuts the list by slightly more than 200 items (several times that many if you count each *C&I* essay as a separate item).

In the single-column 6x9" version, [civ15i8on.pdf](#), I'm including a few not-so-golden oldies: essays from the least frequently downloaded editions of *Cites & Insights* and from the very first issue, back when this was basically an extended continuation of *Crawford's Corner*. ("Least frequently downloaded" based on sometimes-missing statistics, and I suppose it's noteworthy that all three of these issues are at least a decade old.) I chose one or two sections that looked interesting either in "looking back" terms or on their own—and some subsections of a near-issue-length essay in one case.

You are, of course, cordially invited to read both, presumably skipping the second copy of this little essay.

Next time around (with no clear idea of just when that will be): Probably the whole issue will be devoted to *The Open Access Landscape 2011-2014*. After that, who knows?

Perspective

A Few Words, Part 2

I didn't *entirely* stop writing for publication in 1995, although I pretty much stopped editing publications. There were fewer books, at least for a while—but one of them was a doozy, the biggest seller I've ever had and one written with an improbable coauthor.

Same method: minimum of one sentence, maximum of one paragraph, roughly chronological order, superscript numbers refer to a bibliography that is (or, rather, eventually will be) at waltcrawford.name/pubs_since_1994.htm

This isn't complete by any means, particularly since I've added two sensible limits:

- Only one excerpt from any publication, even though I had two running features in one magazine for a while.
- Crucially important from the end of 2000 on: I'm omitting self-published material, such as the 187 (so far) issues and more than three million words of *Cites & Insights* and some 19 self-published books.

1995

Future libraries will offer extended access and extended services, but will not become virtual libraries—and the plural, libraries, is critical, as no single model best serves all libraries.¹²²

Where's the library—or, rather, where's the library symbol? After all the effort of developing the reader icon to identify libraries, why is that symbol not readily available in clip-art sets?¹²³

Librarians are not going to take over the Internet but may be able to organize some corners of the Stuff Swamp.¹²⁴

What a wonderful world if you're a PC buyer—and what a terrible world if you're trying to sell an old PC to savvy buyers. Never have you gotten so much for your money, and never have values of old machines depreciated so rapidly.¹²⁵

The Web is about self-publishing. Not entirely, and not originally, but that's how it's working out.¹²⁶

I believe in viewpoints, and in selectively offering and interpreting information that may be helpful. That's the basis for much of my writing. But I also assume that readers will use my viewpoints as *one* of their sources and will go back to original sources in many cases. "Ditto" is always a dangerous frame of

mind. We all need multiple perspectives to keep our minds alive and maintain some touch with reality.¹²⁷

If you have always wanted color printing capabilities but could never afford them, your time has come. If you've never thought about color printing, 1995 may be the year to consider it. You're not going to replicate *ONLINE*'s cover on a \$300 printer, but you can get surprisingly good results at surprisingly low cost.¹²⁸

One futurist has stated that collections of magazines delivered to the home on CD-ROM should replace printed magazines any day now. This assertion is based on the fact that one can purchase a Sony Data Discman for under \$600.¹²⁹

4. Do not install files that already exist without first, asking permission, second, verifying that the new file is actually newer than the existing file, and third, assuring that the new file copies properly or that the old file can be restored. And do not modify existing files without first asking permission, second, creating a renamed backup, and finally, telling the user about the renamed backup. For example, what are all these CONFIG.xxx files that end up cluttering your hard drive?¹³⁰

Five-and-a-quarter-inch CD-ROMs: surely you've read about them in one magazine or another recently. I was surprised to see such discs mentioned even in some Ziff-Davis publications, where I would expect better editorial work. Put simply, *there is no such thing as a 5.25-inch CD-ROM*.¹³¹

You discover that a program used to plan space requirements for your library stores the constant π (Pi) as "3.1416," which is a fairly crude approximation of this endless decimal. Should you be concerned?¹³²

The best way to save money on software is to not spend it, or to spend so little that it seems virtually free. If you wind up with first-rate current applications, so much the better. Is that possible? Sometimes.¹³³

When it comes to portable computers, rising expectations have stayed ahead of falling costs. Today's "value notebook" costs \$2800 or so—only \$200 less than the cheapest award-winner from early 1993—and the top computers can rise to \$7000 and more.¹³⁴

Measure the visible portion of your 15-inch monitor. It's probably between 13.5 and 14.2 inches. But you probably already know that. Now, try this: measure the visible portion of your 25-inch TV set. Guess what? It's 25 inches.¹³⁵

The news has been particularly good for Mac owners, although not so pleasant for the Mac-specific monitor makers who charged high prices to their captive market. Today, any multisynchronous SVGA

monitor (which means any competent PC monitor on the market) will work equally well on a Windows, Macintosh or DOS machine, possibly requiring a \$15 cable to attach to the Mac. That's about all that needs to be said about platforms.¹³⁶

The upgrade treadmill is a path to oblivion for CD-ROM as a mass medium. It eliminates budget-constrained early adopters, consumers who have no interest in frequent upgrades, and all those waiting for HDCD. Those who purchased multimedia kits and returned them are already gone—and you can eliminate everyone who purchased a multimedia-ready computer, tried out the bundled CD-ROMs, and realized that vide works better on television.¹³⁷

I can't think of *any* commercial product that's so good everybody in the world should own one. Certainly no piece of software comes anywhere close to that category. Is there a book in your library so good that everybody should read it? (No religious answers, please.) I doubt it. Is there a magazine on the market so compelling that everybody should subscribe? Certainly not.¹³⁸

Imagine shrink-wrapping ten assorted paperback books, charging \$10 for the bundle, and selling a quarter-million bundles. Or having hundreds of thousands of record buyers spring for \$25 to get a set of ten assorted audio CDs including a little country music, a little classical, some rock, and a Gregorian chant or two?¹³⁹

Heard much about OSI recently? Seen any signs of OSI usage supplanting TCP/IP? If you know about Z39.50, were you aware that it is fundamentally an OSI-based standard?¹⁴⁰

Danger: crashes lie ahead. If you're one of those who finds Windows 3.1 and its applications remarkably stable for your everyday work—well, don't expect to get through a day exploring multimedia without a GPF or two and maybe an occasional hung system. I begin to understand why the bomb icon appears once in a while on Macs: after all, they've always been multimedia computers. Before you start exploring, save all your files and shut down all your nonessential applications: it's storm season out there!¹⁴¹

If you're in a rush to buy your new desktop PC, take heart. You'll probably get the best balance of performance, security, and value from the very large and well-regarded PC companies and the somewhat smaller but still well-regarded ones.¹⁴²

It's a funny way to run a business: insult your most loyal customers, those who form the foundation

for your success. Sort of like circulation staff in libraries saying “What, you again?” when frequent readers show up to check out books.¹⁴³

1996

The anarchic nature of the Internet and the levelling effect of today’s software raises the importance of cultivating appropriate skepticism among users, which must begin with appropriate skepticism among librarians and other library staff.¹⁴⁴

In the mid-1980s, several videocassette magazines started up. As far as I know, none of them survived. You couldn’t thumb through them, just as you can’t thumb through a CD-ROM magazine.¹⁴⁵

It’s disheartening to have someone tell you “Well, we would have asked, but we assumed you were too busy.” With electronic mail, an initial request doesn’t take more than a minute or two to deal with—and a phone call doesn’t take much longer, once telephone tag is resolved.¹⁴⁶

If you want good sound without frustration, your best bet is to buy a new personal computer, fully equipped with multimedia support. Even then, you need to ask the right questions, since no other area of current PCs has so much under-performance.¹⁴⁷

Our desire was to make Eureka broadly useful across campuses and libraries, requiring little effort to start using Eureka, perform needed searches, and quit.¹⁴⁸

The bad news is that there’s not much here. In fact, all ten discs would fit on a single CD-ROM with a *lot* of room to spare. If you accept default installation choices, you wind up with ten copies of QuickTime drivers in ten different directories, wasting more than 15 megabytes of disk space, since the installation routine doesn’t check to see whether the files already exist.¹⁴⁹

A Network PC is a smart terminal. Period. No local data storage. No local software. All of your work, all of your data, are stored remotely, by one of those ultra-stable companies in the networking business. Since no such business ever fails, you have no cause for nervousness. Are Americans really this gullible?¹⁵⁰

What we have here is a refreshing change from grainy video clips, sounds that swoop in as menus open, artistic interfaces, and badly ported programs that drain Windows resources until the system crashes. No flash, no drama—just a useful tool that makes sense on CD-ROM.¹⁵¹

Remember the paperless office? My best guess is that offices will stop using paper about the same time

everyone stops traveling to conferences and business meetings and relies entirely on videoconferencing.¹⁵²

One day, ta-da, a mysterious knight appeared, offering a \$30 magic bullet that would magically double the RAM (or at least make the computer behave as though the RAM was doubled).¹⁵³

Until priorities change, much of what’s available to users of multimedia titles—like two good ears, widely spaced speakers, and a strong appreciation for the quality of good stereophonic sound—will do them little good, and perhaps even add to their disappointment. The capacity to miss what you’ll be missing makes it depressing to remove an audio CD, put in a CD-ROM, and see the soundstage collapse to a single point. It shouldn’t be that way.¹⁵⁴

I don’t know about you, but \$5,999 is still a bit more than I’d expect to pay for a 14-inch screen—in fact, it’s still about ten times what I’d expect to pay for a 15-inch screen or three times as much as a good 20-inch unit. Just at a guess, my “corporate financial officer” would have a good laugh if I requisitioned one of these beauties.¹⁵⁵

One powerful motive for finding “personal bests” is that they can be substantially less expensive than the market leaders (but this may be the worst motive). A less obvious reason, but one that carries more weight, is that less powerful software may be easier to learn and remember. The remarkable facilities and shortcuts of a world-leading program do little good if you don’t use it often enough to remember all the details.¹⁵⁶

The case for DVDs is compelling, at least in the long run. DVDs can be produced more cheaply than videocassettes (and use a lot less raw material); they’re far more durable; and it’s impossible for a prankster to write over part of a Disney DVD with excerpts from *Deep Throat*. Everyone in the business claims that DVD will offer better video quality than VHS, maybe equal to laserdisc or better.¹⁵⁷

I believe that libraries will *and must* rely more heavily on access to materials (and non-material information) that they don’t own, and that they will find ways to share the risks, costs and benefits of such access. I also believe that most libraries, except for some in specialized areas, will *and must* continue to maintain and build strong collections of print and other media, to serve the essential needs of their users. I hope that librarians won’t accept monolithic solutions to access problems; therein lies disaster.¹⁵⁸

A good CD-ROM must work *as a CD-ROM*: it must do something better than an alternative me-

dium and work effectively in typical CD-ROM environments. So, for example, while “quick lookup” products can be quite worthwhile for libraries or business settings, most PC users neither keep their PCs powered up all the time nor have more than one CD-ROM drive.¹⁵⁹

If you’re one of those who really believe the public library should serve all the media and information needs that everyone has, all the time, get over it.¹⁶⁰

Most experienced computer users have a handful of utilities they swear by—and possibly a few to swear at! Some people get by nicely with one or two inexpensive utilities, or a suite of utilities. Others wind up with dozens, sometimes spending more on utility software than applicaions.¹⁶¹

