

Cites & Insights

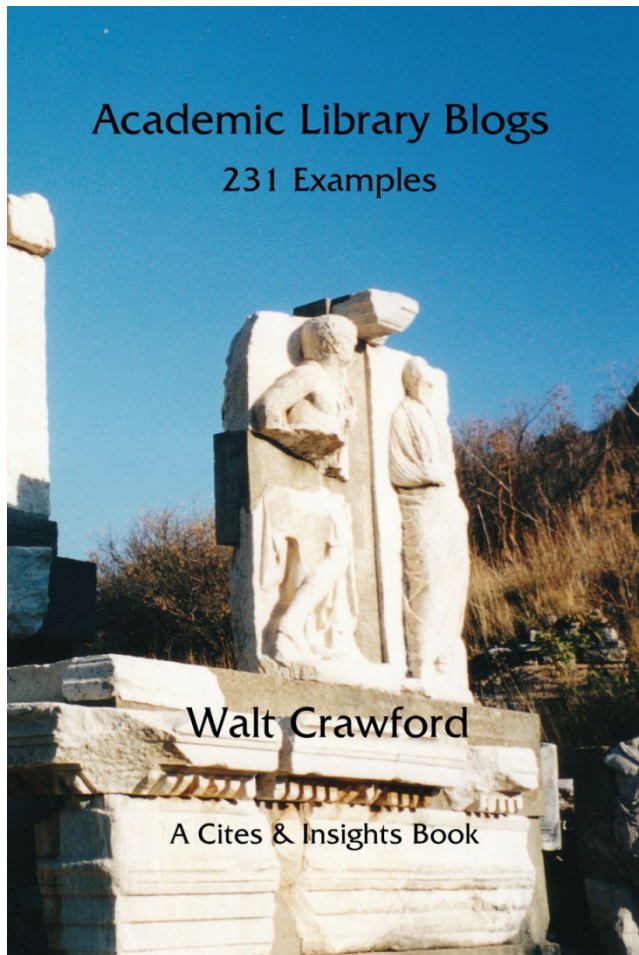
Crawford at Large
Libraries • Policy • Technology • Media

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I'm pleased to announce the availability of *Academic Library Blogs: 231 Examples*.

The 289-page 6x9 trade paperback (x+279 pages) features descriptions and sample posts for a wide range of blogs from 156 institutions of higher education in the United States, Canada, Australia, Botswana, England, Greece, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland and Wales.

You can buy the paperback with a great cover and cream heavyweight "book paper" interior pages for \$29.50 plus shipping from the Cites & Insights bookstore at lulu.com (lulu.com/waltcrawford) or from

Amazon.com—or, initially, Amazon's CreateSpace subsidiary (www.createspace.com/3330738). (At this writing, the book isn't searchable via Amazon, but it should be at some point.) At Amazon, the ISBN is 978-1434832894; the Lulu version doesn't have an ISBN. The book's most definitely a *book*—but if you really don't want it in print form, it's possible to buy the Lulu version as a PDF download for \$20.

The book's been out and fully available since January 17, 2008. It complements *Public Library Blogs: 252 Examples* (same price) and generally uses the same rules and metrics, except that I don't attempt to use service populations for academic libraries.

Why This Book?

Here's part of Chapter One:

Should your academic library have a blog—or more blogs than it already has?

I can't answer that question. I can say there's a good chance your library could benefit from one or more blogs.

If anyone tells you that your library *must* have a blog, they're wrong. Very few solutions apply to every library, no matter how large or small.

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On the other hand, dozens of academic libraries already use blogs to good effect. I believe most academic libraries could serve their communities well by initiating blogs or adding new blogs—although some of those blogs might not *look* like blogs.

This book won't tell you how to start and maintain a blog. You can find plenty of advice within the library literature and elsewhere, including sources as diverse as Michael P. Sauer's *Blogging and RSS: a librarian's guide* (Information Today, 2006) and the first week's content in the **Five Weeks to a Social Library** course (www.sociallibraries.com/course/week1). For that matter, you can go to blogger (blogger.com) or wordpress

(wordpress.com) and try one out, just to get started: It doesn't take long and it's absolutely free.

If you're reading this, you're probably thinking about a blog for your library or adding more to what you already have. Or you're at one of the 165 academic institutions or libraries included here and want to see how your blogs compare to others.

You could check out every academic library blog listed in the two major sources (the "Weblogs – Academic Libraries" page of LISWiki...and the "Academic libraries" page of *Blogging Libraries Wiki*... But that's more than 525 links (in late December 2007)—a lot of blogs to go through.

The purpose of this book is to guide you to blogs that you might find useful when thinking about your own library's case—blogs from nearby libraries, blogs from institutions you consider peers or blogs that specialize in topics or work in ways that you'll find interesting.

What's here? Academic library blogs that were listed in one of the two primary wiki lists of library blogs as of May 2007 and that met a few basic criteria:

- In English
- Started before 2007 (since "young" blogs have a high failure rate and I'm interested in showing plausible successes)
- Have at least one post in two of the three "study months," March, April and May 2007
- Appear to be a blog in most key respects, or to be a blog portion of a library home page (in some cases, the blog is the homepage)

That resulted in 211 blogs from 169 libraries and groups of libraries (I didn't count institutions at that point). A few of those disappeared before I began preparing the book in late 2007, and as I was doing that preparation, I added other blogs from the same libraries (never more than five blogs from one library) that met the criteria but weren't listed in the wikis. The final result: 231 blogs from 165 libraries or groups of libraries in 156 academic institutions.

If your library is considering a blog, this book should help you find blogs from comparable libraries as examples. If your library has a blog and is considering more (or revising the ones you have), this book should help you find interesting examples.

Who's There?

Blogs are included from these academic institutions:

- Adrian College
- American School of Classical Studies at Athens
- Arizona State University
- Armstrong Atlantic State University
- Art Institute of Dallas
- Ashland University
- Auburn University
- Auraria Library

- Austin Community College
- Ball State University
- Binghamton University
- Bloomfield College
- Boise State University
- Bond University
- Bridgewater State College
- Buffalo State College
- Butler Community College
- Butler University
- Case Western Reserve University
- Central Piedmont Community College
- College of DuPage
- College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University
- College of William & Mary
- Colorado College
- Colorado State University
- Colorado State University-Pueblo
- Danville Area Community College
- Drexel University
- Duke University
- Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Eastern Kentucky University
- Eastern Oregon University
- Empire State College
- Georgia Perimeter College
- Georgia State University
- Grand Valley State University
- Green River Community College
- Guilford Technical Community College
- Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre (HOORC)
- Harvard University
- Heriot-Watt University
- Highline Community College
- Indiana University South Bend
- Institute for Astronomy
- IUPUI
- Kalamazoo College
- Kansas State University
- LaGuardia Community College
- Lawrence University
- Lewis & Clark College
- Lidcombe College of TAFE
- Louisiana State University
- LSU Health Sciences Center-Shreveport
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- McMaster University
- Medicine Hat College
- Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology
- Montgomery County Community College
- Moraine Valley Community College
- Mount Saint Vincent University
- Mount Sinai School of Medicine
- Muskingum College

- National Art School
- Naval Postgraduate School
- New York Institute of Technology
- North Carolina State University
- North Metro Technical College
- Northeastern State University
- Northern Virginia Community College
- Northwestern University
- Oberlin College
- Ohio University
- Olympic College
- Otterbein College
- Pacific NW College of Art
- Pasadena City College
- Pennsylvania State University
- Pennsylvania State University-Delaware County
- Pensacola Junior College
- Philadelphia University
- Pratt Institute
- Princeton University
- Purchase College
- Regent University
- Reid Kerr College
- Rio Hondo College
- Rollins College
- Royal College of Midwives
- Ryerson University
- Saint Mary's University
- Seattle University
- Slippery Rock University
- Sonoma State University
- Southern Illinois University
- Springfield Technical Community College
- St. Bonaventure University
- St. Mary's University
- St. Petersburg College
- SUNY Brockport
- SUNY Potsdam
- Temple University
- Tennessee Wesleyan College
- Texas State University-San Marcos
- Tufts University
- UConn Health Center
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University at Albany, SUNY
- University College Dublin
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- University of Alabama, Huntsville,
- University of Alberta
- University of Baltimore
- University of British Columbia
- University of Calgary
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of Canterbury
- University of Colorado at Boulder
- University of Connecticut Stamford
- University of Evansville
- University of Georgia
- University of Glamorgan
- University of Houston
- University of Huddersfield, Oldham
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- University of Iowa
- University of Massachusetts Amherst
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota
- University of Montana-Missoula
- University of Montevallo
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of Richmond
- University of San Francisco
- University of Saskatchewan
- University of South Alabama
- University of South Carolina
- University of Tennessee
- University of Texas Dallas
- University of Toledo Health Science Campus
- University of Victoria
- University of Waikato
- University of Windsor
- University of Winnipeg
- University of Wisconsin Milwaukee
- University of Wyoming
- Vanderbilt University
- Virginia Tech
- Waubensee Community College
- West Virginia University
- Western Carolina University
- Western Kentucky University
- Western Michigan University
- Wheaton College
- Wheelock College
- Yale University

Varieties of Blog

What are the blogs “about”?

Most are general-purpose blogs or news blogs, in several cases just using a blog as a convenient way to provide library news on the library’s home page. Many of the others are blogs for departmental libraries. Including those blogs, I note these categories:

- Antarctic: one blog
- Architecture: one blog
- Art: three blogs
- Astronomy: one blog
- Biology and biological sciences: four blogs
- Books (as a topic): one blog
- Business: six blogs
- Children’s literature: one blog
- Classical/antiquities: one blog

- Conference reports: one blog
- Design: one blog
- Digitization and digital resources: three blogs
- Director's blogs: five blogs
- Distance education: two blogs
- Economics: one blog
- Education: five blogs
- Engineering: four blogs
- Environment: one blog
- ERC: one blog
- Gaming: one blog
- Geology: one blog
- Google Scholar: one blog
- Government and government documents: seven blogs
- Indigenous studies: one blog
- Journalism: one blog
- Law (blawgs): eight blogs
- Learning commons: one blog
- Linguistics: one blog
- Management: one blog
- Maps: one blog
- Media: one blog
- Medicine: seven blogs
- Midwifery: one blog
- Okavongo: one blog
- Physiotherapy: one blog
- Podcasts: one blog
- Poetry: one blog
- Population research: one blog
- Reference: two blogs
- Repository: one blog
- Research: one blog
- Resources: six blogs
- Reviews: three blogs
- Scholarly communication: two blogs
- Science: six blogs
- Special collections: four blogs
- Staff: two blogs
- Systems and technology: three blogs
- Textiles: one blog
- Thanks: one blog
- Undergraduate: two blogs

The Metrics

There is no such thing as an average blog—and they vary so much that the mean and median for any given measure tend to be quite different.

So it is with these 231 blogs. I used the same metrics as for public libraries (and generally include the same information). I won't repeat those metrics and findings here; the October 2007 *Cites & Insights* details the metrics used (with public library results).

You could say that an “average academic library blog” had 27 posts during the three-month period

March-May 2007, with 2.5 comments received, 16 illustrations, a total length of 3692 words and an average of 178 words per post. (Don't bother to multiply: No, the average post length times the average number of posts does *not* equal the average total words—because the average post length is the mean of all average post lengths.)

On the other hand, you could say that a “typical academic library blog” (the median rather than the mean) had 14 posts, no comments, one illustration, a total of 2,244 words and an average length of 143 words per post.

Both statements would be equally meaningful, which is to say not very. So, for example, there are three blogs with 27 posts each—but none of them had any comments, two had no illustrations (one had 12), and the average words per post was 88, 161, and 325. There are *nine* blogs with 14 posts each, the median, and indeed, six of the nine had no comments—but only one of the nine had one illustration and only one (a different one) was within 10% of the median average length per post. There is, as expected, no such thing as an average academic library blog.

An Example

It may be hard to visualize the blog writeups that make up most of this book (and *Public Library Blogs: 252 Examples*). Here's an actual example (from “16057” through the line starting “URL”), reformatted just enough to fit within *Cites & Insights*:

16057

Bailey Library, Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania 16057

Cites & Bytes @ Bailey

“a library newsletter, a compendium of interesting tidbits, a communication tool....from Bailey Library @ Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania. (Site Feed)”

Links to and from library website. Multicontributor blog with signed posts. Many posts show distinctive personal style—a very readable blog.

Metrics: 50 posts, 37 comments (0.7/post), 50 illustrations (1/post). Average length 203 words. Began October 2004. Slightly visible (1.4).

Sample post (April 30, 2007):

Withdrawn from the Collection Today...

Cheryl Downing, School Nurse by Ruth MacLeod (1964) that concludes with this statement:

“Suspended in a sea of rapture, Cheryl's only rational thought was that now she could look forward to the

most wonderful career of all—that of a wife helping her husband achieve his highest ambitions.”

Yuck. I couldn't find any cover illustration for Cheryl Downing, so used one of the more ubiquitous Cherry Ames (accused by Nancy Drew of not being able to hold a job, in some parody I read.) The Cheryl Downing book is part of a series called “Career-Romance for Young Moderns,” which also includes such titles as *Introducing Patti Lewis*, *Home Economist*, *Allison Day: Weather Girl*, *Tomboy Teacher*, and *Magic in Her Voice* (a tale of a telephone ad-taker.) I strongly suspect they all conclude with suspension in a sea of rapture when Mr. Right takes them away from the horror of working for a living. Let's think of some sequels!

[The comments are priceless, but you'll have to go look for those yourself.]

URL: <http://baileylibrary.blogspot.com/>

A Public Library Example

Since I didn't include an actual example last October, here's one from *Public Library Blogs: 252 Examples* (from “07922” through the line beginning “URL”):

07922

Berkeley Heights Public Library, Berkeley Heights, New Jersey 07922. Serves 12,000.

Berkeley Heights Public Library Book Blog

Welcome: “This family friendly blog features frequently updated news about the **Berkeley Heights Public Library** with a strong emphasis on BHPL's library services, popular books and non-book materials. Local and New Jersey events and people are often noted. Stories from the Reference Department of this small public library are sometimes featured, but patron anonymity is always assured.” Followed by a “how this blog works” statement encouraging comments.

Link to library website within set of right-column links, *below* a set of links to sites mentioned in posts. Link *from* library website on secondary page, “web-links.” All posts signed by Anne deFuria, reference librarian.

Wide-ranging “book-related” posts with distinctive voice.

Metrics: 38 posts, 5 comments, 3 illustrations. Average length 205 words. **Began May 2005.** Slightly visible (1.3).

Sample post (March 7, 2007), partial:

Books in the Bookbag

Books in bookbags and backpacks, stuffed in a purse, piled on the coffee table or bedside table, waiting on the kitchen counter to be returned to the library, stuffed sideways on bookshelves waiting to be read: wherever you keep the books that buffer you from the possibility of

being bookless when you finish the one you are reading might be the bibliophilic (word?) equivalent of keeping milk and bread on hand in case of a snowstorm.

BHPL has uncataloged paperbacks which patrons borrow without actually checking them out so there is no due date. When finished, return the book or another paperback of your own. Think of these books as security blankets which can be kept on hand without worrying about due dates. Turn to them if your current pile of checked out books prove to be duds and snow has shut down all the roads to the library. (BHPL rarely closes for snow, though.)

Lately, I've found another kind of bookish security blanket: books of **very short** short-stories, which is called either “sudden” fiction or “flash” fiction. Stuffed in the necessarily largish reticule (as S.J. Perelman would have said) is **New sudden fiction : short-short stories from America and beyond** / edited by Robert Shapard and James Thomas. One story told in just five pages tells the surreal tale of a bank clerk who covets a red fox fur coat, really obsesses on this coat, puts a downpayment on it and suddenly becoming athletic, starts to run in the forest, develops an acute sense of smell, craves bloody meat...you can see where this is going....

URL: <http://bhplnjbookgroup.blogspot.com/>

And Now There Are Five...

Cites & Insights Books isn't a traditional publisher, but there are now five books linked to that name: *Balanced Libraries: Thoughts on Continuity and Change*, *Public Library Blogs: 252 Examples*, *Cites & Insights 7: 2007*, *Cites & Insights 6: 2006* and *Academic Library Blogs: 231 Examples*.

They're all trade paperbacks with full-color covers featuring my wife's travel photography (*Academic Library Blogs* has another picture at Ephesus, but not the library). The two *Cites & Insights* volumes are 8.5x11" on bright-white 60lb. book stock; the others are 6x9"—on cream 60lb. book stock from Lulu and (except for *Academic Library Blogs*) bright white 60lb. book stock from CreateSpace/Amazon. (*Academic Library Blogs* is on cream stock from both sources.) Each book is \$29.50. PDF ebook versions of the three 6x9 books are also available from Lulu for \$20. (If I could bundle the print and ebook versions for a lower price, I would. So far, I can't—just as I can't bundle the two blog books, much as I'd like to.) The bound volumes of *Cites & Insights* are exclusively available from Lulu.

I believe each book is a bargain. I think many of you would find one or more of them worthwhile. Purchases of the books help support *Cites & Insights*, at least indirectly.

I don't anticipate that there will be any more *Cites & Insights* Books for the first half of 2008. At or

around the time of ALA Annual, I'll formulate some initial thoughts on how this experiment is going and where it might go.

Preparing this commentary, I realized there are other things I could have done with the data used to prepare the two library blog books—e.g., look for correlations between blogs with more comments than most and other blog characteristics. I might yet do some of that informal analysis in future issues of *Cites & Insights*. If time and interest permit, that is.

Trends & Quick Takes

Trends and Forecasts

January seems to be a time to predict the future, contemplate current trends and—sometimes—follow up the previous year's projections with a scorecard. Since I included some predictions (and scorecards) last year, this is a good time to see how those came out, along with a sampling of new predictions and trends.

Scorecards for 2007

One mark of a proper business guru (or guru in general) is that they *never* look back at past projections. It could make them look fallible, even foolish—and that's no way to keep the best-selling books and high-priced speeches going. We're supposed to forget what they said last year, two years ago, five years ago: They're *gurus*, so they *must* be right.

High-profile people aren't always gurus of that sort. That's specifically true for Ed Felten of *Freedom to tinker*, who regularly—and honestly—reviews his previous year's predictions. Last year, I noted five of Felten's 13 predictions that I regarded as "in scope," without offering my own comments. Four of the five were right on the money, I believe. The fifth ("Bogus airport security procedures will peak and start to decrease")—well, when have you seen the current Presidential administration admit a mistake and make changes for the better?

Here's what Felten and his team had to say, excerpted and reformatted, with comments I might choose to add in boldface, noting that the predictions I mentioned last year are #1, 3, 5, 8 and 12:

As usual, we'll start the new year by reviewing the predictions we made for the previous year. Here now, our 2007 predictions, in italics, with hindsight in ordinary type.

(1) *DRM technology will still fail to prevent widespread infringement. In a related development, pigs will still fail to fly.*

We predict this every year, and it's always right. This prediction is so obvious that it's almost unfair to count it. Verdict: right.

(3) *Despite the ascent of Howard Berman (D-Hollywood) to the chair of the House IP subcommittee, copyright issues will remain stalemated in Congress.*

As predicted, not much happened in Congress on the copyright front. As usual, some bad bills were proposed, but none came close to passage. Verdict: right. **Much as it pains me to say this, "no losses" seems to be the best news we can expect on the copyright front.**

(4) *Like the Republicans before them, the Democrats' tech policy will disappoint.*

Very little changed. For the most part, tech policy issues do not break down neatly along party lines. Verdict: right.

(5) *Major record companies will sell a significant number of MP3s, promoting them as compatible with everything. Movie studios won't be ready to follow suit, persisting in their unsuccessful DRM strategy.*

Two of the four major record companies now sell MP3s, and a third announced it will soon start. I haven't seen sales statistics, but given that Amazon's store sells only MP3s, sales can't be too low. As predicted, movie studios are still betting on DRM. Verdict: right. **I believe the other two majors have now come on board Amazon's no-DRM MP3 store.**

(8) *AACS, the encryption system for next-gen DVDs, will melt down and become as ineffectual as the CSS system used on ordinary DVDs.*

AACS was defeated and you can now buy commercial software that circumvents it. Verdict: right.

(11) *There will be less attention to e-voting as the 2008 election seems far away and the public assumes progress is being made. The Holt e-voting bill will pass, ratifying the now-solid public consensus in favor of paper trails.*

Attention to e-voting was down a bit. Despite widespread public unhappiness with paperless voting, the Holt bill did not pass, mostly due to pushback from state and local officials. Rep. Holt is reportedly readying a more limited bill for introduction in January. Verdict: mostly wrong. **On the other hand, California officials took a fairly firm stance against low-security e-voting systems.**

(12) *Bogus airport security procedures will peak and start to decrease.*

Bogus procedures may or may not have peaked, but I didn't see any decrease. Verdict: unclear. **I'd have to call this one wrong: The procedures are as silly as ever.**

(13) *On cellphones, software products will increasingly compete independent of hardware.*

There was a modest growth of third-party software applications for cellphones, including some cross-platform applications. But there was less of this than we predicted. Verdict: mostly wrong.