The prime movers behind Network Computers never really understood personal computers, regarding them as annoyances to be gotten rid of. On the other side, many of those who began the field really did treat PCs as life, distorting the rest of their lives to suit the single-minded pursuit of the neat hack or great new design. I can respect what they did, and can profit from it, but it doesn’t make sense for most of us. Most of us need to use tools as tools.¹⁶²

When you push the boundaries, one *or more* of three things can happen: the boundaries change, something breaks, or the boundaries push back.¹⁶³

Between Oracle in Redwood Shores and Diba in Belmont, I’m afraid the north end of Silicon Valley is turning into the Sillycon foothills.¹⁶⁴

Curiouser and curiouser: just as big-name journalists are beginning to lump CD-ROM in with Interactive TVs as yesterday’s news, consumer CD-ROMs actually seem to be getting friendlier.¹⁶⁵

Any time you’re waiting for a computer, you’re wasting time, and you can’t grow more of that. Any time the computer’s waiting for you, it’s probably wasting a few watts of electricity. PCs are tools. As distributed tools, they sit there wasting cycles until you need them. Which is exactly the way it should be.¹⁶⁶

The technological forecasters of a decade ago assured us that hard disks would be passé by now, replaced by solid-state storage or something more exotic. After all, hard disks are mechanical devices based on fifty-year-old technology. And a decade ago, hard drives seemed ripe for replacement. PC drives were expensive, tended to crash, and were generally troublesome.¹⁶⁷

Does “Mac” really stand for “Male Aryan Computer”? I wouldn’t think so, but this appalling editorial makes me wonder...¹⁶⁸

Let it stand that Oracle, which doesn’t produce hardware, is the prime mover behind the NC hardware specifications—and that Sun, which doesn’t produce consumer products, is the prime mover behind the software specification for this ultimate consumer product. Am I being paranoid in suggesting that a prime motivation is to reduce the importance of Microsoft and Intel in the marketplace? Perhaps.¹⁸⁷

1997

It’s nearly impossible to quantify improved value in displays. Most people pay more for displays than they did a decade ago, but displays do so much more that a direct comparison doesn’t make sense.¹⁸⁸

Oddly enough, a range of companies seems determined to bring us something akin to Network Computers whether we want them or not—and nobody has yet done a user survey showing any demand or desire for such things.¹⁸⁹

When is a CD-ROM the “best” medium—as opposed to books, audiocassettes, video of some form, a combination of the above, or direct online access? I’ll ask that question in most reviews, but I can’t guarantee that you’ll be happy with the answers.¹⁹⁰

I’ve been wrong on technologies succeeding more often than on technologies failing. That’s a shame.¹⁹¹

Do you find you’re looking at your 486/33 with less affection these days? Is that mammoth 340MB hard disk seeming a little cramped? Not that thrilled with offerings for your VL local bus or with the 1MB of RAM on your 16-bit graphics card? Finding that your single-speed CD-ROM drive just doesn’t cut the mustard?¹⁹²

What’s the difference between a 1.5GB hard disk and a 1.6GB hard disk? Quite possibly, nothing at all—just as one PC’s 512MB hard disk may be another PC’s 532MB drive. It all depends on how you count.¹⁹³

The story basically says that BeOS could prevent Mac loyalists from jumping to Windows NT; there’s nothing in the story to suggest that BeOS would attract away Windows users. I found it almost mordantly amusing to consider the list of “What’s Hot” in BeOS: eight items, including these three: Context-sensitive menus, extensive keyboard control (of menus), and the ability to minimize windows.¹⁹⁴

Michael Jackson (no, not *that* Michael Jackson) thinks that beer is more interesting than wine, and offers in evidence this interactive journey around the world of brews and breweries.¹⁹⁵

Do you know where your nearest state park, national park, regional park, and county park are? Have

you visited any of them lately? I'll bet at least one of those is within a half-hour's drive and well worth the time.¹⁹⁶

This stunning CD-ROM (*Leonardo da Vinci*) is one of Bill Gates' answers to those who decried his multimillion-dollar purchase of Leonardo's *Codex Leicester*—the only one of Leonardo's notebooks in private hands. First, Gates loaned the *Codex* to an Italian museum before bringing it to the States. Now, the *Codex* is once again being shown in museums, carefully protected and with a multimedia presentation to make sense of it.¹⁹⁷

I want DVD (and particularly DVD-ROM) to succeed. Wanting doesn't always make it so. Should your library be paying attention to DVD? Yes. Should you be buying DVD discs and players? Probably not yet. Maybe this fall; maybe in 1998.¹⁹⁸

Yes, there's still an OS/2, and diehard OS/2 supporters continue to make slightly absurd claims about its market share. But look at IBM's own marketing: Aptivas come preloaded with Windows 95; ThinkPads come preloaded with Windows 95. In going through a dozen mail-order catalogs, not only did I see every IBM computer preloaded with Windows 95, I saw no listings for OS/2 at all.¹⁹⁹

My ideal CD-ROM world atlas would include composite satellite views of the earth both by day and by night; accurate geophysical and topographical maps at reasonable levels of detail; accurate political maps with sensible level of detail; and user-controlled options for display.²⁰⁰

I'm delighted to say that *Prokofiev for Dummies* doesn't suck pondwater. Indeed, it earns a three-star rating given its price and narrow focus. It won't make you an expert on Prokofiev or music, but it does make effective use of the 38MB CD-ROM data—and the audio CD portion offers slightly more than an hour of excellent performances in excellent sound.²⁰¹

The economics of ISPs may not make sense—particularly in a few bizarre cases. The most bizarre case at the moment is “Bigger.net,” a California ISP that claims we can have a lifetime of unlimited Internet access for a one-time \$60 fee, plus \$10/year for e-mail. How? Because Bigger.net's Internet access will always have an ad on the screen. Bigger.net believes it can raise \$320 per year per subscriber. This is, I believe, one of those cases where “lifetime” is likely to mean “life of the company” rather than “life of the user.”²⁰²

Think of this article as a consumer warning—one you won't get from most computer magazines. Many display manufacturers publish misleading

specifications that can encourage you to make meaningless comparisons between displays. I'll try to explain the problem enough so you can avoid it.²⁰³

In a computer-conference discussion of software updates recently, another participant bemoaned the hugeness of Microsoft Word, said she really wanted something that would just do the essentials, and then listed the ten essential functions that she used every day. Here's the kicker, as I noted in a following message: None of her ten essential functions is a function I ever use. Not one.²⁰⁴

The concept of libraries for the new millennium conjures up vast and wonderful schemes for the distant future. But when people start thinking about libraries in millennial terms, my advice is “calm down.”²⁰⁵

This is an unfortunate midway comment on a technology that I'd really like to see succeed. The USB, included on all 1997-vintage Dells, Gateway 2000s, Microns, and more, offers the prospect of adding medium-speed external devices to PCs with no hassles and few limits. Up to 128 devices, hot-swappable, and the bus even supplies enough power for low-power device. Some day, it should be great, particularly with the high-speed FireWire as a complement. Some day apparently isn't today, as this is written.²⁰⁶

While topical groupings of CD-ROMs can provide interesting comparisons, so can a group of CD-ROMs from a single publisher. “Family resemblance” can be very strong (for example, Corbis and Zane) or can be so weak as to be invisible (with The Learning Company/Softkey possibly the extreme case). Since that's also true with magazine and book publishers—for example, Online Inc. publications have strong family resemblances, Ziff-Davis much less so, and Hachette Filipacchi almost none—it shouldn't be surprising.²⁰⁷

Heard of “OOBE”? That stands for Out Of Box Experience, and it isn't a mystical term. Mysterious, maybe: it's the concept of how wonderfully easy and rewarding it is to set up particular brands of computers from scratch.²⁰⁸

Regular readers of CD-ROM Corner probably know I'm a text person at heart. I very much agree with the recent saying “If a picture isn't worth a thousand words, don't use the picture.” I get frustrated by CD-ROMs that show me lots of pretty pictures, but neither identify them nor provide textual context.²⁰⁹

Bet you didn't know your microwave oven even *knew* what year it was: mine doesn't appear to know what day it is. My VCR doesn't seem concerned with years either. Phone lines? Date-sensitive? The best I can figure is that the microwave and VCR will con-

clude that it's 1900, not 2000, and that as a result neither one has been invented yet, and they'll vanish into thin air.²¹⁰

1998

One remarkable myth, sometimes coming from within the library field, is that nobody reads anymore—that libraries need to move on to multimedia and virtual reality, because the era of universal book reading is dead. This myth combines false nostalgia with bad information. Remember those wonderful decades when every adult read books as a primary means of leisure—and when they all had the leisure to read books. Can anyone place those decades in history?²¹¹

Books continue to matter, now and for any plausible future. Not as the *only* means to transmit information, entertainment, and knowledge—that hasn't been true for more than a century. Not as the *dominant force* among media—that hasn't been true for decades. But as a vibrant, healthy medium—one that serves a variety of needs better than any alternative and that makes good economic, ecological, *and* technological sense for the new millennium—the book just isn't going away.²¹²

PowerPC-based Macs are faster than Pentium II-based PCs. Pentium II-based PCs are faster than PowerPC-based Macs. If you believe the Mac evangelists only the first statement is true, and it's a Repeatedly Proven Fact. In fact, both statements may be true.²¹³

I've called the Internet 'the Stuff Swamp' out of exasperation with those who laud it as the Information Superhighway and make absurd claims about finding anything you want. I'll stand by that description, but there are many beautiful islands of information and knowledge within that swamp—trusted and verifiable sources that directly enhance and extend library services.²¹⁴

One trend began in the eighties and has continued far beyond its useful life. That is the great technological handwave—the futurist's response to any shortcomings in technology, any unmet needs, anything that's lacking. When you hear, for example, "we can confidently project that such devices will be commonplace in the next two years," you're hearing the great technological handwave.²¹⁵

Remember "upgradeables"—computers specifically designed so that you could swap in a new processor board from the same vendor, and carrying a price premium over "standard" computers? They were a big deal in the early 1990s, but never did make much sense.²¹⁶

Some people will find *Cartopedia* more approachable than the two top CD-ROM atlases because of its attractive, simple organization and clearly-presented content—and maybe because it doesn't offer quite as much.²¹⁷

Here they come: magazines on video, one more time. A few of you with long memories and arcane tastes may remember that several publishers tried to establish magazines on videocassette some time back. More recently, it seems like dozens of people tried to make it with CD-ROM-based magazines—one or two of which seem to be struggling along, although most have disappeared.²¹⁸

If you don't like your mouse, why not replace it? I suspect there are millions of PC and Mac users who aren't thrilled with their pointing devices but never get around to doing anything about them. If the curve of a mouse doesn't feel right in your hand, if you think the mouse design may be hurting your wrist, if you don't like the number, placement, shape or feel of the keys—do something about it!²¹⁹

Early and cheap sound cards use FM synthesis for MIDI music: that incredibly cheesy pseudo-instrument sound you've come to know and hate. Good sound cards use wavetable synthesis: short, digitized samples of real instruments modulated for playback. That yields decent sounds if the samples are good. Physical modeling, developed at Stanford, creates a software model of the instrument and how it works. Theoretically, this should yield superior results—but it needs a lot of processing power, which is finally available in home PCs.²²⁰

Clearly, there's more to the CD-ROM field than games, education, and even the adult learning and reference titles that I spend time reviewing. Interactive CD-ROMs can make tax preparation more interesting, eliminating calculation errors and speeding the process. Video and interactive training have kept video-discs alive and profitable (for some companies) despite their relative failure as a consumer medium.²²¹

There's no Craftsman Personal Computer: no brand that you can buy with a lifetime guarantee, knowing that it will still serve you for three decades or the company will replace it. But personal computers are still tools—or, more accurately, powered workbenches: the programs are the tools.²²²

If you want your notebook to be ultrathin, you'd better be ultrarich.²²³

The CD-ROM market isn't as healthy as publishers would like. Sneering at anyone who lacks an extra couple of gigabytes isn't a good way to grow it. Most home users don't buy a new PC more than every three

or four years; most home users don't buy gargantuan hard disks unless they plan to do their own image editing. I don't care how good the game is, it's awfully difficult to justify more than 30 or 40 megabytes per game, just as it would be for occasionally-used references and secondary tools.²²⁴

3Com's PalmPilot is probably the first real success story in the PDA field. *PC World* suggests that this may not last long. They tout the forthcoming Windows CE 2.0 "shirt-pocket PCs" due this spring from Casio, Everex, Philips, and Samsung. Similarly priced (\$300-\$400), about the same size and weight (mostly 5.3 to 5.7 ounces and roughly 5x3x1"), the Windows CE devices offer more memory, a voice memo recorder, an infrared port, and a slot for expansion. They offer a little more useful screen space and roughly comparable software—and the screen has three times the overall resolution, at 320x240 as compared to PalmPilot's 160x160. I'd wait and see. Remember Windows 1 and 2?²²⁵

Libraries and librarians should care about the distinctions between media because libraries deal in messages. You can define a message as anything that can be treated as having independent and intentional significance. A one-sentence dictionary definition is a message, so is Picasso's *Guernica*, so is a Regency romance, so is Jimmy Cliff's song *You Can Get It If You Really Want*, so is Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*...²²⁶

The story now is that DVD is the most successful new consumer medium—because more drives were sold in its first six months (measured as the last half of 1997) than in the first six months of VCRs or audio CD. That's probably true; it's also beside the point.²²⁷

It's been tough to do these reviews: most of the titles are so interesting that I'd rather explore them than write about them.²²⁸

The San Francisco Bay Area is one of two preliminary markets for this "better than DVD" monstrosity [Divx], which can only hurt libraries. Big full-page ads from Circuit City, pushing the \$499 Zenith player and the \$4.49 discs—"better than rentals because you don't have to return them." As discussed before, you get 48 hours to play them, starting with the first time you press the Play button. Then, if you play them again, it's \$3.25 for another 48 hours...or you can just toss the disc.²²⁹

Once you take away games and education, CD-ROM publishing doesn't seem to be a huge success. CD-ROM publishers continue to disappear—or merge—as the field struggles to find successful niches.²³⁰

Cool. That's the cover line for the July 1998 *Macworld*—and, in a rather charming way, it illustrates an ongoing difference between the rest of us. You know what the cover is about, in a four-page story that appears to have been inserted at deadline: the "revolutionary" iMac. Cool isn't a term you see applied much to PCs.²³¹

CD-ROMs have become enormously successful in personal computing, but not quite in the manner anticipated. For most users and producers, CD-ROMs are primarily big, safe floppies—ways to distribute very large programs and resource files cheaply, with fewer virus dangers than diskettes.²³²

The blues had it right: don't believe anything you hear, and only half of what you see. When it comes to the Internet, computing, and writing about either one I sometimes wonder whether half is too liberal.²³³

This may be the year that reality finally sank in. CD-ROM isn't (as a rule) going to replace other media. The "Hollywood model" for CD-ROM titles, with hugely expensive multimedia production costs for each title, is usually a recipe for disaster. Thinking of title CD-ROMs as equivalent to either television or motion pictures just doesn't work, and has led to many failed publishers.²³⁴

It's always amusing to watch people rewrite history and try to play with language. Divx spokespeople now say that Divx was never meant to compete with open DVDs—"we believe they will co-exist harmoniously." We all know how much retailers like to stock multiple formats; that's why prerecorded Beta movies are so readily available these days.²³⁵

1999

No percentage is meaningful without knowing the baseline—but some percentages are self-deflating, so outrageous that you can assume insignificance. When you hear that this year's Internet fad of the month shows a 9,000 percent increase in use over last year, you can presume two things: (a) that *rate* will not continue, (b) the *baseline* was probably small.²³⁶

Indiscriminate links proliferate within the Web like ants at a picnic. Reputable links disappear as sites change location and leave the scene. It only takes one casual link from a reputable site to lead into a morass of meaningless sites.²³⁷

Here's where we've come: a collection of little stuff, mostly nonessential, uses so much power that some programs "were painfully slow when loading on a Windows 98 150MHz Pentium system." Think

your year-old Pentium II-266 is hot stuff? Not with today's programmers coming down the pike!²³⁸

Sometimes, reviewing brings back painful memories of being reviewed—and that can be a good thing. Quite a few years ago, two of the books that I wrote (*MARC for Library Use* and *Current Technologies in the Library*) each received one review that I found particularly frustrating. The first complained that *MARC for Library Use* wasn't a cataloging manual. The second complained that *Current Technologies in the Library* was about *current* technologies rather than hot new potentials—the reviewer denounced me for discussing ink on paper and ignoring artificial intelligence.²³⁹

In my experience, most futurists who proclaim the death of print don't understand books very well. That's also true of some booklovers, who appreciate books as objects but don't think of them as tools. Mass-market paperbacks are inferior objects, but they're fine tools for communicating (until the paper yellows or disintegrates).²⁴⁰

The first and possibly biggest problem with most low-end ink-jet printers is that they use one ink cartridge at a time: either black or three-color. If your color pages have just a little color, but mostly text, you're in trouble: the pages will take longer to print, the black will be odd-looking (because it will be a combination of the three colored inks), and you'll be paying several times as much for each page.²⁴¹

This isn't so much a product as an idea—specifically, an idea to simplify PC maintenance at the expense of legacy boards and peripherals. Intel produced prototype “legacy-free” PCs that look like truncated pyramids, run quietly, boot quickly, and have sealed chassis. The company hopes that real-world PCs will have many of the legacy-free prototype's features in late 1999, the rest sometime in 2000.²⁴²

Visual reality can't beat the real thing. No CD-ROM or Web panorama of California's Avenue of the Giants can possibly match strolling among those magnificent trees for a few minutes. It's not possible to recreate the experience of cruising Alaska's Inside Passage even with a 16" display and the best PC sound system.²⁴³

You never know where you'll run into platform oddities. Here's [*FamilyPC*] a one-page set of tips on using typefaces effectively. The tips are fine; it's the box in the lower corner that's odd. It lists and illustrates “10 common fonts, included with most word processors, that you can always turn to for help.” The descriptions are sometimes silly—“Courier makes it official”—but the listings are, shall we say, eccentric

in a field where 90% of computers run Windows: specifically, Chicago, Geneva, and Monaco.²⁴⁴

One presumption seems to remain constant when digital storage is discussed: Once it's digital, all we need to do is copy it to a current storage mechanism. The information can be copied from medium as often as needed with no possible degradation—after all, bits is bits.... Unfortunately, the standing presumption just isn't true, at least not for resources that are “born digital”—things that are published on digital media or distributed over digital networks.²⁴⁵

Mondak, Tuesdak, Wednesdak, Thursdak, Fridak, Saturdak, Sundak. Januark, Februark, Mak, Julk. If you haven't seen the memo yet (perhaps a dozen times or more), you surely will: it's the report of a consultant told to handle the “Y-to-K” problem.²⁴⁶

This disc [*Cheyenne Dog Soldiers*] is not without its flaws. One is a surprising oversight that suggests this was developed for the Mac and ported to Windows as an afterthought: although no installation is required (or feasible), there's also no AutoPlay. You're forced to click on a specific file on the CD-ROM.²⁴⁷

One problem is common to all checklist judging: it encourages “featuritis,” where features are added whether they make sense or not. Additionally, checklists deal with specifics while great online systems require overall coherence. It's one thing to score 90 percent on a 200-item checklist, but I'd rather use a system that scored 70 percent and worked coherently as a whole.²⁴⁸

Microsoft makes life tough for utilities vendors by including more (and generally better) features within each new version of Windows. There was a substantial market for backup software in Windows 3.x days. Windows 95 included a backup applet which, while not great, was just good enough to gut the competitive market. Windows 98 has gone further: the Backup applet is a version of Seagate's backup program, probably the best program left on the open market.²⁴⁹

How much storage do you need? At least twice as much as you think—but it may not pay to go overboard. If you expect to do any video editing or lots of graphics work, today's 16GB disks look pretty good. For most of us, a 10GB disk is likely to be enough for a year or two.²⁵⁰

Arkkh! You have a meeting! If you dislike Lotus Notes' annoying little reminder box, maybe you're a candidate for Prody Parrot. It costs \$100 and it does a lot more than alert you to meetings, e-mail, and the like. You can speak to it (if you use a microphone) and let it control some of your Windows interface.

The parrot will fly around your screen, tell bad jokes, and grump at you if it feels ignored. Just what you need at the reference desk.²⁵¹

Language learning for adults seems like a natural for CD-ROMs. Many of us are too busy (or too self-conscious) to sign up for human instruction, but it's difficult to learn a spoken language just from books.²⁵²

Who needs a new medium? Books form the basis, you have CDs under control, and VHS videos work well enough. Anyway, won't everything arrive on the Internet any day now? If you're a true believer in that last statement, go on to the next article. For the rest of us, it's a good time to get up to speed on DVD.²⁵³

Monopolies bother me. Closed formats bother me. I think they should bother you as well, particularly when it comes to document distribution and storage.²⁵⁴

By now, publishers should know how to write AutoPlay routines that *don't* run Setup when the disc is already installed, but all four of these discs run Setup every time. For that matter, by now even Apple should be able to check for (and use) *newer* versions of QuickTime before installing older ones.²⁵⁵

Before we can think intelligently about the complex libraries that will succeed in the new millennium, we must get past some unworkable visions of a simpler future. These visions have room for only one medium, digital access, offering whatever anyone wants, when and where they want it.²⁵⁶

A miracle happens when schools and colleges want bond money or tax overrides, at least in California: Media centers and learning resource centers miraculously turn into libraries. Why? Because people *like* libraries and tend to support them, while very few noneducators even know what a media center is, and they're not too clear about learning resource centers.²⁵⁷

Will bookstores replace public libraries? Oops: that was last year's question. This year's version is: Will the Internet replace libraries? Four years ago, at least for some Midwestern public libraries, the question was: Will information brokers replace public libraries? I'm sure that a quarter-century ago, some pundits were puzzling over the question: Will Sesame Street make children's librarians obsolete?²⁵⁸

The cynical saying about Microsoft is that it always needs three tries to get something right. Word 3 was the first Word worth considering, and the same was true for Access and Excel. Windows 3.0, which shipped May 22, 1990, was the first Windows any sensible user would consider. More cautious users waited until April 1992, when Windows 3.1 appeared.²⁵⁹