Our overall score: five right, two mostly wrong, five wrong, one unclear.

A salute to Felten and his colleagues. How many forecasters would explicitly say they were more wrong than right?

Information overlord

Scott Vine offered a series of predictions for 2007, some of which I cited—with my own comments in italics. Vine is another one with the courage of his own convictions: He posted his predictions and “How did I do?” on January 5, 2008 (www.information-overlord.co.uk). Since I added comments to the seven I considered particularly interesting, I’ll include those comments here (in italics), followed by Vine’s own scorecard (in bold) and my thought, if any, following that—in regular type rather than smaller indented quote style.

AllofMP3.com to get bought in a surprise (and risky?) move by Yahoo, who recognise its business model as winner. *Doubtful—the legal risk probably exceeds the potential reward.* **WRONG: AllofMp3 was shut down (unless you were using the Alltunes desktop version), but the company behind it just set up new sites.**

I was pretty sure Yahoo would never take that kind of risk, particularly given the American legal situation—and they didn’t.

Google will buy Pandora. *Could happen, but I hope not.* **WRONG: LastFm was the major online discovery site to get snapped up. I still think Pandora could be a target though.**

I can’t disagree that Pandora could be a target—but I’m pleased they didn’t become part of Google.

The US District Court will once again hold that COPA is unconstitutional in its attempts to protect children online. *Let’s hope this is true...and that the Supreme Court agrees.* **RIGHT: common sense prevailed.**

Microsoft will buy AOL. *Doubtful.* **WRONG: Although I do not discount this one coming true in 2008.**

I do (discount this happening in 2008), although I could be wrong. I don’t see why Microsoft would consider AOL a worthwhile acquisition—there’s just not much there anymore.

IPTV will really take off. **RIGHT?: Although I think it will be the next 18 months when this really takes off in a big way.**

This may be right for the UK, but certainly not for the US, unless you count low-res shortform video as IPTV—and I think that’s stretching it.

Mobile spam and viruses will grow. *Likely.* **RIGHT (although not as right as I thought I’d be).**

DRM in music will be abandoned (may be 2008 until this one really happens, but maybe). *Doubtful, although it’s a wonderful notion.* **RIGHT: or as good as, with Sony BMG just announcing that they will complete the list**

of majors ditching DRM in their commercial download sales.

Here, I’m delighted to say Vine was closer to the truth than I was. It’s certainly not abandoned, since DRM-heavy iTunes is still the biggest force in downloaded music, but the writing is definitely on the wall.

One other Vine 2007 prediction I chose not to include last year, along with his scorecard comments and mine.

Avatars will rule the world ... maybe. **WRONG.**

I think it’s now clear avatars aren’t gaining real-world significance or numbers nearly as quickly as they gained media and blog recognition.

How did Vine do overall? Excluding sports predictions, six right and seven wrong—and I’d score it 5.5 right and 7.5 wrong. That’s a good track record, and Vine gets full credit for taking responsibility for his own predictions. My second-guessing, noting that I’m not ready to give my own brave predictions? I called it right six times out of seven, with the seventh being a tossup—and a case where I hoped I was wrong. But it’s *always* easier to second-guess somebody else’s predictions than it is to make your own.

Wired news: “Wild predictions for a wired 2007”

I think these were intended to be grain-of-salt predictions. Here are a few, again with my thoughts in *italics* and my own followup in **bold**. (I didn’t find any scorecard, but may have missed it.)

Spam Doubles: No-brainer—but no one cares because we’re all using IM, especially at work. *“We’re all” is just nonsense here.* **The “we’re all using IM” line is sheer Wired-style garbage—but email spam filters have done a reasonable, if far from perfect, job of keeping spam a nuisance rather than a disaster.**

Year o’ the Laptop: Half of all new computers sold in 2007 will be laptops and 20 percent of those will be Apple’s MacBooks. *First part: Possible. Second part: Unlikely—that would more than double Apple’s market share even if they didn’t sell a single iMac or other desktop.* **Yes, roughly half of PCs sold were notebooks. No report I’ve seen would credit Apple with anything close to 20% of notebook sales, however.**

Print to Web: A major newspaper gives up printing on paper to publish exclusively online. *Unlikely—the economics still don’t work. Unless you define “major” very broadly.* **Just hasn’t happened.**

Apple goes Apple: The entire Beatles catalog is licensed exclusively to iTunes for a year. *Seems unlikely.* **Didn’t happen—and I’d regard it as highly improbable that the Beatles would give iTunes an exclusive even in 2008.**

HD-DVD wins: HD-DVD is the clear winner over Blu-ray in the DVD format wars. Oh yes, and the PS3 is a bust. *I’m already on record as saying that Blu-ray is the like-*

ly “winner” if there is one, so I think this is a bad call. **Wrong, wrong, wrong. Blu-ray is the clear sales winner by every known metric.**

No More Dads: Artificial gametes made from female eggs are sold over the internet, making fathers biologically irrelevant. *And pigs will fly.* **Somehow, the pigs are still on the ground.**

Greenland Becomes Green: As the ice melts, Greenland becomes literally green. *Not this year, but...* **OK, global warming is real—but not quite that fast.**

Raelians Need Not Apply: A human embryo is cloned for real. *Claimed, yes; real, unlikely.* **I don't even remember any serious claims.**

Don't Don't Be Evil: Google drops “Don't be evil” as its corporate mantra. Evil has its justifications, but no one likes a hypocrite. *Unlikely.* **Didn't happen.**

They're Watching You: Congress passes a law requiring internet service providers to keep logs of all web traffic and e-mail for three years. *Highly unlikely.* **Didn't happen.**

MySpace Spaces Out: Myspace splinters as teens head for niche sites... *Likely enough.* **If anything, the migration seems to be to Facebook, hardly a niche site—but MySpace usage still far outweighs Facebook and any other social site.**

Wowzer. Maybe that's why I didn't find a 2008 set of “wild predictions”—even a stopped clock is right twice a day, but this set of predictions was so wild as to be ludicrous.

Peter Suber's predictions for 2007

Here are very brief excerpts from his 2007 predictions. My (rare) comments are in italics, with follow-up (if any) in bold.

The spread of OA archiving policies by funding agencies and universities is an unstoppable trend [with] more mandates than requests. **Maybe unstoppable—but slow.**

The spread of institutional repositories is equally unstoppable... I'm tempted to predict a continuing tension between the narrow conception of institutional repositories (to provide OA for eprints) and the broad conception of IRs (to provide OA for all kinds of digital content, from eprints to courseware, conference webcasts, student work, digitized library collections, administrative records, and so on, with at least as much attention on preservation as access). But I have to predict that the broad conception will prevail. **The spread itself seems to be slowing (at least in terms of actual usage), and without the “broad conception” I suspect most IRs would be comatose.**

Funding agencies with weak OA policies... will find, like the NIH, that the policies generate unacceptably low compliance rates or unacceptably long embargoes... [And the NIH will eventually move to a mandate.]

When funding agencies consider OA mandates, the center of attention will be the length of the permissible embargo.... For authors and readers, the sweet spot is

zero—no embargo at all. The embargo period will be the center of attention for four reasons: (1) it really could make the difference between effective and ineffective OA; (2) it really could make the difference between survivable and unsurvivable cancellations; (3) it's not binary and could always be nudged up or down; (4) and most other issues have already been settled.

Publishers who don't already consent to author self-archiving are facing increased pressure to go green. Publishers who do already consent are feeling increased pressure to retract or scale back their permission (say) by adding fees or embargoes or both... I think both will continue to increase.

We'll continue to debate the question whether high-volume OA archiving will reduce journal subscriptions, and we'll continue to debate it without hard evidence... [Suber goes on to say “we'll need the money” spent on subscriptions to pay for the OA alternative—which leaves libraries' other needs out in the cold.]

We may see occasional friction between proponents of fee-based and no-fee OA journals, just as we see occasional friction between proponents of OA archives and OA journals. But in both cases it's best to interpret this as division of labor rather than real rivalry... **I think we're seeing a new kind of friction: Supposed gold OA advocate(s) who oppose any form of OA that doesn't promise to keep big publishers whole.**

More publishers will adopt the hybrid OA model for more journals. Because the hybrid model is so risk-free, this is an easy prediction... The big question for publishers is whether they want author uptake badly enough to make it attractive... I'm not predicting that many hybrid OA journals will convert to full OA, though that's what I'd like to see happen.

A few years ago most book publishers denied that free online full-text searching (even without reading) would increase net sales. Today most believe it. Today most deny or don't want to believe that free online full-text **reading** will also increase net sales. But in a couple of years most will believe it and they will seize it as a new and lucrative business model which, incidentally, will help readers, researchers, and purchasers enormously. In retrospect, it will look a lot like the fuss about distributing movies on videotape—a profitable no-brainer delayed by short-sighted panic. *Quoted in full because it's a false analogy—videotapes were never free—and because I doubt this one.* **I still doubt this for full-text reading—and the analogy continues to be false.**

Novel copyright problems are coming over the horizon. Do machine-generated paraphrases of copyrighted texts infringe copyright? What about databases of facts and assertions gleaned from copyrighted texts, either by human gleaners or by software? What about data (not itself copyrightable) seamlessly integrated with a copyrighted text? *I doubt that any of these will be taken up seriously in 2007, at least. I could be wrong.*

In 2007 we'll see an outcome in the lawsuits against the Google Library project... I predict a judicial ruling, not a settlement. **Turns out these particular wheels turn exceedingly slowly: No outcome of any sort.**

We've used many methods over the years to educate publishing scholars about OA, and for many reasons this work has been slow-going... [O]ne elegant method is starting to work 24/7 without draining anyone's time or energy. It's simply the growing exposure of existing OA literature. [I]t's easy to predict that this kind of spontaneous author education will also continue to grow. **On the other hand, university faculty continue to show very little interest in "spontaneously" using their IRs for article deposit.**

As always, **go read the original.**

Paula Hane's "trends to watch in 2007"

Hane, editor of Information Today, Inc's *Newsbreaks*, offered this list in a January 8, 2007 article "Wrapping up 2006; looking ahead" that also comments on what Hane considered the most important trends for 2006. I listed half of the 2007 trends with comments on some. Updates in bold.