"This is my story, this is my song..." Depending on how you grew up, you may remember that chorus line. Did you know that the name of the song (hymn, actually) is "Blessed Assurance" (or "Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine"), that it was written by Fanny J. Crosby, and that the tune, "Assurance," was written by Phoebe Palmer Knapp?²⁶⁰

True hypertext fiction or narrative is tough. It requires new ways of thinking, new ways of organizing. It's hard to avoid sound-bite narration, turning an overall story into a linked network of mini-stories. There's nothing wrong with sound-bite narrative, but it can rarely have the sweep or effectiveness of fully organized narrative.²⁶¹

2000

Since this is a group that deals with maritime life, I'd like to begin by noting three inevitabilities for today's world based on predictions from a couple of decades ago: 1. Many of us now live and work in underwater cities, thus greatly expanding the space available for human habitation; 2. We systematically harvest the seas for metals and rare chemicals, greatly increasing our wealth while doing no harm to marine life; 3. Much of our electricity is generated from great tidal generators. New Brunswick, in particular, gets nearly all its energy from the installation at the Bay of Fundy.²⁶²

What's a story? The word itself is even older than "information" and the dictionary definitions not much more helpful. I have in mind the oldest non-archaic sense in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate*, "an account of incidents or events" I'd extend and clarify that. First, the "incidents or events" may be factual or fictional. Second, for my meaning, you should add "ideas and opinions" to "incidents or events"—I include essays in the broad definition of stories.²⁶³

I want to believe this one can work, and just maybe it can. Compaq designer Adrian Crisan recently filed a patent application for a keyboard that keeps your notebook computer's battery charged. It's certainly scientifically plausible, using coils and magnets mounted on and around individual keys. Press the key, and the motion of magnets creates a current through the coils, which can be used to charge the battery.²⁶⁴

What could a monetary glossary, a standards database, and a set of folk tales have in common? One delightful and unusual characteristic: none of these CD-ROMs requires installation.²⁶⁵

Whatever happened to FireWire, IEEE-1394? This high-speed external bus was supposed to be a great replacement for SCSI and usher in an era of easy

video editing. FireWire offers ten times as much bandwidth as Narrow SCSI (50MBps) and lets you connect 63 devices on one chain. Some Apple computers—and some Intel-based computers—have had FireWire ports for a couple of years. But, to date, it hasn't meant much of anything.²⁶⁶

How frequently does a periodical's other content add important context to a given article? Always for some periodicals; frequently for others; not at all, in some cases. You can count on one thing: If the context is gone, it's gone.²⁶⁷

As of December 1999, *PC/Computing* is no longer a snide, mean-spirited personal computing magazine for people who just want to be told what's best. Now, it's a snide, mean-spirited *business* magazine for the kind of people who talk on cell phones at restaurants—or who, following the December 1999 issue's advice, work on their laptop computers while driving.²⁶⁸

I don't buy MP3 as *the* sound for the new millennium—it's a step backward in audio quality at high compression ratios and loses most of its advantages at low compression ratios. But that doesn't mean it's useless. As *a* sound for the new millennium, MP3 has virtues that may make it worth your while.²⁶⁹

I have *never* seen a publisher [Harvard Business School] try so hard to offend reviewers. I came close to slapping a new label on the box and sending back the CD-ROMs unopened.²⁷⁰

As I write this, Windows 2000 is finally in production. Should you be switching over to the new operating system? A fine examination in the February 22, 2000 *PC Magazine* says that the new OS was worth the wait—but that it may not be right for everyone. Home users may be better off sticking with Windows 98 (or the new Windows Millennium Edition, which seems to be Windows 98.2 or, really, Windows 4.3.)²⁷¹

Librarians and library supporters need to make the case for effective library spaces. Stacks were never enough, but stacks will continue to grow. Dispersed computer use may be powerful, but settings for group study and individual research continue to be essential. Good libraries serve many community needs, whether the community is a school, college, city, or corporation.²⁷³

Other old fogies may remember that slogan [The Man Can't Bust Our Music], used in a Columbia Records marketing campaign. It was mordantly amusing, since by most standards Columbia was "the man." It was a little like police department recruiting posters with cops flashing peace signs: a little too much irony for many people.²⁷⁴

More than a year ago, Gateway configured all its multimedia PCs with DVD-ROM drives by default. It seemed likely that smaller home-PC suppliers would follow. There were almost no DVD-ROMs on the market—but as tens of millions of DVD-ROM drives were installed in 1999, I thought the discs would follow. Instead, the race was on to produce the cheapest possible PC, and reputable makers stripped out extras like DVD-ROM so they could lower prices.²⁷⁵

Most new technologies flame out, although rarely as literally or spectacularly as Iridium. It's an old lesson, but one that's occasionally worth relearning.²⁷⁶

If your printer is five years old or newer, you may not see the need for a new printer. Sure, it might be faster; sure, it might be quieter (in some cases); sure, it might work with a wider range of paper; sure, it might offer even better print quality—but your current unit works just fine. Why change?²⁷⁷

Oddly enough, Larry Ellison doesn't even admit that the NC was a mistake. The company spun off from Oracle to handle NC morphed into Liberate Technologies and changed its focus to interactive TV. Because Ellison owned a big chunk of Liberate and it went public while the Internet Bubble was still in play, he made billions (at least on paper). Ergo, the NC was a success: Ellison made money from it.²⁷⁸

Inevitably, when you translate one medium to another, you can count on losing something in the translation.²⁷⁹

There was no Web in 1989, and even the Internet was unknown to most of us. PACS-L used Listserv mail processing software and nearly all that mail went out over BITNET, the Because It's Time Network that linked academic institutions through e-mail. When most of us thought about public-access computer systems in libraries, we meant online catalogs and circulation systems, CD-ROM databases, and maybe a few online services such as Dialog and BRS/Search.²⁸⁰

I was bemused by one sentence halfway through the story: "DVD yields are nowhere near as good as current CD yields, which are in the high 90th percentile or in some cases even above the 100th percentile." Wow! A yield above the 100th percentile means that there are more perfect discs coming out of the process than there are raw materials going in. I'm impressed!²⁸¹

What's the future of e-books? What should librarians do about them? The easy answer to the second question may be, "Don't lose too much sleep just yet." There's no good answer to the first question because there's not one medium called an "e-book" the

way there's one medium called a DVD or an audio CD. Let's look briefly at nine e-book varieties.²⁸²

Most title CD-ROMs feature the works of mankind—but a few good ones come straight from nature.²⁸³

The vision of Berners-Lee that most unsettles me is also, I believe, the most unrealistic. He envisions a future in which XML tags make all Web documents understandable at a machine level—and a “Semantic Web” in which powerful computers “make all the data in the world into one huge database.” I find that vision horrifying. I said so at the conference, perhaps not in those words—but, as I also said, I take comfort in the sheer improbability of the Semantic Web.²⁸⁴

DVD is almost certainly not the final word in physical video distribution. Although high-definition television (HDTV) hasn't had much success in the U.S., the FCC is determined to see HDTV come into use, and HDTV has four times the video resolution of DVD.²⁸⁵

In a future where everything is in digital form and freely available to everyone, everywhere, all the time, there will be no need for interlibrary loan or other means of resource sharing. But such a future is as unlikely as one in which every library has infinite resources—enough money to buy everything, enough room to shelve it, and enough staff to catalog it.²⁸⁶

Since this is the last PC MONITOR for 2000, I planned to discuss the year's hot topics in personal computing—or, given the realities of publishing, the hot topics for the year ending in June 2000. As I was going over the possibilities, however, I found an interesting commonality—expressed in this column's title [“The Dogs That Did Not Bark”] (with apologies to Sherlock Holmes). It's been a surprisingly calm year for personal computing—not because technology hasn't kept developing, but because many of the developments haven't mattered all that much.²⁸⁷

As of June 2000, Michael Hart claims that there are three *billion* computers in use, but only a tenth of them have Internet access. As with Hart's earlier claims, this means that 90 percent of all computers use unknown operating systems (or no operating systems at all), but never mind that. What about numbers from people operating in *our* universe?²⁸⁸

The decision to conclude CD-ROM CORNER at the end of the year came in June 2000. In early July, I explored two large local outlets for CD-ROMs and other computer products... The results tell me that the problem with title CD-ROMs...is not that publishers haven't sent them to me. The new titles just aren't there.²⁸⁹

2001

Context matters—so much that it's tempting to say that there is no meaningful content without context. A news story from *The Onion* carries no factual information. You can't fully interpret an article on global warming without some understanding of the author's credentials, the publication's reputation, the sources cited, or a combination of all three.²⁹⁰

Now that the pedantic millennium has begun and the sticklers have celebrated their new century, it's worth looking back at the biggest threat when the millennium began for the rest of us: the Y2K crisis. Compared to the reasoned projections of doom, Y2K turned out to be a true non-event: a crisis that didn't happen. Unsurprisingly, when January 2000 (and then April 2000) came and went without major disruptions, some observers claimed that we'd all been misled—that we'd wasted hundreds of billions of dollars on a crisis that never was. As is usually the case, the truth lies somewhere in between.²⁹¹

It would appear that Gemstar *must* maintain proprietary distribution technology; its only way of making money is through taking a chunk of each ebook sale. Gemstar says it wants to be the Yahoo! of reading. I see its model as the DivX of ebooks, and can only wish it the same success that Circuit City had with DivX.²⁹²

Sometimes, an item in the press can push you over the edge. The following item in the December 26, 2000 issue of *Inside* (the print magazine) served as the trigger for this month's hunk of discontent: “Sony markets content. Sony markets hardware that plays Sony content. Now Sony provides a virtual space where the devoted can share their passion for All Things Sony...” There's more, but the first two sentences told me that it's time. That is, it's time to say that *only middlemen buy content*.²⁹³

New media come and go. Most new carriers for old messages fail early on. Title CD-ROMs are a slightly different case. They promised new kinds of messages, and in several cases fulfilled that promise brilliantly. Unfortunately, while the carrier succeeded and seems unlikely to disappear for another decade, the new media never quite caught hold.²⁹⁴

I remember a comment from some media guru that all media consisted of “enough content to wrap around the advertising,” and thought how sad it was that the commenter had never read a book, listened to a CD, or watched a DVD. At the same time, I understand what he was saying about *free* media: those who pay the bills call the tune, while the rest of us look for a tune we find appealing.²⁹⁵

The best public libraries are exceptional institutions—where “exceptional” is a literal description, not an encomium. Good public libraries cater to exceptions: to the ideas, people, and literature too often ignored in a majoritarian society. The best public libraries are also “counter-Pareto” institutions: They go beyond the Pareto Principle for the long-term good of the community.²⁹⁶

Dear AT&T Broadband, I’m a little confused. I hope I have the name right this month. “Dear striped blue deathstar” seems too informal (and may infringe on a high school classmate’s intellectual property—sorry, George). “AT&T” I understand; “Broadband” I’m not so sure about. But never mind. I’m one of your customers and, I suspect, a hot prospect to get where you and other convergence operators need to be—and I just don’t see it.²⁹⁷

What ever happened to desktop computers? According to industry analysts of the early to middle 1990s, they faded away a few years ago, replaced by notebook PCs. Remember when notebooks took off, when notebook sales passed those of desktops, and when Toshiba became a bigger factor in personal computers than Dell or Compaq? None of this happened—but why?²⁹⁸

By now, you’ve probably heard of MP3, the revolutionary audio format that, according to some commentators, will wipe out audio CDs and put the big record companies out of business. MP3-related legal fights in that arena affect the maintenance of fair use, which matters to libraries, but MP3 might turn out to be directly significant to libraries as a convenience for users of audiobooks as well. Audiobooks in MP3 format already exist—but in a form that serves libraries as poorly as most commercial e-books. That could change, with a little vision and some small evolutionary technology.²⁹⁹

BiblioBytes, a self-publishing platform and collection, has 377 books, all free but only readable on screen. The site is ugly; the collection appears to be static (I counted 379 in November 2000); text claims “royalties” to author, but since there’s no way to buy anything that seems implausible. *Moribund?*³⁰⁰

Cubed Magazine will set the record straight about journalism about journalism, making waves, dishing dirt, and putting the reader further inside. You’ll know which metamedia are too cozy with the media they cover; we’ll summarize the best summaries and critique the media critics.³⁰¹

Weblogs show wild variation in looks, methodology, and underlying software, but they have one thing in common: Weblogs always appear in reverse

chronological order. Today’s (or this week’s) links and comments are at the beginning, followed by as many earlier days’ entries as the blogger chooses to show.³⁰²

I believe in lists, discussions, and other forms of user-generated content. I don’t believe that such content and plausibly replace professional writing at least not without substantial editorial oversight. As a consumer, I don’t see freely generated content as part of “the business environment”—I see it as part of the Web that I pay for with my \$19.95/month ISP payment.³⁰³

Until recently, you needed more than a good idea to create a new list. You needed a host site with appropriate software, something not readily available to smaller libraries or people with their own novel ideas. That’s changed, at least for the moment. Services such as Topica will guide you through the process of starting a new list—and, if their economic model works out, will run it for you as well, including the usual range of list processing options and archiving... [I]f you have a need for discussion that you don’t think is being filled, and know of others who share that need, there’s never been a better time to address that need.³⁰⁴

You’ve heard (and may believe) that the Internet and the Web are about commerce—that the Web is a way to make money, period. If you remember the Internet from the early 1990s, this must seem astonishing. Unfortunately, substantial portions of America’s media seem to have adopted a purely commercial stance, encouraged by “business philosophers” and huckster consultants. If it isn’t making money, it doesn’t matter.³⁰⁵

Based on the feedback I received, there’s general consensus that three years is a reasonable replacement cycle. That’s consistent with my own experience and understanding of the factors involved. Aim for a three-year replacement cycle for PCs that are actively used, either as staff machines or as Internet-access devices.³⁰⁶

People and groups start e-newsletters and e-zines because they have things to say that other people want to read. That may mean collaborative filtering to select the most noteworthy articles in a field and annotate them; it may mean rounding up news in a particular area to provide continuity and focus; it may mean hearing the unheard or providing perspective within a field. Internet distribution, archiving, and other tools can extend a publication.³⁰⁷

Complexity is an important principle if you’re trying to build new media and new ways to make content work. Following this principle, new media

and forms of content must *complement* existing media; you can't assume that you'll *replace* them. That can happen, but it's a long shot—unless the existing forms are broken in a way that's apparent to users, not just to you.³⁰⁸

2002

Stories are what video does best—and stories (broadly defined) are what libraries do best. Stories aren't just facts strung together. A good story has a beginning, middle, and end. It has a narrative thrust: an arc, if you will. When you reach the end of a well-told story (whether fact or fiction), you should know, feel, or be aware of something more than when you began.³⁰⁹

When you subscribe to a magazine, you begin a relationship... You pay a modest sum in advance. The publisher sends you an interesting package at regular intervals. If you like the package, you can pay more attention to the ads that really pay for the magazine—and you keep renewing your subscription. The publisher can show demographic data to advertisers and guarantee a certain minimum exposure; advertisers can work in a medium that minimizes “viewer” dissatisfaction and maximizes the possibility that messages—sometimes detailed messages—will get through. Ideally, everyone wins.³¹⁰

I'll suggest that most people don't have *one* book in them—they have four. How so? First there are memoirs: the classic “I could write a book.” Then there's the Wit and Wisdom of Louise Everywoman, those wonderful insights into the human condition. For everyone with a hobby or keen interest, there's the book that tells *the truth* about HO-scale model railroading on the Upper Peninsula. The fourth? How many parents don't have the urge to write a children's book? How many genealogy buffs prepare book-length exegeses of their family histories? How many people are sure they have the great American novel inside them?³¹¹

[Re Sept. 11, 2001]: Google figured out the situation fairly early, putting this advisory on its spare Web page: “If you are looking for news, you will find the most current information on TV or radio. Many online news sources are not available, because of extremely high demand...” Turn on the radio was the best advice Google could give. Too bad other portals and pages didn't offer the same sensible thought.³¹²

Am I suggesting that publishers and record companies are dinosaurs? Not at all. They still serve worthwhile functions—but they also claim more prominence and power than seems reasonable. Most

authors don't assume that readers are thieves; most musicians don't assume that their fans want to rip them off. When intermediaries damage us all through unbalanced power, it's time for the partners to assert themselves. Technology can help.³¹³

What? You say you don't get the Blue Screen of Death at least three times a day? You must be leading a charmed life, at least compared to tech writers. These writers seem to face a constant stream of Windows freezes and crashes, with Mac users not doing that much better. “Crashing every hour” may be an exaggeration, but not by much—if you believe the popular computer literature.³¹⁴

The model for Seawise [a real failed cruise line, with a different name] was good. The business model was muddled and context kept getting in the way. Seawise built too big and too fast without clearly identifying a clientele. They undermined business relationships and diluted their own image in apparent last ditch attempts to build an amorphous audience. It didn't work. It usually doesn't—even in traditional industries where people do know how to make money, much less in the great unknown of Web content commerce.³¹⁵

There are no infallible Library Legends, just as there are no infallible politicians, doctors, writers, auto mechanics, or Nobel Prize winners. No Library Legend knows every aspect of librarianship with equal authority. No Library Legend keeps up to date on every aspect of the field or understands all the issues surrounding every controversy. No Library Legend deserves the awful fate of being above questioning or beyond doubt. If you're beyond doubt, you're also beyond relevance.³¹⁶

The surest way to avoid writer's block is to keep those hands at the keyboard. A thousand words a day, seven days a week, no interruptions, no excuses. That's a great way to start writing—but it's also a great way to make writing a chore rather than a creative act.³¹⁷

Any path towards easing the funding and access crises for scholarly journals includes many disparate steps. Free electronic scholarly journals represent one such step—and they can succeed, even prosper. Such journals offer specialized outlets in humanities and social science niches that are too narrow to justify commercial journals. They may also pre-empt aspects of science, technology, and medicine, or at least offer competitive outlets for quality scholarship.³¹⁸

Confidentiality issues immediately pop up. “Look at user search patterns.” “Suggest worthwhile items based on previous reading.” Geezers like me say, “And when the FBI comes calling, you'll have a

package to hand them—assuming they haven't picked it up directly from your servers.”³¹⁹

It's not simply a question of libraries and established publishers achieving a “greater degree of harmony” barring revolutionary changes in pricing and publisher policies. Too many libraries have been pushed to the wall and can go no further, and many scholars now recognize the plight of the libraries and are unwilling to see a complete abandonment of monographic acquisitions just to shore up STM periodicals for a few more years. Things are starting to give.³²⁰

Will your next home computer monitor be an LCD? I wouldn't bet against it. Should yours be? I no longer advise against it. Take a good look, think about your preferences, and consider your power bill (along with your air-conditioning bill in some cases). Maybe it's time to eliminate one more vacuum tube.³²¹

True open standards—like Z39.50 and the ISO ILL protocols and *unlike* PDF (Adobe's proprietary standard)—inherently take time to refine, adopt, and implement. In a field where most participant organizations are relatively small and many are nonprofit, it takes longer.³²²

Many think timeliness is what makes econtent special—for fast-breaking news. In my opinion for radio, “big news” and TV still work better. For in-depth analysis, give me good metro newspapers and magazines any day. Yes, content adds value through links, but it could undoubtedly do more by providing context, breadth, and depth.³²³

What do you call a reference librarian who provides wholly satisfactory answers 79% of the time? “Above average,” based on most studies of reference service. “Incompetent”? Probably not. How about a student who gets 79% correct answers on exams? A mediocre student—maybe a B-, maybe a C+. Failing? Probably not. How about an adult who succeeds at 79% of literacy-related tasks (prose and quantitative) indicating full competence? Functionally illiterate? Yes, according to most press coverage of a 1992 national survey and many literacy organizations since 1993. That's the basis for the claim that 47% of American adults are functionally illiterate.³²⁴

For goodness sake, let body text be “normal” or “medium” size. And why not let the user's preferred typeface prevail for printed versions? If the user hasn't made a choice, the default's probably Times New Roman, which works very well on the printed page. And if the user *has* made a choice of a font he or she finds highly readable (and that is the point, isn't it?), he or she will appreciate having that choice honored.³²⁵

If properly implemented, OpenURL is a win-win situation. Good abstracting and indexing services become more valuable by linking to local resources. Licensed resources and print holdings see more use because the link from identification to holdings is fast and easy.³²⁶

Optimists such as I look for countertrends in content and distribution—ways that new technologies can work against the growing concentration of media ownership. Such ways do exist, with electronic distribution playing important roles.³²⁷

We all know that our mutant children will inevitably change everything. That sentence highlights three assumptions that, when I encounter them in articles and speeches, raise a big mental sign: “Warning: Probable Nonsense Ahead.” All three have entered into predictions of the future of reading.³²⁸

Recently, however, you may have heard [the Copyright clause] go more like this: “The Disney Corporation and other members of the MPAA, RIAA, and AAP shall have exclusive and perpetual rights to creations that they pay for and creations derived in any fashion from those creations, and Congress shall protect those perpetual rights by any means necessary, regardless of other provisions of the Constitution.”³²⁹

CIPA induces libraries to violate the First Amendment, making it an unconstitutional exercise of congressional spending power. Filtering software does not mirror collection-development policies, since libraries have no say in what's blocked. Filtering software is like buying a magazine or encyclopedia and tearing out pages, except that someone else tears out pages and won't tell you which ones or why.³³⁰

The Secure Digital Music Initiative devised methods to watermark digital music in order to protect against copying and invited people to crack the codes. Edward Felten and his Princeton team did so and planned to present a paper on their work. The RIAA sent Felten a letter demanding that he destroy the research and threatening that publication of academic research “would subject your research team to enforcement activities under the DMCA.”³³¹

Let's talk about access to scholarly articles in scientific, technical, and medical (STM) fields—or what's commonly called the serials crisis. It's becoming clear that the combined wisdom of America's top academic libraries and consortia isn't enough for a simple solution. That probably means this is not a problem so much as an ongoing situation—a situation that distorts library budgets and may be distorting journal prominence and use.³³²