- Wikis will likely grow in numbers and importance. **True.**
- We'll see more interesting and useful content and tools mashups. **"More" is easy: True.**
- "Widgets" will be cool and ubiquitous... *"Cool" is a personal judgment; many of us will avoid widgets to avoid gadget overload.* **Ubiquitous? Not a chance. Wrong.**
- We'll see more experimentation with new forms of publishing... **Again, "more" makes this right, although I'm not sure I've seen a big increase.**
- Video will continue to be a big deal. *But most people will still watch most video in the form of professional productions, that is, TV and DVD.* **True—both Hane's comment and my note.**
- Copyright issues won't just go away and could come to a head in 2007. *They won't go away—that's for sure—but even with Berman in charge, I believe that more oppressive legislation is unlikely (and more balanced legislation close to impossible, unfortunately).* **You can't argue with "could," but in fact my comment was on the money. No significant new legislation.**

Forecasts for 2008

Scott Vine has nine forecasts for this year, some of which are wholly out of my scope. You can find them all on his blog in a January 9, 2008 post. Most are interesting and

worth thinking about, but simply beyond the scope of *C&I* as I currently see it. Here's one, though:

MP3 to the masses - let the battle commence. Can Amazon kick iTunes' arse in 2008??

Maybe. I've grown to dislike Steve "people don't read books anyway" Jobs enough that I can't offer an unbiased comment. I'd like to think DRM-free MP3 that can be used on any player would attract people away from the iMonolith, but that may be wishful thinking.

Ed Felten and friends

Felten and team (Alex Halderman, David Robinson and Dan Wallach) issued their "official Freedom to Tinker predictions" on January 7, 2008 (www.freedom-to-tinker.com). Of the 14 predictions, I think 11 are in scope and worth noting. My comments, if any, in italics.

- (1) DRM technology will still fail to prevent widespread infringement. In a related development, pigs will still fail to fly. *I believe this will be less true in 2008—because I think there will be less use of DRM. Otherwise, the safest prediction around.*
- (2) Copyright issues will still be gridlocked in Congress. *Probably, and maybe a good thing.*
- (3) No patent reform bill will be passed. Baby steps toward a deal between the infotech and biotech industries won't lead anywhere. *Probably, and almost certainly a bad thing.*
- (4) DRM-free sales will become standard in the music business. The movie studios will flirt with the idea of DRM-free sales but won't take the plunge, yet. *The wildcard: Now that Sony has finally seen the light on the music side, if its generally anti-DRM hardware side becomes more powerful, the Sony-owned studios just might recognize the virtue of DRM-free sales. On balance, though, Felten's probably right.*
- (5) The 2008 elections will not see an e-voting meltdown of Florida 2000 proportions, but a bevy of smaller problems will be reported, further fueling the trend toward reform. *Almost certainly right on both counts.*
- (7) Second Life will jump the shark and the cool kids will start moving elsewhere; but virtual worlds generally will lumber on. *Almost certainly right, noting that Second Life never really had that many users.*
- (10) If a Democrat wins the White House, we'll hear talk about reinvigorated antitrust enforcement in the tech industries. (But of course it will all be talk, as the new administration won't take office until 2009.) *One can only hope.*
- (11) A Facebook application will cause a big privacy to-do. *Seems likely.*
- (12) There will be calls for legislation to create a sort of Web 2.0 user's bill of rights, giving users rights to access and extract information held by sites; but no action will be taken. *I'd call this one nearly certain.*
- (13) An epidemic of news stories about teenage webcam exhibitionism will lead to calls for regulation. *Not unlike-*

ly—and if there is regulation, it will be overreaching and probably unconstitutional.

(14) Somebody will get Skype or a similar VoIP client running on an Apple iPhone and it will, at least initially, operate over AT&T's cellular phone network. AT&T and/or Apple will go out of their way to break this, either by filtering the network traffic or by locking down the iPhone. *Highly probable.*

Peter Suber's predictions for 2008

The December 2007 issue of *SPARC Open Access News* (www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/) includes ten predictions related to open access, excerpted here, with comments following in unindented type. You should read the original article, particularly for discussions such as (2), where I'd like to be as sanguine for the long term as Suber is. Where I don't have a comment, assume I agree or lack an informed position.

(1) First, I'll be quick with the easy predictions: In 2008, there will be more new OA journals, more journal conversions from TA to OA, more OA repositories, more deposits in OA repositories, more OA to data, more OA to books, more OA to ETDs, more OA to courseware, and more OA policies—including OA mandates—at funding agencies and universities. These are not just easy; they're central. We'll see steady progress on all these important fronts.

(2) The rate of spontaneous author self-archiving—without intervention by funder or university policies—will only increase slowly in 2008. In one sense, this doesn't matter much if funder and university policies increase, which I'm also predicting. But the more we can supplement mandated green OA with spontaneous green OA, the faster and more securely we can reach our goal.

I'd say it **does** matter, for reasons Dorothea Salo has been discussing—and that the prediction is, unfortunately, correct.

(3) All stakeholders want to know whether OA mandates will cause libraries to cancel journal subscriptions, at least outside physics where we already know that high-volume OA archiving does not cause cancellations... We won't see decisive results in 2008. There are two reasons. First, if there's an effect, it will take more time to show up.... Second, even if subscriptions fall as OA archiving rises, it will be difficult to disentangle the cancellations caused by OA from the cancellations caused by natural attrition and librarian triage.

(4) The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) will mandate OA for NIH-funded research. If the mandate doesn't come as part of the NIH appropriation for fiscal 2008, then it will come another way.

Right. This happened—and the publishers and one so-called OA advocate (but only gold OA, only done his way) are screaming bloody murder.

(5) Publishers will always market their OA projects as boons to authors and readers, which is perfectly justifi-

fied. But with or without more OA mandates to force the issue, we'll start to see more OA and near-OA projects designed to help publishers themselves...

A particularly interesting discussion, and I don't know enough to comment, except to note that Suber knows his stuff.

(6) More publishers of OA journals will report profits or surpluses. Hindawi has proved that OA journals can be profitable by charging publication fees, and Medknow has proved that OA journals can be profitable without publication fees by offering priced, print editions (sometimes supplemented by advertising, membership dues, and reprint sales). We'll see more successes at both fee-based and no-fee OA journals.

Good news and almost certainly right—and, as Suber notes, these successes will continue to “compete with myths, misinformation, and misunderstanding.” Even though we now know that most OA journals don't charge publication fees, that fact hasn't sunk in (as Suber notes).

(7) We'll see more publisher-university deals... These deals create a new body of OA content—articles by faculty at participating institutions—for about the same price that institutions currently pay for subscriptions. They don't make whole journals OA, and hence don't make subscriptions unnecessary, but they do make articles OA. We'll see more of them because they benefit both parties. They benefit universities by delivering more bang for the library budget buck and by widening the dissemination of some faculty work. They benefit publishers by reducing the risk of cancellation.

(8) We'll see more funder-publisher deals, like the Wellcome Trust deal with Elsevier, the NIH deal with Elsevier, the deals of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) with Elsevier, Springer, and BioMed Central, and the Elsevier deals with most of the funders in the UKPMC Funders Group. Some of these deals pay publishers for gold OA when green OA would suffice, and some pay publishers for green OA when publishers don't need to be paid at all.

(9) We'll see more initiatives expressly designed to redirect money from subscriptions for TA journals to publication fees or subsidies for OA journals.

(10) Universities adopting new OA mandates will shift from the “required deposit” model of the early pioneers to the “required permission” model currently under review at the University of California (and some other institutions not ready to reveal their plans). This model reduces the demands on faculty and increases the certainty about permissions. As long as the university is willing to pay people, usually librarians, to make the actual deposits, it could be a faster and more frictionless way to move the deposit rate toward 100%.

Tim Bjarin's 2008 Predictions (in PC Magazine)

Bjarin notes his predictions for the past three years and touts their accuracy. Reading his 2007 predictions, I don't regard them as all that accurate—but I see that, as you'd expect from a market analyst selling pricey reports, they're worded in such a way that he can *claim* accuracy. Here's what he has for this year:

- **Smartphones get smarter and gain market share.** A repeat prediction and safe enough.
- **Flash-based laptops.** He mentions the rumor that the new Mac Air would be flash-based, and goes on to say “we will see at least one flash-based laptop of some type come from each of the major PC vendors.” Could be, although that may depend on your definition of “major PC vendor.”
- **“Basic PCs.”** He expects to see *lots* of bare-bones computers “priced around \$275 to \$350 and targeted at emerging markets.” Oddly enough, *neither* of his two examples falls in that price range: The XO-1 (OLPC) is cheaper (\$188, theoretically) and the ASUS Eee PC 4G is more expensive (\$399).
- **Social networks targeted by botnets.** Almost certainly true; once there's a big enough target, there's malware aimed at that target. Thus, also, the fifth prediction: **Smartphones become targets for viruses and identity theft.**
- **Social networks catch on with corporate users.** If he means LinkedIn or Facebook (which he mentions), probably. But he also mentions Second Life. Really?
- **Little screens get video.** Bjarin touts “media snacking.” Sigh.
- **Corporate IT and users demand green PCs.** One can only hope—and hope that people recognize the fallacy of replacing working “non-green” PCs with “green” PCs. Unless it's an energy hog, the greenest PC is the one you already own.
- **Apple gains significant market share.** By “significant,” he means that Apple could move up to somewhere between six and ten percent of the market. (I note here as in other columns that *PC* apparently doesn't copy-edit its columns—e.g., “more integrated than anything in the PC environment” in this prediction.)
- **Tech spending in U.S. could slow down.** Since I'm suggesting a time of limits, I can't disagree.

Lance Ulanoff's big trends for 2007 and 2008

Also from *PC Magazine*, this one's interesting because Ulanoff focuses on what he saw as key trends for 2007—and where he sees them going this year. I'm omitting some.

- **Vista flounders.** He's right that 2007 wasn't a great year for Vista—and I'm inclined to agree with his prognosis: “Vista will recover in 2008, and by the end of the year people will forget why they hated it so much.” As Ulanoff points out, XP didn't get off to a great start either. (Here, since I haven't yet made the move—which will come with my next PC—I trust my bright and skeptical wife. She's been using Vista for several months and has no desire to overwrite it with XP.)
- **iPod touches.** That is, the iPod Touch was a great success. Prognosis: “Look out, Apple. The competition has nimble feet.” Seems likely.
- **Google expands.** Prognosis: Google will win its wireless bid and get *partners* to roll out Android-based phones—but not build its own phones. Seems likely.
- **Facebook blows up** (in a good way, opening up to everyone). Prognosis: Facebook's “heat” will fade and its popularity start to decline. Since I don't use it, I won't comment.
- **Intel trumps AMD.** Prognosis: AMD has some interesting chips—but they really need to deliver. My own comment: My next PC will almost certainly be a quad-core Intel—but what do I know? Just this: AMD-equipped PCs seem to be “lowball” in various ways, which makes me nervous. Maybe that's not AMD's fault.
- **Viruses keep quiet and phishes get smarter.** Prognosis: This will continue. Probably true.
- **Retail rises from the dead.** “Remember how we thought that eventually everyone would shop online?” Prognosis: Companies will make the links to retail. My comment: “We” were wrong in the first place—not everybody wants to shop for major purchases online. Dell's appearance in Best Buy and Gateway's appearance, well, everywhere tells the tale: Most of us would rather just walk out of a store with a PC.
- **The HD DVD vs. Blu-Ray Battle Stalls.** Prognosis: “2008 will mark the year we stop caring about Blu-ray or HD DVD.” I wonder; I could see HD DVD calling it quits by the end of the year—but Ulanoff could be right. My fairly confident prediction: HD DVD will *not* run Blu-ray into the ground.