Millions of ebooks have been downloaded. Ebooks have gone nowhere slowly. Thousands of libraries use ebooks. A few hundred libraries use ebooks, mostly thanks to grant funding. The next chapter in ebooks is 7, coming a little later than Chapter 11. Ebook publishers see growing sales and bright futures... I believe that every statement [up to here] is true. You can reconcile the contradictions if you understand the many meanings of “ebook”—meanings that continue to shift as the niche markets hiding in that word shrink, grow, and mutate.³³³

Steve Jobs is right. If you want to get excited about today’s PC, think of it as a digital hub—and, unfortunately for Apple’s market share, that’s just as true of Windows PC as of the Mac. The excitement is in the peripherals.³³⁴

CBDTPA would require that all digital devices able to reproduce, display, retrieve, or access anything that’s copyrightable include undefeatable copy-protection circuitry defined or approved by the government. That proposal may not go anywhere, but less-extreme proposals are likely to be adopted.³³⁵

Funny thing about the “World Wide” Web—sometimes it’s exactly that. When last July, ZDNet Australia quoted Factiva’s CEO as saying that consumers will pay for *all* content by 2004—after all, “valuable information has a price”—that statement was cited within hours by a variety of U.S. Weblogs and online “magazines.” As the year ends, I thought it might be appropriate to offer a few reasons that this assertion is unlikely to come to pass.³³⁶

2003

A note here about “deli publications”—slicing a research project’s results into thin little articles so that the project yields four, six, a dozen articles. If you read many scholarly journals in any field, you’ve seen deli publications, typically with thinly sliced results spread across a variety of journals. (The resulting articles are sometimes called “least publishable units.”) It’s an effective way to pad a publication record. It’s also unfortunate for writer and reader alike—the writer because it vitiates the impact of the research (and will eventually breed cynicism about the writer’s articles), the reader because it’s harder to understand and appreciate the full scope of the research.³³⁷

I attend many more programs at state library conferences than I do at ALA conferences. These are real librarians (some of whom don’t get funding for ALA Annual) talking about real situations, with

shorter lead times than ALA programs, and generally more down-to-earth approaches.³³⁸

As no-cost extras with paid print subscriptions, precise digital replicas may serve a purpose. But I don’t believe they’ll be as effective as the originals, for either advertisers or readers. I could be wrong.³³⁹

The other side of PoD may be more important for public and academic libraries, and it’s reason enough to pay attention to this rapidly growing field (the only real success in “e-books”). PoD makes niche books more feasible, since it reduces many of the production costs involved. PoD may help to keep midlist and backlist books available and even to bring classics back into print, although the latter depends heavily on copyright issues.³⁴⁰

Why encourage reader commentary and treat it differently than the usual quick feedback? Not to pad your content; that’s a self-defeating practice. The best reason is that some readers know as much or more about the subject of an article as your staff and writers.³⁴¹

Thus my nomination for the most important technological device of this year, last year, or almost any year in the past century. Not transistors, not nanotechnology devices, not PCs, not PDAs, not self-circulation laser scanners. I vote for the off switch—the device that lets you remove distractions and prevent interruptions.³⁴²

We need to see the people behind the tools at any content site. Your content doesn’t create itself, and if your site doesn’t involve editing and original writing, then I’d just as soon stick with Google New (knowing there are people behind the news, if once or twice removed).³⁴³

I didn’t expect “five times as fast” to actually mean five times as fast. I hoped for a three-time improvement at best. But let’s be real here. I do each of these tasks 14 or 15 times a year, so the new PC might save me half an hour a year. Even at \$100 an hour, that’s a poor return on investment.³⁴⁴

It makes no more sense to believe that everything that *has* appeared in book form *should* appear on bound pieces of paper than it does to believe that all those things should exist only as displayed on screen.³⁴⁵

For most ECONTENT 100 companies, your Web site is how the world sees you—and the home page may be the most important part of the site. Everyone has competitors, and would-be stockholders and customers always have other places to go. If a home page bothers users, they’re less likely to go any further into the site.³⁴⁶

Some librarians view intellectual freedom and free speech as one-sided affairs or as things to be avoided within the profession itself. They should know better. I find that attitude unfortunate for a field so closely aligned with the First Amendment.³⁴⁷

Given the plague of Arial/Helvetia—almost every site not only uses these unpleasant fonts, but also forces it on users—I deducted just one point if the site forced any font other than this ubiquitous pair. Amazon, the Internet Movie Database, the *New York Times*, Slashdot, and the U.S. House of Representatives respect my choice of type.³⁴⁸

Why do I hate Arial/Helvetica so much? The short answer is that I don't actually have anything particular against them—but I *prefer* a good serif typeface on screen as well as on paper. More to the point, I don't see why I can't use my preference, whatever that preference is.³⁴⁹

Back then [1973] we were talking about library networks, but few of us could envision the Internet. We were learning about MARC II, a painful process that took another decade. Libraries learned earlier than most that the computer wasn't magic. No revolution occurred between 1973 and 2003—but for most libraries and librarians, the overall changes could be considered revolutionary.³⁵⁰

Robots don't write your articles, and it's unlikely that computer algorithms assemble those articles into a site. I'm beginning to believe that a lot of content sites *were* designed by default, by adopting a packaged style or the unquestioned output of a consultant. When you adopt a *conscious* site design, that's interesting. Let us get beyond the stories to the personalities, personality, and mechanics of the site.³⁵¹

How many of you remember when floppy disks actually were floppy—back when there were *diskette* drives, 8-inch behemoths that came in a bewildering variety of incompatible formats?³⁵²

It is, in my view, *irresponsible* to retain circulation histories that identify who borrowed what for any significant length of time after items are returned, except under special circumstances and with the clear and positive agreement of the patron.³⁵³

There are two fundamental issues in providing long-term access to digital content: carrier and presentation. If you completely ignore presentation issues, then the claim of some scholars that digital resources are *easier* to archive than analog is at least plausible.³⁵⁴

The biggest problem was one noted by several respondents. Patrons *treat* DVDs as though they were indestructible or free. They get stepped on, used as

Frisbee replacements, tossed around, played with by kinds who have no concern for their cost, and generally abused.³⁵⁵

Nontraditional Internet-based writing can set you free, but that freedom can yield surprises. My own zine began as a continuation of a traditional newsletter section predominantly about personal computing and related technologies. That was my niche, and I stepped outside it rarely and reluctantly. Now, in its third year, less than 10% of *Cites & Insights* deals with personal computing.³⁵⁶

Then there are books. The publication cycle is typically a whole lot longer, but when you're done, you have something for the ages. For pure authorial ego-boost, magazines may one-up econtent, but *nothing* compares to a book. Holding that first bound copy in your hands, with your name on the cover and spine; knowing that even trade paperbacks printed on acid-free paper will potentially be around for centuries: It's a thrill.³⁵⁷

Why should a public library collect videos when there are all those books? It makes no more sense for a public library to circulate movies on DVD than it does to circulate popular fiction. It makes no more sense to have selected TV series in the collection than it does to have novels in series, particularly genre series. But it also makes no *less* sense.³⁵⁸

If you're offering something that's better than what's available offline, and you're aiming at people likely to stick with the Internet, you shouldn't worry. But "better than offline" doesn't equate to just "because it's online." That fantasy is dead.³⁵⁹

I don't believe notebooks will replace boxes for all users. It's even less likely that a return to time-sharing will displace PCs. There is one potential threat to PC boxes: the drive by Big Media for absolute control over all copying and transmission of digital files.³⁶⁰

Will the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. library—the massive new San Jose Public/San Jose State University library—succeed? Are joint-use libraries the wave of the future? Although it's too early to say, I'd guess the answers are yes and no. I expect the San Jose library to be a success—but that success may not mean much for other joint-use libraries.³⁶¹

When it comes to continued technology-related strangeness, it's hard to top the RIAA, MPAA, and their buddies in Congress. One highlight this year was a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing about ways to discourage peer-to-peer file sharing. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) asked witnesses about ways to *damage* computers engaged in file trading. A spokesman

for MediaDefender said “No one is interested in destroying anyone’s computer.” Hatch *interrupted* to say “I’m interested...if we can find some way to do this without destroying their machines, we’d be interested in hearing about it. If that’s the only way, then *I’m all for destroying their machines.*”³⁶²

2004

If you want to create a weblog, go for it. Maybe you’ll generate a nice bicycle club—a community of people who share your interests. Maybe you’ll attract the attention of library leaders and other unsavory folks like me. You can exercise and possibly improve your writing skills, no matter how small your readership.³⁶³

Google’s “I’m feeling lucky” button is a clever gimmick, but it’s also an extreme instance of “good enough” thinking. Any time someone clicks that button, they’re either naïve enough to believe that Google will unerringly lead them to the best site—or, far more likely, they figure they will reach an *adequate* site.³⁶⁴

OpenURL is a wonderful technology if you can find the right ways to use it. Open Access has the potential for great good if we don’t gloss over the problems and promise more than it can accomplish. Together, they’re even better.³⁶⁵

I believe forgetting is a critical part of a healthy life. Despite the proliferation of reality TV, I don’t think I’m alone in that I don’t want to record everything I’ve seen or done, online or (particularly) offline, and I find the idea more than a little creepy.³⁶⁶

I learned about the Dragonfly Project a year ago, during the Alaska Library Association’s 2003 annual conference in Juneau. The Native community in this case is the Chilkoot Indian Association, the government of the Chilkoot Tlingit tribe, which worked with the [Haines] library on the project.³⁶⁷

Good antivirus software catches the bulk of computer virus propagation. But note “the bulk of”—just as luck isn’t enough, neither is antivirus software. Not any more, and not even for PCs that don’t have full-time broadband connections to the Net. I speak from personal experience—fortunately, experience that merely knocked me off the Internet for a few days and had no other consequences.³⁶⁸

Do you believe that money is about comparisons between people? When did status become a zero-sum game? If I am well-regarded how does that necessarily require someone else to be regarded less well?³⁶⁹

[The April column, “A Dozen Solutions to All Library Problems”:] **Embrace inevitability.** The print serial is dead and the print book is dying. Nobody

wants to go to a library. Book reading is a lost art in any case, and Google gives you all the research anyone really needs. That’s the way it is. It’s inevitable. Live with it.³⁷⁰

Is it reasonable to assume that the full-text version of a print article is as good as the same article within the printed issue or bound volume? Is it reasonable to assume that a chunk of content has the same meaning on its own as the same chunk on your site? As with most contextual questions, the answer is a resounding “maybe” or, perhaps, “sometimes,” which means that the answer is also “maybe not” and “sometimes no.”³⁷¹

The number of open access journals (with no charge for online access, typically covering costs via publication fees or institutional subsidy) will certainly grow—but, as with SPARC-supported lower-cost journals, that growth won’t save libraries any money until such journals replace overpriced commercial and professional-society journals, or at least cause their publishers to lower subscription prices.³⁷²

You should be aware of swamping, since it can affect almost any search process. When swamping occurs, the stuff that counts can disappear under a flood of other vaguely similar stuff. You’re no longer looking for a needle in a haystack; you’re looking for a dried stalk of fescue in a haystack.³⁷³

Libraries work effectively by integrating new technologies into an ongoing continuum of collection and services. The shape of that continuum should be driven by policy; that doesn’t mean ignoring new technological possibilities, but it does mean maintaining different focus.³⁷⁴