Mike Shatzkin on publishing trends

Excerpted from a piece in the January 7, 2008 *Publishers Weekly*, available at www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6517338.html. Shatzkin remembers Arthur Anderson's “now-infamous turn-of-the-millennium” projection that ebooks would be a \$1 billion business within four years and says he's not climbing out onto any billion-dollar limbs. These are interesting and

informed comments, though. I'm only giving a few of the topic sentences, with my thoughts (if any) following in unindented type.

1. The popularity of e-books will increase, with titles formatted for Amazon's Kindle leading the way.

Probably right—noting that the increase is on a tiny base, as Shatzkin makes clear.

2. Sales of books in electronic form to public libraries will continue to grow.
3. This will be the Year of the Author. (That is, publishers will recognize the insignificance of their “brands”—and maybe a major author will try self-publishing.)
5. Christmas 2008 will be the first one in which sales of customized books, enabled by the Internet and print-on-demand, will become substantial.

I wouldn't be surprised: One-copy books are more feasible than ever.

7. Apple...will move to turn the iPhone and iPod into e-book readers.

Seems to me Steve Jobs absurd and offensive dismissal of book reading poisons that well, but who knows?

13. Some publishers will begin producing a hardcover edition of every paperback and a large-print edition of every title [using PoD and XML].

Intriguing, and certainly feasible. If I thought there was a market for large-print or hardbound C&I books, it would be relatively trivial to provide them.

Some of the other trends are mostly interesting to insiders. Note that I can only find one of these where I disagree (#7), there mostly because Jobs made such a point of putting down book reading. Maybe music and TV is all he needs; most of us dig more deeply.

Top Tech Trends

I wasn't there. I resigned from LITA Top Tech Trends some years back because I'd been doing it long enough (since its founding), because I don't consider myself much of a trendspotter, and because of personal conflicts. My appearance last summer was a “special guest appearance” at the committee's request, as was my moderating gig the year before.

I understand there have been complaints about the Midwinter session not being set up sufficiently like a program. Of course, it *isn't* a program—that would violate ALA rules for Midwinter. Back in the days when TTT was young, we—the “trendspotters”—actually *discussed* trends among ourselves, tossing out things I don't think would be mentioned in a big crowd and sometimes arguing about them. There were observers (having a closed session also violates ALA rules), but it wasn't a panel or program-in-

disguise. It sounds as though the setup this time was along those lines.

Is that wrong? It is if you think Midwinter TTT *should* be a program, but not otherwise. Then again, I don't know. **I wasn't there.** And, reading through these trends—at least in some cases—it's probably just as well that I wasn't. I'd get even more of a reputation as a curmudgeon.

Reading some second-hand reporting I've chosen not to include, I see yet again the suggestion that libraries should offer two-tier service (“basic” services free, money for better services—ignoring the nearly-inevitable long-term consequence that “basic” becomes worse and worse) in order to compete with Netflix. *Sigh.* See the January 2008 issue. I recognize that the idea of turning libraries into another NPR or ballet or symphony, another cultural icon for the wealthy (with a few scraps for the rest of us) won't go away; that doesn't make it a good idea.

I'm excerpting (and reformatting) these notes from panelists' own blog posts or blog posts about the sessions, in no particular order. LITA TTT always produces interesting sets of possibilities. My comments appear in regular type following the smaller-type indented quotations.

Sarah Houghton-Jan

Houghton-Jan includes the full versions of these notes in a January 11, 2008 post at *LibrarianInBlack* (librarianinblack.typepad.com).

Tough Budget, Tech Stays: With a recession, or at least a persistent economic downturn, pending, libraries are counting their pennies and staying up late writing up proposals for why their budgets should not be some of the ones that are cut... I do believe, though, that even in these times of tightening belts and even less funds for library services that most libraries will at least hold their technology budgets steady, realizing that a lack of outlay now means that next year the library will be even further behind and its users further disenfranchised.

If that means keeping technology budgets but cutting materials, hours or public-service staff, doesn't that disenfranchise patrons even more than a technology slowdown? I don't see how technology can or should be a sacred cow if or when new books and weekend hours lose out.

Widening of the Digital Divide and our Inattention to It: ...The digital divide is a reality in our communities, and one that we aren't paying enough attention to. It doesn't matter what type of library you work for, it's the same everywhere. All libraries have the technological haves and the have nots (and the people in the middle)... In the past (think: early days of the internet) we had tunnel vision toward the have nots, and catered our technol-

ogy services to that group, for better or for worse. It's imperative for us to realize, now, that we cannot make the opposite mistake this time and focus our services and priorities only/mostly on the haves, ignoring the segments of our communities who still lack the basic technology skills and equipment... I worry that our attention on the haves, stimulated in large part by the influx of Web 2.0 (and now, possibly 3.0) technologies, will result in our continued inattention to the digital divide, much to the detriment of our entire service population.

Since I've been ranting off and on about libraries favoring the advantaged, I can't possibly disagree with Houghton-Jan on this one.

User-Centered Content Production:... In the case of web content, libraries are starting to move in the direction of not only allowing users to create content on their sites (imagine!), but also to drive the individual appearance of that content through "MyLibrary" sites and the overall organization of that content as well... The price? Letting go of a little bit of that control we've held so dear over the years. It's very exciting to see libraries paying more attention to user needs and priorities in the web environment, just as we do in our physical locations.

No argument here.

Virtual Reference Software a la Rest-O'-The-World? The phenomenon of instant messaging as a new way to provide reference services was quickly followed by libraries exploring non-library-world software to provide this essential service...

We Stop Being So Bossy: We are experts in the realm of the online, as we are in the realm of print, but our behavior is a little different in the two worlds. We would never tell people that we know better than they do how they should read properly...but we have taken on that holier-than-thou role when it comes to online services, where we are telling people repeatedly that we know the right way to behave online... I think libraries are starting to realize that instead of acting in a paternalistic and patronizing way toward our users in the realm of technology, we should act toward them exactly as we do in any other situation that bears on customer service: we collaborate, we share, and we work together.

Since I haven't encountered the behavior, I can't comment on the supposed change. Both of these seem entirely reasonable.

Another Day of Open Source:... Libraries are starting to look more and more to open source, and the initial fumbblings have morphed into some well-thought-out and confident experiments with open source. We've moved beyond the basics, like using open source blog and wiki software. Libraries are blazing full ahead using open source ILSs, open source productivity software on public and staff computers (office software, browsers), and a lot more...

I don't get the "locked-down nature of Microsoft Word" (in a portion of this section I didn't quote), but

in general I agree that libraries are making better use of open source—and this is a good thing. It's not a holy war, though; I don't believe libraries should automatically favor open source in all cases, unless all else truly is equal. (Nor do I suggest Houghton-Jan is saying that.)

Karen Coombs

Coombs includes much longer versions of these notes in a January 12, 2008 *Library web chic* post (www.librarywebchic.net/wordpress/):

Ultra-light and small PCs (eeePC and competitors)... The idea of having a small, cost effective (\$300-\$400) efficient computer that has a limited amount of storage (flash memory for a hard drive) and relies heavily on the network and open source software to meet users needs is one that has both appeal...and raises questions about how libraries will provide services in the future.

Although I might wind up buying an eee or equivalent, I doubt their general usefulness and relevance for libraries—but I could certainly be wrong.

New uses of wireless... Probably the coolest moment at Internet Librarian this year was the guys from DOK, Delft Public Library demonstrating the hardware which allows them to push content to people's wireless phones via bluetooth when the phones get within a certain proximity of said hardware...

Cost to the user when you push them some fascinating, un-asked-for content: \$0.10-\$0.15. Change in user's attitude when they figure out that libraries are suddenly spamming them, with the user paying: Priceless. Maybe I'm wrong (again), but this strikes me as an exceedingly bad idea, just as location-based coupons have turned out to be nonstarters.

Blogging ceases to exist as blogging... For many blogging has simply become the way in which content is being created, rather than its own genre or methodology.

Even reading the whole thing, I don't get this one at all. Sure, some people use blog software for news feeds and other purposes, but most bloggers have, um, blogs. With blog names. No, most of them aren't "weblogs" in the original "log of what I visited on the web" sense—but they're both genre *and* methodology.

On the Go Applications and Data... I and many of my colleagues do 90% of their business using web applications today. We expect applications to be available from wherever, whenever. We are starting to expect the same of our data... Increasingly library users are expecting the same things. Therefore we need to make sure our systems interact well with these technologies that support portable applications and data.

Really? What percentage of public library users do "90% of their business" using portable applications and data? And to what extent is catering to that group

another example of tailoring library expenditures to serve the overadvantaged? If the answer is “not at all, it’s just a matter of proper design,” then this seems unobjectionable. Otherwise, it’s arguing that libraries should broaden the digital divide.

Eric Lease Morgan

Morgan’s commentary appears in a January 7, 2008 post on the *LITA blog* (litablog.org). Excerpts:

The use of Linux as a server platform as well as a desktop platform will increase. The latest version of Windows seems to have gone over like a lead balloon... As Linux becomes more predominant, so will the concept of open source software, and that is an additional ball of wax that has already been mentioned numerous times.

While the actual trend strikes me as extremely likely, the “failure” of Vista is relative—and “more predominant” is, at least for desktops, a flat-out misstatement. On servers? Maybe. On desktops? I’d rate the chances of Linux becoming “predominant” any time soon as somewhere between slim and none, much closer to none.

Open access will grow, I hope. H.R. 2764 was put into law this past month. In it was a provision mandating recipients of NIH grants to submit their articles to PubMed 12 months after publication...

I’d go farther. Open access will *absolutely* grow. How fast, how far and in what ways—there’s the rub.

Social networking spaces will mature a bit more...

Read the whole item. I’m not sure I agree or disagree, but I’m not a terribly social animal.

Blogging will continue to affect the way we communicate... I see many blogs going by the wayside and not getting updated. I believe this is true because people realized the time commitment a truly successful blog requires, namely, having something to say on regular basis and knowing how to say it in writing. Yet, the good (and prolific) writers who blog will exert an influence in the way we think and share ideas...

Actually, there’s no particular time commitment unless you have the idea that frequent updates are required—and I think aggregators have ended any such requirement. Otherwise, far be it from me to argue with someone who says that writing counts (and, in the rest of the paragraph, notes that it communicates over time).

Finally, the entity that has made all of these things possible has been our network of globally accessible computers. Each one of those words (“network,” “globally,” “accessible” and “computers”) packs a wallop, and combined into a single thing represent a huge change in the way we live and work. Let’s call that the understatement of the decade.

Hmm. Most of our computers aren’t globally accessible, but it’s true that the internet and computers that make up its nodes underlie all four of Morgan’s points.

John Blyberg

Blyberg posted “This trendster’s trends” on January 18, 2008 (www.blyberg.net). Very brief excerpts from some of his trends:

Keep an eye on DRM... (but in place of DRM, studios are opting for digital watermarks.)

So far, *motion picture* studios seem to be sticking firm with DRM in most cases. I’d love to see a way of making a digital watermark “stick” in a simple digital-analog-digital or even MP3-WAV-MP3 conversion cycle...without that watermark being audible.

Location awareness. If you’re in a room with a hundred cell-phone owners, you can be sure that at least eighty of them are Lo-Jacked. Quietly rolled out under the guide of “Location Services”, most cell phones are equipped with a GPS locator chip... Interesting and very cool from a techie point of view, but also incredibly invasive and potentially scary.

Really? 80% of cell phone owners are “Lo-Jacked”? I’m not sure I believe that. Otherwise, no comment—except that it’s good that Blyberg sees the invasive potential.

Surface computing (e.g., Microsoft Surface).

I honestly don’t see this as something that’s likely to catch hold very rapidly; I think “tactile computing” sounds a lot better in theory than in everyday practice. I could be entirely wrong.

Privacy is dead. Yep, no such thing if you’re a netizen. We basically have the choice to connect or live out our lives in quiet and total obscurity.

Here’s one where my two-syllable comment is impolite and refers to bovine digestive functions. “Netizens” don’t quite rule the world just yet, and some of us manage to be reasonably evident on the net without surrendering our offline time or our privacy.

I’ve left out some topics and possibly some participants. That would probably be true even if I’d been sitting in the session scribbling notes.

Bibs & Blather

Midwinter Musings

Five years ago, when Midwinter was last held in Philadelphia, I began MIDWINTER MUSINGS (*C&I* 3:3, March 2003) as follows:

Cold. So cold. Where am I? Must keep moving. Find open door. What do you mean, use the door on the opposite corner of the block? Can’t feel face...

I ended that introductory section—mostly about the absurdly cold Monday morning—suggesting I might not come back to Philadelphia for Midwinter next time around, albeit not in so many words. As of last summer, I wasn't planning to do so.

Things changed. I contracted with PALINET to run the PALINET Leadership Network—which was formally launched at Midwinter 2008, in PALINET's home town, Philadelphia. So, of course, I attended—hoping for the best.

Truth be told, I didn't leave my hotel at 7:30 a.m. Monday morning this time around. If I had, though, it would have been OK: Unless I'm mistaken, the temperature at that point was in the low to mid 30s, with very little wind. That's a *whole* lot better than 16 degrees (12 degrees after wind chill factor). Indeed, the weather throughout Midwinter was fairly nice; I rarely bothered with a scarf and never took a cab during the daytime.

Maybe 2003 really was a fluke. I hope so.

On the other hand...

As I located and reread that essay (I remembered Philadelphia Midwinter as being 2004, not 2003, so it took a while), I got to the longest section of the Perspective: "What's happening in LITA?" I felt "out of touch with my home division"—I didn't know what most interest groups planned to discuss during Midwinter, I really didn't have much sense of the highlights of the 2002 Annual Conference, I missed any sense of continuity. In other words, I missed the *LITA Newsletter* and felt that LITA really hadn't replaced it at all effectively.

Around that time, I was agitating on this issue and was assured by the leadership (members and staff) that they were working on it.

Maybe they still are. I can tell you that, from my perspective, the situation is worse now than it was in 2003. The LITA Blog is in my aggregator. I apparently dropped off LITA-L due to terminated email accounts (I've just fixed that). I checked the LITA Wiki and the general LITA website. And, when I went off to Midwinter, I had very little idea what most of the IGs were doing. (Checking the LITA-L archives, I see that at least one-third of the IGs posted something, by and large the same ones who did blog posts—but most IGs, as far as I can tell, did neither, and *none* show up on the LITA Wiki. Why have a LITA Wiki if it doesn't provide current topical information?)

Worse yet, this time around the people putting together the ALA meeting program tried to be helpful—with a new section listing discussion groups time slots, meeting places and brief notes on what they

were discussing. Whoops. The LITA IGs either weren't included or were included without topical information. I knew the topics for most discussion groups—just not those in my home division.

In 2003, I was tentatively offering to help solve the situation. The response I got was somewhere between "It's being taken care of" and stone silence, occasionally with a sense of mild offense that I should be questioning LITA's actions.

I'm not offering to help any more. I've done my stint. Right now, I pay more in LITA dues than I do in ALA dues—and, frankly, get a lot less. Other than the LITA Happy Hour (thanks to cab rides, the most expensive glass of wine I've had in years!), I attended no LITA events at all—at least partly because I hadn't a clue as to what they were about. I didn't even have my usual Former President ribbon: Apparently, I was never at the right place at the right time (including the LITA booth in the ALA office) to get one.

To be honest, the primary reason I renewed my LITA membership this year is because I was once president of the division, and somehow feel obliged. I'm not sure just how long that reason will suffice. I have no doubt LITA is doing great things for some people, but I feel more out of touch with the division than ever.

Informal notes on my Midwinter experience

That's the downer. Sorry about that. Otherwise, it was a good (if very quiet) Midwinter for me. I planned to keep it low-key, to retain energy and to leave plenty of time for exhibits and for possible PLN-related interviews and other activities.

That doesn't really leave a lot to report that would matter to any of you. The receptions I attended (all groups I have some affiliation with) were all excellent. The ALCTS "Medium Heads" session on leadership succession was fascinating, leaving me with six or eight topics to pursue for PLN. Exhibits were exhibits—seemingly less crowded than usual, even with a record Midwinter crowd. I frequently find Midwinter more energizing than Annual and usually attend quite a few interest groups and discussion groups. Not so many this time, for reasons noted above. (There were other reasons I kept things low-key. My wife cracked a rib, and I nearly canceled the Midwinter trip in order to stay home and run errands for her. She convinced me I should go, but I was still concerned...and then, I caught a cold a few days after returning, probably from the plane ride.)

One session was particularly interesting, perhaps for the wrong reasons. Something happened that I've

seen happen at least once or twice during almost every ALA I've been to. That's worth a separate section (which appeared in the PALINET Leadership Network, pln.palinet.org, before it appears here).

Leadership and Initiative: The Case of the Empty Chairs

The Midwinter 2008 schedule included an intriguing session from LAMA: "Leaders, Not Managers." At least that's an intriguing title if you're running a leadership network where much of the original material is about managing! So I went, to sit in the back, take notes and, if possible, promote PLN briefly.

I wasn't the only one who found the title intriguing. By 10:30 a.m. (starting time for the session), there were at least 35 or 40 people in a room set up for perhaps 50. Who was **not** there by 10:30 a.m.: Chairs or convenors. The chairs at the table in front of the room were empty.

10:35 a.m. People continued to trail in—but those chairs remained empty. At that point, I thought I'd use the opportunity to promote the PALINET Leadership Network. I spent maybe three minutes saying what it was, who it was open to (everybody), why people would find it worthwhile and repeating the URL. I'd already left a few copies of the PLN one-sheet on the table in the back of the room.

10:40 a.m. I was done talking about PLN. The room was almost full. Another attendee, at that point, said "Why don't we co-facilitate?" So we did—she and I took seats at the front of the room and coordinated a really good discussion for the next hour or so. By the end of the discussion, I think a full 50 people were involved—and at least half of them took part in the discussion at some point.

Since I was coordinating the discussion, I didn't take very good notes. I know that a library school student made a distinction between managers (who handle day-to-day issues) and leaders (who find ways to improve the organization), that we discussed how managers do (or don't) become leaders ("vision" was one keyword), that ALA was mentioned as a source of inspiration. They talked about collaboration with staff, peer consulting, advocacy, how leaders influence people, leading even when you disagree. Some tough topics included leaders who have no interest in being top-level managers (or university librarians), how hard it is to be a leader in a dysfunctional organization, difficulties in *demonstrating* leadership—and an apparent gap in the library literature relating to lea-

dership. In that last case, I think PLN is there to fill the gap, albeit not with peer-reviewed articles.

At some point, I mentioned "guerilla leadership"—finding ways to lead in spite of obstacles, by going under or around them. And I began to think about this particular meeting as an indication of a leadership issue that isn't always discussed: Initiative.

Find a need and fill it?

That's how I started to describe this situation—but, as it turns out, that's wrong. That actually describes the *failure* in leadership: The LAMA people who saw a need for a discussion on "leaders, not managers" set up the meeting but failed to carry through and lead the discussion.

On the other hand, that slogan—which I remember from Kaiser Sand and Gravel cement trucks in earlier days—needs a creator. A little "research" yields a number of possibilities, including Robert H. Schuller in 1926, but the most frequent citation is for Ruth Stafford Peale, Norman Vincent Peale's widow. (I've also seen it credited to Norman Vincent Peale, Ruth Handler, founder of Mattel, Martin Small, and Henry J. Kaiser himself...and I'm sure there are other claims for original authorship.)

Yes, in a sense, the two of us saw a need and took action to fill it. I have no doubt that others in the room would have done so if we hadn't; after all, most of them are either AULs or at least middle managers, and I can only assume that most of them are leaders.

Finding a need and filling it is all about *initiative*. We took the initiative to assure that people's time wouldn't be wasted. Leaders learn to take initiative—but institutions don't always reward or even admire initiative.

Still, "find a need and fill it" is the wrong motto. A better motto is much older, going back more than 2,000 years, and can be credited to Horace.

Carpe diem

Seize the day—or harvest the day. More specifically, take initiative when a clear opportunity presents itself. That's what we did. It's not always comfortable. I'm not even a LAMA member, I've never been a high-ranking manager, I was just there to take notes.