For me, an inexpensive MFP with today’s technology has been a blessing. Turns out I *could* use a copier once or twice a month, and sometimes color is better.³⁷⁵

Too many content sites get in their own way, offering internal distractions on top of the maze of attractions that surround the site. That keen background pattern? Looks great, but it reduces readability, which means the reader spends energy just seeing the text straight, which means less attention to the actual content. The big ad that shoves half the text into a one-inch column? It pays the bills but it disturbs that portion of the text so badly that it becomes nearly useless.³⁷⁶

Call it federated searching, if you will—or distributed searching, or cross-database searching, or metasearch, or even search portals. I suspect there are those who can make sensible distinctions between these terms, people who can explain why Searchlight

at the California Digital Library and WebFeat offer federated searching, while Vivisimo and iBoogie are examples of metasearch, and Godot (at several Canadian libraries) does distributed searching.³⁷⁷

The requirements for a visitor-friendly, printer-friendly page are quite simple. Don't use frames. Don't use fixed pixel widths or fixed font sizes. Ideally, don't force text typefaces (let the user decide). Don't use backgrounds, tinting, ads, or anything else that gets in the way of a clean, legible printout.³⁷⁸

In the real world, most librarians and other citizens who think about copyright probably believe in what's now called "weak copyright" but should be called "balanced copyright." They believe creators and intermediaries should benefit from their works, but that those who buy and use creations also have rights.³⁷⁹

When you look exactly like a category leader, it puts you in direct competition with that leader. Chances are, most of you can't out-Yahoo! Yahoo! or out-Google Google, and by making your site look just like theirs, you have to play the game on their terms.³⁸⁰

[W]hy do so many of us look for single solutions to current problems, single technologies, single media? Why do so many writers, futurists, and speakers tout X as "*the future*" rather than "*a part of the future*?"³⁸¹

What's wrong with online surveys? For the insta-polls on so many Web sites, a better question is "What isn't?" The questions are frequently badly worded but that's the least of it. Some online polls register all responses—including those from bored people and axe-grinders who just click, and click, and click again. Others make some attempt to prevent multiple voting either by installing cookies (easy to defeat!) or by checking IP addresses. That helps, but not all that much.³⁸²

Count on this: Introducing a new thing will have unexpected effects on other aspects of your library—and failing to introduce any new thing over a period of years will have substantial negative effects on the place of your library in the community.³⁸³

In most cases, I believe it makes sense to turn off the machine when you won't be using it for an extended period. Personally, I leave my work PC on as long as I'm there, shutting it down when I leave. At home, I turn on the PC when I need it and off when I'm done, unless I know I'll be back within an hour.³⁸⁴

Trust (or a loss of it) impacts a variety of industries—not just econtent sites. Knowledgeable users, suppliers, and partners operate at a continuous level of paranoia and distrust; those who haven't already learned to distrust will before long.³⁸⁵

If you do decide to feed, be sure to sign up for at least one aggregator and monitor your own feeds—you may be surprised at how they come through. Don't be too cute with headlines and summaries: If people feel tricked into clicking through, they'll unsubscribe you.³⁸⁶

Does your site get under people's skins? Do people click away with something to think about—something from your econtent that warrants contemplation?³⁸⁷

Moore's Law doesn't matter as much as it did a decade ago. You probably haven't seen revolutionary new uses for a PC in the last year or so—and you certainly haven't seen revolutionary advances in operating systems.³⁸⁸

When I see "DRM" I think of digital *restrictions* management, not digital rights management. Too much DRM serves to restrict the rights of content users in ways I consider unreasonable and inequitable. At its worst, DRM undermines fair use and first sale rights. I recognize the necessity of DRM for some forms of content distribution, but DRM doesn't have to be abusive.³⁸⁹

It is in the nature of digital technology that every use of a digital object produces at least one copy and frequently more than one. When you call up a Word document that you previously wrote (which is now protected by copyright), you're making one copy in the computer's memory—and, arguably, another copy on the screen itself.³⁹⁰

OpenURL is a leveraging and amplifying technology. Relatively small and simple by itself, it improves a library's existing resources by allowing them to work better together.³⁹¹

You've seen them—in airports and on airplanes, on commuter trains, in the supermarket, walking down the street, in cars, wandering around outside office buildings. You may even be one. That's right, the borgs have landed. Millions of them are among us. Maybe they're not as scary as on *Star Trek*, but they can be pretty unnerving nonetheless.³⁹²

OA has clear advantages. Other researchers can build on existing research without missing pieces of it or spending research funds to buy reprints. Patients and their doctors can read the latest medical findings. Scholars who work outside the box, at small institutions or on their own, aren't deprived of the scholarly literature because of that isolation.³⁹³

Firefox may be the most successful example of open source software in the personal computer market. I'm not going to write a column about the wonders of open source, partly because I'm not a true believer. A little Web searching will yield more propaganda and advocacy than you'd ever want to read, some of it thoughtful and eloquent.³⁹⁴

Remember the feeling of liberation when you realized that there was, in fact, no permanent record? That your elementary school GPA and behavior demerits really didn't matter much in high school, no college would go back to anything prior to high school, and very few employers will even ask for your college transcripts, much less that infamous permanent record?³⁹⁵

Here's a thought to give you nightmares: what you say in your econtent is only part of the message people receive. The rest is metacontent—and believe me, you have less control over metacontent than you'd like.³⁹⁶

Hirshon rightly notes that companies in the econtent and communications fields have problems finding sustainable models, but goes on to call subscription-based and single-purchase econtent pricing “contradictory practices.” I'd call them complementary, not contradictory, and note that the coexist nicely in many different areas.³⁹⁷

Google is a company that produces some very good products and services. It is not a religion. Its services are neither perfect nor necessarily the final word in any area—and, more to the point, they're not universally applicable to all uses and all users.³⁹⁸

We're at the quarter-century mark for PCs: Not a bad time to consider that name and its implications. P is for personal; C is for computer. Together, those two words formed a surprisingly political statement on the part of IBM when it introduced the first IBM personal computer in August 1981.³⁹⁹

As we wrap up 2005, we should be well on the way to digital nirvana, everyone zooming down the infobahn consuming (and paying for) vast quantities of digital content. We should be getting full measure from our broadband connections—always connected, always in touch, always consuming. Yet somehow potholes keep emerging on that infobahn.⁴⁰⁰

2006

Creative Commons takes one tack toward building a commons of econtent (and physical content). OCA uses Creative Commons and the many open standards developed to share information where it can, and

works to make major resources available to all without injury to any. There will be more such projects—not to undermine the rights of writers and publishers, but to provide a commons that we can use and derive new creations from.⁴⁰¹

The title for this column [“What's Wrong with Your PC?”] probably doesn't strike you as unusual if you regularly read the MC magazines. Sometimes it seems as though these publications spend as much time telling us what's wrong with computers and how to work around those failings as in telling us what's right and what's possible.⁴⁰²

For now, pros have the edge when it comes to truly rich media. I think that edge will hold for a while just because rich media is hard—and there's too much of it out there to tolerate badly done amateur stuff for very long. It's an edge; make the most of it.⁴⁰³

In 1996, I calculated that the new PC was 50 times more powerful than the 10-year-old PC for the same money (ignoring inflation). Is the 2006 PC 50 times as powerful as the 1996? That depends on what you're doing. It has about 50 times the CPU power (and maybe more), 125 times as much RAM and graphics RAM, 500 times the storage...⁴⁰⁴

Let's look at four reasons libraries don't need to fear Google Book Search or Google itself—and some things librarians can do to make search engines and libraries *more* complementary.⁴⁰⁵

So despite a recently reignited interest in ebooks, particularly given the much-hyped Sony Reader the market has largely floundered.⁴⁰⁶

Next time you switch to a new printer (relying on uniform page-imaging standards), click on the “Firefox” icon that causes your notebook computer to connect to the Web via the wireless network that essentially came free with your broadband connection (relying on so many related hardware and software standards I couldn't begin to enumerate them), or create a mix CD-R on a dime's worth of polycarbonate, metal, and dye—consider that it took not only standards but “standards” to make that all happen smoothly.⁴⁰⁷

Ebooks are for *book readers*, not for vidiots and gamers. If someone's not interested in reading a book-length text, putting that long text on an electronic device won't make it more palatable.⁴⁰⁸

Maybe *PC Magazine* has it right: Personal computers are just part of the digital lifestyle, with nothing much to separate them from set-top boxes or cars or what have you. Maybe the facts don't matter, or maybe people just aren't willing to read those data boxes any more. Maybe, for most people, personal

computing is indistinguishable from being on the Web and the device is just a gateway.⁴⁰⁹

Too many of us lack the patience and single-mindedness to make the most of long text. The long form isn't dead any more than deep thinking is. But it may be endangered among many—many who could do better and even accomplish more with more, and that's a shame.⁴¹⁰

2007

Today's conversational software and collaborative technologies may have an unexpected and welcome side effect: the renaissance of the writer. Mindful, literate, cogent, interesting, *readable* writers are emerging from unexpected sources—and net media helps such writers to emerge.⁴¹¹

At the rate some social networks (and other social software) grow, by the end of the decade everyone in the world will belong. Twice.⁴¹²

I have seen more than one case...where a pseudonym has gone bad. I've seen the retroactive addition of a real-world signature to every post in a blog, including those that might never have been written were they signed originally. Identity revelation can happen because a blogger has a book or article published and is proud of it, referring to it in a manner that makes the blogger's name obvious.⁴¹³

The old audience, supposedly avidly consuming just a few outlets, is dead. Of course, it never was that simple, since only TV and movies ever had such a narrow set of outlets within recent times. Meanwhile, the audience lives on. And most of the time, it is, in fact, *being* an audience, not participating in a multi-directional conversation.⁴¹⁴

With so many friends on so many social networks, it's all you can do just to accept invitations and hope to keep up with them all. And maybe wonder how you have so many virtual friends on all these networks when you've never spoken to or (in some cases) heard of in real life.⁴¹⁵

2008

Journalism, especially newspaper journalism and blog protojournalism, tends to favor crises over positive signs. In most reports, the significant number in the AP/Ipsos poll was this one: 27% of those responding (typically reported as "one quarter") did not read a book in the past year.⁴¹⁶

[T]his column is about "being on" full time. I don't regard that future as utopian, except in the dic-

tionary sense of a utopia being "imaginary and indefinitely remote." My own feelings about full-time connectivity might be summed up in another dictionary definition, changing one word: "an impractical scheme for social improvement." *Impractical?* Yes, although some would argue that it's practical and even inevitable. *Improvement?* Not in my sights.⁴¹⁷

The Pew Internet & American Life Project owes me an apology. Not just me—Pew owes apologies to 18 million Americans. Who are we? Lackluster Veterans. That's Pew's label, repeated at least 3 dozen times in [a 2007 study].⁴¹⁸

Most bloggers are not journalists in any sense. They don't see their job as reporting the news and shouldn't be held to journalistic standards. Most bloggers are diarists, essayists, or topical commentator. So what set of ethical standards covers all these (and other) categories? I think there are three basic standards: human decency/fairness, transparency, and what I'll call The Prime Ethical Standard (treat other people at least as well as you'd have them treat you).⁴¹⁹