But there was an opportunity—and a real loss if the opportunity slipped away. Several dozen people came to a room to discuss something that mattered; if they left without that discussion, several dozen person-hours would be wasted. That didn't happen because we seized the day.

This isn't the first time I've done this, although it's probably the first time outside of LITA sessions. I've

encountered a few too many cases where chairs or leaders don't show up—maybe for good reasons, maybe not. (With cell phones and all, it's getting harder to accept that “something came up” and there was no way to find a substitute, but never mind. I came very close to canceling my Midwinter trip at the last minute, so I'm sympathetic to emergencies.) My own rule of thumb is that if at least ten people are in the room and it's five minutes past the starting time, it makes sense to ask whether people want to start discussing the topic at hand while we wait for the proper leadership. Usually, the answer is “Yes.”

Try it yourself the next time such an occasion arises. Maybe people are only there because they felt they had to be, in which case the room will empty out. Maybe the leaders are just a few minutes late, in which case you can just turn the meeting over to them (and if they're true leaders, they'll make a point of thanking you). In any case, you'll be taking initiative and showing leadership.

Oh, and if you *are* the chair of a discussion group: Either cancel the meeting beforehand or make sure somebody shows up. Just because you and your buddies (including the core of the interest group or discussion group) don't think there's anything to discuss, you requested a meeting time—and that meeting time is the best possible place to find new members and interested parties. Failing to show up undermines your own group and the division it's part of. Leaders also *carry through* with initiatives.

About This Issue

Some of the people I talked to at Midwinter may remember that I was uneasy about this issue of *Cites & Insights*. Between running errands for my somewhat immobilized wife and the greater effort needed to get the PALINET Leadership Network ready for Midwinter, I hadn't written anything for this issue by the beginning of Midwinter—a point in the month at which I'd typically have at least half an issue's worth of copy waiting.

My comment at the time was that the February 2008 issue was likely to be some combination of late, short and peculiar. “Late” would be tricky for a reason that might suggest itself to anyone who pays attention to the masthead. Short? Well, my original goal for *C&I* was 12 to 16 pages an issue, but now I'd consider any issue shorter than 20 pages to be a *little* on the short side—but that's OK. Then there's **peculiar**: Not getting back to the usual mix of topics, after December 2007 and January 2008 issues that might be considered a little peculiar.

When I returned, I realized I *did* have some copy ready for the issue, or nearly so: The first six discs of the *50-Movie Classic Westerns* set. Which is longer than the usual OFFTOPIC PERSPECTIVE, because I'm saying more about these flicks, particularly some of the stranger one-hour oaters. Oh, and *Academic Library Blogs: 231 Examples* was ready, meaning I needed to do an announcement for that. And I needed to write up my thoughts about the session in which two audience members took over because the chairs of a discussion group didn't show up, as a lesson about leadership and initiative (which you've just read)...

Add a T&QT special on forecasts and trends, and it looks like the February 2008 issue will only be one of the three. That is, it won't be late, it won't be short...but it's a trifle peculiar, making three somewhat peculiar issues in a row. Not that anyone else cares, and not that I haven't had better luck with peculiar issues than with normal ones. If only I could remember what normal looked like...

Offtopic Perspective

50 Movie Western Classics, Part 1

Roy Rogers is riding tonight...and Tex Ritter, Gene Autry, John Wayne and a slew of others, some singing, some not. This is one of the early 50-Movie Packs: You can tell by the silent still TreeLine logo that starts each side. (Somewhat later ones have the same logo with motion effects and stereo music. More recent ones have an animated MillCreek logo with stereo sound effects.)

Many of these movies were one-hour second features, “oaters” to fill the second half of a double bill. Not all, by any means, but the total running time for the 50 movies is just under 60 hours (59:57)—more than the original Family Classics (56:36) but a lot less than, say, the Classic Musicals (66:50) or the Hollywood Legends I'm interleaving this with (73:44, about as long as any 50-pack is likely to get). Those timings come from the Mill Creek Entertainment website, which now seems extremely forthcoming about what's in each set and its actual length (although lots of the disc sleeves are inaccurate).

Some of the discs cluster films with the same star. That can be a trifle disconcerting. For starters, five early Tex Ritter movies right in a row is at least two too many.

Disc 1

Tex Ritter did an awful lot of movies in the late 1930s and early 1940s, and you can read that any way you want. How many? Forty “Tex” movies between 1936 and 1942—in all of which his character’s first name was “Tex.” Then he did another 20 between 1942 and 1945, movies where he learned a different name for the role. Ritter was important as a country singer and may be best known today for singing “Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling” for *High Noon*—and, of course, as the father of John Ritter.

As an actor and singing cowboy, particularly in these five movies from the first three years of his movie career (1936-1938), including the first? Not so much. You could count on several things in these pictures: Ritter doing fancy (and fast) shooting, typically shooting some gunslinger’s gun out of his hand. A big fight scene, where Ritter triumphs—and the bad guy’s cohorts don’t try to draw their guns until Ritter’s done (at which point Ritter’s companion draws on them, of course). Ritter wearing a white hat (and riding his white horse White Flash) and the well-dressed lead villain (usually) wearing a black hat. A young woman deeply involved in the plot, and Ritter riding away or otherwise ending up with her (and companion, sometimes) at the end of the film—sometimes married, sometimes not.

Oh, and Ritter singing with a big smile on his face. In the first two movies here and to some extent in the others, I’d call it “singifyin’” more than singing—akin to speechifyin’ as compared to speaking. He overdoes it, going for extra effects and becoming a parody of country singing—sometimes with songs that seem to be twelve-bar compositions repeated over and over again. It’s clear that Ritter *could* sing well and without overdoing it, particularly since he does that (sometimes) in his very first movie. I can only assume that the over-the-top style was what his director or audience wanted.

Rollin’ Plains, 1938, b&w, Albert Herman (dir.), Tex Ritter, White Flash, Horace Murphy, Snub Pollard, Harriet Bennet, Hobart Bosworth, Ed Cassidy, Karl Hackett, Charles King, Beverly Hillbillies. 0:57

Texas Ranger Tex Lawrence is tracking down a troublemaker who’s causing grief between the sheep farmers and the cattlemen. (This time, the villains are the sheep farmers.) While gang leader Trigger Gargan is the obvious culprit, the *real* culprit’s a leading citizen. Smilin’ Tex and his goofy sidekicks save the day after getting in various sorts of peril, and of course he gets the girl.

One of those with a huge battle on horses, where it’s really not clear who’s shooting at who—just lots of stunt

men on lots of horses shooting, once in a while one of them falling over. Dark, choppy, damaged. Very charitably, \$0.75.

Sing Cowboy Sing, 1937, b&w, Robert N. Bradbury (dir.), Tex Ritter, White Flash, Al St. John, Louise Stanley, Horace Murphy, Snub Pollard, Karl Hackett, Robert McKenzie, *The Texas Tornadoes*. 0:59.

This time, the ruthless gang leader shoots the man running a “freight company” so they can get the contract and take over the town. The woman in peril is the daughter. Tex (not a Ranger this time) and a different goofy sidekick save the day, after getting thrown in jail. Note cast overlaps: White Flash always plays a horse, but the sidekick on one picture may be the sheriff in the next, and so on...even the villains tend to reappear. Also the murky gun battle. This one’s damaged, choppy, and really pretty awful. Purely for historical value, a token \$0.25.

The Mystery of the Hooded Horseman, 1937, b&w, Ray Taylor (dir.), Tex Ritter, White Flash, Iris Meredith, Horace Murphy, Charles King, Earl Dwire, *The Range Ramblers*. 1:00.

My notes here consist of “arrghh...” But that may be unfair. Slightly different plot (this time it’s a bunch of hooded horsemen—not just one—terrorizing folks and in particular a should-be-worthless mine), same-as-usual woman in distress and Tex with a sidekick. Once again he gets arrested. Once again there’s a different villain than you’d expect. Once again...oh, never mind. At least the singing’s a little more normal. \$0.50.

Arizona Days, 1937, b&w, John English (dir.), Tex Ritter, Sid Saylor, William Faversham, Eleanor Stewart, Snub Pollard, Horace Murphy, Earl Dwire, Bud Buster. 0:57 [0:41]

This one’s truly frustrating. Tex and yet another sidekick join up with a traveling show (essentially buying their way in—Tex pays debts owed by the show in its last town), so Tex gets to sing on a stage for a change. Then, suddenly, Tex is out trying to collect delinquent taxes from some villainous types.

What happened here? What happened here is 16 minutes—a missing reel in the middle of the movie, during which (apparently) the show’s wagons get burned down and Tex has to become a tax collector to make ends meet. Better singing and a different plot (sort of), but messed up pretty badly by the missing reel. Assuming that you pay any attention to the plot in these anyway... Even so, \$0.75.

Song of the Gringo, 1936, b&w, John P. McCarthy (dir.), Tex Ritter, Joan Woodbury, Fuzzy Knight, Monte Blue, Ted Adams, Forrest Taylor. 1:02.

The first of the lot and the most unusual. Tex (a Ranger again, I think) is sent to investigate the deaths of a bunch of miners and goes undercover to infiltrate the gang that’s probably murdering them. Most of this is set in a Spanish (or early California?) rancho with the

beautiful senorita as love interest, and the true villain a business partner of the head of the ranchero.

Lots of singing, with one song *wildly* over the top but most pretty good. Oh, and this time Tex gets blamed for several murders, stands trial, and does a Perry Mason bit, sort of. Choppy and damaged, but in some ways the best of this lot. \$0.75.

Disc 2

Two other singing cowboys also made loads of westerns in the 1930s, 1940s and beyond, winding up with their own TV shows: Gene Autry and Roy Rogers (who both died in 1998, Autry 91 years old, Rogers a mere 86). This disc includes five more one-hour oaters, apparently with slightly better budgets and certainly more skillful production and acting than the Tex Ritter quintet on Disc 1. All five are Republic pictures directed by Joseph Kane; four of the five have dual timings on IMDB (original and a slightly shorter TV-edited time), and in most cases the version here is the shorter one.

It's interesting to compare the three heroes, noting that these movies aren't necessarily characteristic for their careers—particularly not for Roy Rogers. Where Tex Ritter plays some character with the first name Tex, a cowboy who also happens to sing a little, Gene Autry *always* plays Gene Autry, a singing cowboy—who might also have some other job (he's a ranch foreman in one of these but also an entertainer), and pretty much always has a group of singers with him. He sings far more naturally here than Tex Ritter does in his early flicks and also acts considerably better. Oh, and his sidekick's always Smiley Burnette, clearly a costar with high billing and his "Froggy" character name and vocal abilities.