There are other reasons for different kinds of PoD books. One of the most common, I suspect, is this: You want to do something in a very small number of copies—a gift collection of photos (Lulu and CreateSpace both do full-color books at higher prices, and many other agencies do expensive photo books), a collection of recipes, or a family genealogy that only half a dozen people care about.⁴²⁰

PRISM makes much out of peer review being under attack, a frequent theme of OA critics—even though nothing in OA suggests eliminating peer review. This is of a color with claims by OA opponents that all open access journals charge author fees (most do not—whereas many subscription journals do charge such fees): No matter how often the claims are refuted, they're repeated.⁴²¹

Is it plausible or within the American tradition to assume that no valuable speech appears from anonymous and pseudonymous source? Remember Tom Paine? Is it *really* reasonable to expect journalists—much less bloggers—to contact people directly before writing about them? Always?⁴²²

"Dear Marydee: Sorry about the missed deadline. I would have written the column on time, but I got caught up in Twitter conversations, and the time got away from me. You know how it is..."⁴²³

Last spring, I encountered a blog posting—by a generally reasonable younger librarian—taking me to task for charging any price for a downloadable book. As picked up by another blogger, I was essentially called clueless and money-grubbing because I

thought that several hundred hours of research and writing deserved a few bucks reward when presented in book form.⁴²⁴

The gray literature of librarianship is the most compelling, worthwhile, and—I'll add—*important* literature in the field at this point. I doubt that librarianship is the only field where this is true—where the gray literature has become more compelling, worthwhile, and important than the formal literature.⁴²⁵

I've seen comments that blogging is over—"so last year." I have no idea whether megablogs will continue to thrive, and it's been true for some time that most teeny-tiny blogs wither rapidly. (If you believe one estimate, 300 million blog have been created and slightly more than 2% are active.)⁴²⁶

2009

Predictions of the celestial jukebox have been around for years. Declarations of the impending, inevitable death of physical media have been around even longer, at least for certain physical media. For example, predictions of the death of books have been around since the invention of the telephone.⁴²⁷

One whole wave of "death of library" predictions seems based on similar linear projections—that we'll always all have all the money we want, and money will be less important than time, so we'll all opt for convenience. And since we're fleeing the cities and avoiding human contact, libraries as places are pretty much obsolete. Right?⁴²⁸

The third form of "chartjunk" here as become commonplace: Exaggerating the change by using a nonzero axis. You see an apparent huge decline between 1999 and 2004—but if the chart began at zero, the decline would be nearly invisible: 1.1% over 4 years. (The real change over the course of the study is *zero* percent over 24 years.)⁴²⁹

Most of us, most of the time, aim for clarity in our writing—we'd like to be read and understood. That's not always easy (particularly for arcane topics and philosophical discussions), and we may not always hit the target, but that's the aim.⁴³⁰

People who live within limits are more likely to make good use of shared assets. They're more likely to appreciate parks, to take walks, and to use their public libraries. I'm hoping more people will recognize the need for limits without having that need forced upon them through foreclosure or bankruptcy or an inability to retire...ever.⁴³¹

10. Putting things together into a list seems to connect them. Surely you've seen lists where some

elements don't quite seem to fit—or where the organizing principle seems forced. Not a problem. It's a list.⁴³²

Here's a modest change in U.S. copyright law: Any work asserted to be wholly original can be maintained under copyright indefinitely. Any work admitted to be partially or wholly derivative is protected under copyright for 28 years ("Founder's Copyright"), or 40 years or some other plausible term... Of course, the words...need to be defined. **Wholly original:** No significant part of this work can be found in any previous work. Period. If 1% of the sentences or 5% of the plot in your novel appeared previously...then your work is not wholly original.⁴³³

Fake authenticity? Feigned sincerity? They've always been with us. Do social media really make sincerity harder to fake I wonder.⁴³⁴

Life isn't magic; life also isn't black and white. Being in the middle can be uncomfortable when things are viewed as dichotomies. But most of us live most of our lives in the middle, and I believe most sustainable progress comes from the middle.⁴³⁵

When was the last time you read some piece of econtent (or print content) proclaiming "X is dead"—where X is something other than a person who's recently deceased? Five minutes ago? An hour ago? Yesterday?⁴³⁶

2010

Languages that lack extended counting systems sometimes get it right. For many purposes, "one, two, three...10...lots" aligns with our perspective. As humans, we have problems judging differences among big numbers in general, but we're inclined to regard large numbers as important and differences between them as meaningful.⁴³⁷

If you've been reading *real* blogs for the past decade, you may have noticed a change in the past year or two. I'm finding significantly fewer posts and in many cases, somewhat longer posts.⁴³⁸

Some words just aren't said in polite company: I count among them the "F"-word. No, not that one; the one that I translated to "partial success" in the title of this column. Failure. It's hard enough to admit being wrong, at least for some people. Admitting failure is much tougher.⁴³⁹

If you're suspicious that a clumsy plagiarist has cut-and-pasted without paraphrasing, almost any medium-length sentence *may* suggest you should check further. It could be entirely innocent. But it seems surprisingly uncommon for the same 10-word

string to show up more than one. Our everyday language is more varied and diverse than I think most of us expect.⁴⁴⁰

I'd be surprised if ALA Midwinter and ALA Annual don't shrink somewhat. I would also be surprised if either conference shrank so much that it ceased to be viable or profitable.⁴⁴¹

TechMust lists are mostly overreaching assertions. I have yet to hear of librarians being fired because they lacked sufficient Orkut expertise or didn't have Bebo and Nexopia profiles.⁴⁴²

2011

There's reason to believe that it isn't the big commercial publishers and their overpriced journals that will be hit first as the subscription model continues to crumble. The first to go tend to be journals with smaller audiences and lesser reputations, including many of the more reasonably priced journals and those in the humanities.⁴⁴³

I believe gloom and doom about the future of reading has subsided quite a bit. I think there's less nonsense about universal aliteracy—the idea that kids don't read books—or notions that “postliteracy” is a desirable future.⁴⁴⁴

The heyday of “Library 2.0” is long past. However, the usefulness of Library 2.0 concepts and philosophies began long before mid-2005 and should continue into the future. If these concepts and philosophies make libraries more flexible and get them more in real touch with their own communities, we all benefit.⁴⁴⁵

The big issues for PoD—other than the discovery and review issues previously mentioned—are those faced by all self-publishers and micropublishers. Actually producing the book is now the easy part. The hard parts come before (writing, editing, copy-editing, proofreading, layout) and, perhaps most importantly, *after* publication (marketing and publicity).⁴⁴⁶

It was always easier to start a blog than to maintain it, but these days, it's even easier to start a Twitter account or a Facebook page. For many public libraries, one or both of those may be better choices.⁴⁴⁷

We also continue to hear that OA—even referring to articles based on government-funded research—is somehow socialism. Societies that rely on library subscriptions to subsidize other activities argue (never directly) that this is both proper and mandatory, that no change in publishing can be allowed to diminish those revenues—even as academic libraries grow ever less able to keep up with journal price

increases, which are consistently much higher than inflation.⁴⁴⁸

I made clear in 2009 that the discussion about privatization is *not* about whether the proposed settlement was ideal, should be modified, or should be abandoned entirely. It's about language and demonization. “Privatization” is a vivid rallying cry for some sectors. But vividness does not, in my mind, excuse fundamental inaccuracy—and misusing the language turns off those of us who believe that words *do* have meaning.⁴⁴⁹

2012

Good publishers have access to many more first-rate typefaces than you probably do. Good book designers will use those typefaces intelligently based on the nature of a book and are likely to achieve more polished and interesting layout and typography than you will just using and modifying templates. Good editing is important to a book's worth.⁴⁵⁰

It's all well and good to write about how you *could* produce a polished book using nothing but Word—but do I mean what I say?⁴⁵¹

2013

How many libraries have spent significant amounts of time, energy, and possibly even money building Second Life presences when it was hot stuff? How many are still there—and find that they've reached more than a handful of people within their own communities? Second Life was the subject of more conference programs than I can remember, with extravagant praise for this sure-fire wave of the future. It was the shiny...and then it wasn't. MySpace—except for the music community and maybe some other communities—has similarly gone from the shiny to, well, a second-rate social network. Was your North American library on Orkut? Is it now?⁴⁵²

Traditionally, self-publishing involved substantial capital costs and, in essence, becoming your own publisher. You had to contract with a printer and binder, buy several hundred or a few thousand copies up front, store them, and fulfill orders. Micropublishing eliminates up-front costs and turns fulfillment over to a service agency, but producing book one at a time is more expensive.⁴⁵³

Every library, no matter how small or how large, including public, academic, and others, can and I believe should be a special kind of makerspace: a makerspace for the mind. That is what library publishing and library support for patron publishing is all about: providing the tools to develop books, articles, and

other publications—creations where the mind is the primary resource. It's a role that's suitable for public libraries as small as Brownell Public Library in Kansas or Cliff Island Library in Maine; it's a role that's suitable for the Little Priest Tribal College in Nebraska and the John Wesley College in North Carolina.⁴⁵⁴

2014

Looking at the reality of library spending on serials since 2002, it's tempting to use the analogy of a person who's been gut shot and is bleeding at the rate of one pint of blood per hour. If doctors patch things up so that the patient is now losing one pint of blood per day, that's a substantial improvement—but only a fool would say the problem has been solved and send the patient home.⁴⁵⁵

Are most U.S. public libraries already on Facebook or Twitter? That's not clear. In a summer 2011 survey of public library agencies in 25 states, slightly less than half (48%) appeared to have either library-run Facebook pages or Twitter accounts. The missing majority was not just smaller rural libraries, however. Although a majority of libraries serving 25,000 people or more *did* have Facebook pages, more than a third of those libraries were not apparently active on Facebook or Twitter.⁴⁵⁶

2015

In the early days of OA publishing (going back to 1987 and lasting at least until 2001), OA was idealistic. Societies and groups of people started free online-only journals that filled gaps in the literature. Fewer than one-quarter of OA journals founded prior to 2006 charge fees. Idealism has been joined by opportunism, with publishers looking to take advantage of readily available funds in medicine and other fields. There seems to have been a gold rush between 2006 and 2013. Still, idealism plays a major role. Many APC-charging journals charge just enough to keep going, and more than 2,700 new no-fee journals emerged between 2005 and 2013.⁴⁵⁷

What fees are reasonable or unreasonable? There's no simple answer to that question. The answers vary based on available government, association and institutional subsidies (and in-kind subsidies), the size of the journal, the subject area of the journal (some subjects may require much more rigorous peer review than others), and many other factors. I've chosen a breakpoint of \$1,000 as one level at which it's reasonable to ask questions about

whether a journal should need that much money—but as a single breakpoint, it's arbitrary and certainly wrong in some cases. Based on various initiatives, it's possible to suggest \$90 or \$500 or \$625 or \$1,350 as a “justifiable costs per article” point—and those may all be right and wrong.⁴⁵⁸

Closing

That's it for now—except for 17 or 18 formal publications I no longer seem to have copies of, 19 or 20 self-published books, and 187 issues (to date) of *Cites & Insights*.

I obviously owe a great deal to a number of tolerant editors at ITI, ALA and the old Pierian Press. It's been an interesting few decades...and I'm not quite done just yet.

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Masthead

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