Then there's Roy Rogers. In his early movies (1938-1939—there are earlier ones but he's not credited except as part of the Sons of the Pioneers), he plays a character named Roy Rogers. In his later movies, from 1942 on (he did more than 100 in all), he plays Roy Rogers, frequently with his wife Dale Evans. In these three 1940 movies and in a group of other 1940 and 1941 movies, he plays entirely different characters—and he hadn't met Dale yet. While Gabby Hayes is a costar of all three films, always as a boastful lovable old coot, he isn't always Rogers' sidekick (but always has the same character name, Gabby Whittaker). There isn't all that much music in these; then again, none of Rogers' characters is a musician as such.

If you remember the later Autry and Rogers, both consistently fine singers but a little more weathered, the young Autry and the *very* young Rogers (fresh-faced and 29 years old) are remarkable. Rogers is in-

stantly recognizable, particularly with that voice and smile. My last (and lasting) memory of Roy Rogers comes from 1990: His duet with Randy Travis on "Happy Trails" (written by Dale Evans)—and his voice at age 78 or 79 was still fine.

Round-Up Time in Texas, 1937, b&w, Joseph Kane (dir.), Gene Autry, Smiley Burnette, Maxine Doyle, LeRoy Mason, Champion. 1:03/0:54 [0:55]

Here's a curious one. The title is the name of the song under the titles and elsewhere in the movie—but the movie, at least most of it, is set in South Africa. Seems Gene Autry's brother has found a big diamond mine and needs horses, so Gene and his sidekick have to take a whole bunch over by boat.

Naturally, evildoers intervene...and, sigh, a "native" tribe gets involved, with a bunch of kids who instantaneously learn five-part harmony singing flawless English. As with the next flick, this is supposed to be contemporary. While the singing is great and the acting's decent, the plot's even more ridiculous than most and the stereotypes are unfortunate. \$0.75.

Springtime in the Rockies, 1937, b&w, Joseph Kane (dir.), Gene Autry, Smiley Burnette, Polly Rowles, George Chesebro, Champion. 0:56/0:54 [0:55]

Were cattlemen still fighting against incursion of sheep in 1937? I thought the range wars were pretty much over by 1920 or so, and maybe this flick is set slightly in the past (but it does mix seemingly 1930s-vintage cars and horses). Anyway, Gene's the foreman at a cattle ranch *and* an entertainer.

The young woman who actually owns the ranch shows up fresh out of college with an animal husbandry degree. Somehow she buys a bunch of sheep—and the cattlemen will gladly kill her and Autry to get rid of them. Autry convinces her that a dilapidated, worthless farm (which he won in a poker game and can't give away) is her ranch and too poor even to raise sheep. Lots of action ensues, including the usual "frame the hero for murder" bit. Well played, and apart from historical issues the plot's pretty good too—as is the music. \$1.00 as a one-hour flick.

The Carson City Kid, 1940, b&w, Joseph Kane (dir.), Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Bob Steele, Noah Beery Jr., Pauline Moore, Francis McDonald, Hal Taliaferro. 0:57 [0:53].

The jacket copy says "Roy Rogers, posing as The Carson City Kid, is determined to exact vengeance on his brother's killer, Morgan Reynolds." The way it looked to me, Roy Rogers *played* the Carson City Kid, an "outlaw" who stopped stages only to look for a particular letter leading him to Reynolds. Unfortunately, his sidekick (*not* Hayes) is a thorough scoundrel. Fairly typical plot, but Rogers brings flair to the role and the rest of the cast is good as well. \$1.00

Colorado, 1940, b&w, Joseph Kane (dir.), Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Pauline Moore, Milburn Stone, Maude Eburne, Arthur Loft, Hal Taliaferro. 0:57/0:54 [0:53].

Set in the Civil War, with Rebs posing as a Preservation of the Union group in Colorado financing Indians and renegades to keep the troops too busy to go fight. Rogers is Lieutenant Burke, sent to investigate. Among other things, he finds that his brother's one of the problems—but Burke eventually saves the day. Another good cast, fine acting, a coherent plot, and Roy Rogers—who here as in the other pictures gets the girl (except that Rogers tends to marry the girl as well). Even for a short flick, this gets \$1.25.

Young Bill Hickock, 1940, b&w, Joseph Kane (dir.), Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Julie Bishop, John Miljan, Sally Payne, Hal Taliaferro. 0:59/0:54 [0:53].

Also set in the Civil War, near its end. Rogers is Bill Hickock, sent with his sidekick Calamity Jane to investigate Indian uprisings that threaten to cut communications to the West Coast. The villain is a highly respected townsman who's actually an agent from some unnamed country, out to seize California and its gold while the Civil War's progressing. Some great stunts and solid acting; if you can ignore the "history" it's a nice little movie. \$1.25.

Disc 3

Three more second features, albeit none with singing cowboys—and a fine full-length movie.

Phantom Rancher, 1940, b&w, Harry L. Fraser (dir.), Ken Maynard, Dorothy Short, Harry Harvey, Ted Adams. 1:01.

Apparently this flick was late in Maynard's career of trick riding and solid acting. The acting's solid—but the film's gimmick doesn't make a lot of sense. Maynard's uncle is gunned down, and he arrives to take over, finding that his uncle was universally loathed and he's inherited mortgages on most of the farms. Naturally, an evil gang is behind this; naturally, the most respected man in town is the villain.

Maynard plays an odd game: Telling the sheriff to foreclose on Ranch X the next day if the money's not there, then showing up in a mask and cloak at Ranch X that night, dropping off enough money to pay off the mortgage—while Maynard's character is also joining the gang. Of course it all works out: It's an old-time one-hour Western. Good enough for \$1.00.

Broadway to Cheyenne, 1932, b&w, Harry L. Fraser (dir.), Rex Bell, Marceline Day, Matthew Betz, Huntley Gordon, George 'Gabby' Hayes. 1:00 [0:51].

Truly strange. Rex Bell plays a New York cop who gets injured in a gang shootout and sent home to recuperate—"home" being a ranch near Cheyenne. One of the gangs has high-tailed it to Wyoming and is setting up a ranchers' protection racket—and in the process, riding

around in a car with a gunsel using a machine gun to kill off cattle. Naturally, the honorable cowboy/cop on his horse (and several other outraged actual cowboys/ranchers) manages to defeat the gang and their machine gun. The print's very choppy and missing nine minutes of dialogue. George Hayes wasn't "Gabby" yet, just another rancher. At best \$0.75.

Stagecoach to Denver, 1946, b&w, R.G. Springsteen (dir.), Allan Lane, Martha Wentworth, Roy Barcroft, Peggy Stewart, Robert Blake. 0:56 [0:53].

Allan Lane is Red Ryder in this odd story of character doubles and corrupt sheriffs and land commissioners. The sleeve says "Star: Robert Blake," but that's nonsense: 13-year-old Bobby Blake plays a minor (if pivotal) role as a sick child. It's decent entertainment if you don't look too closely. \$1.00

Angel and the Badman, 1947, b&w, James Edward Grant (dir.), John Wayne, Gail Russell, Harry Carey, Bruce Cabot, Irene Rich, Lee Dixon, Tom Powers, John Halloran. 1:40.

The first full-length film in this set—and it's a beauty. It's also the first film John Wayne produced and has been called Wayne's most romantic Western. I can believe that. I almost didn't watch this because I already reviewed it in another set—but then realized that set was not one of the 50-Movie Packs (it was the "DoubleDouble Feature Pack" given away with subscriptions to the doomed *InsideDVD*). When I reviewed that disc (*C&I* 4:12, October 2004), I complained about the print quality but found the movie good enough to get past the problems. Fortunately, this pack has a much better print, with no apparent noise, scratches, or missing frames—one of the best prints I've seen in these megapacks.

What about the movie? John Wayne is a fast-shooting bad man, Quirt Evans, who winds up injured and in a Quaker household. The girl of the household (Russell) cares for him and falls for him—and the way Wayne looked at age 40, it's not hard to see why. (In one or two scenes he smiles an open smile instead of his usual hard-ass half-smile: It's a revelation.) After a series of situations and tribulations, some of them involving other bad men out to get Wayne, all ends well. The movie's generally well acted (although the cynical old Doctor does do a bit of scenery-chewing), with a particularly good job by Harry Carey as the sheriff who waits patiently for Quirt to screw up so he can hang.

What makes the movie remarkable, other than good plot, good acting (I've never been a big Wayne fan, but maybe that's my mistake, and Russell's excellent as well—as are Cabot, Rich, and the rest), and good filmmaking, is the gimmick. This isn't exactly a plot spoiler—the movie's 60 years old—but skip this sentence if you feel it will lessen your enjoyment: Wayne never once fires a gun during the picture (except maybe under the title). A fine picture and a good print—I enjoyed watching it again. \$2.

Disc 4

Paroled—To Die!, 1938, b&w. Sam Newfield (dir.), Bob Steele, Kathleen Eliot, Karl Hackett, Horace Murphy, Steve Clark. 0:55.

The title covers the last five or ten minutes of a short oater that could have been shorter, in a timeless West with telephones but without cars, in an unnamed state where a small-town banker would be the wealthiest man in the state if he managed to finish drilling an oil well. (I did say “without cars,” didn’t I?) Seems like there’s a lot of footage of one man or another man or three men on horses galloping full tilt; much of it’s close-up, so it’s not clear whether they’re simply using five seconds of footage over and over.

And, of course, it follows typical one-hour-oater habits: Lots of badly-staged fistfights, the villain is also the most respected man in town (and runs the town), even though he bears a striking resemblance to Snidely Whiplash, the hero gets framed—except this time he gets sent off to prison (framed because the banker’s looting his own bank to pay for the oil well, and the banker and hero are after the same girl) for 21 years, but immediately paroled by the governor because...well, if I include that, I’d be giving you pretty much the whole screenplay.

Not terrible but not very good. Bob Steele isn’t much of an actor (and neither is anyone else), but makes up for it by not doing trick shooting or trick riding either. Generously (it’s a decent print), \$0.75

The Oklahoma Cyclone, 1930, b&w. John P. McCarthy (dir.), Bob Steele, Rita Rey, Al St. John, Charles King, Slim Whitaker, N. E. Hendrix. 1:06 [1:03].

This time, Bob Steele *does* sing (a *lot*)—and preens, and makes much of himself, and generally behaves in such a manner that he seems like a pretty good villain. That’s not how things turn out, but for most of the movie he’s playing a thief on the run (the Oklahoma Cyclone), holding up with a gang of thieves who also play ranchers at Santa Maria.

If anyone plans to see this (which I don’t advise), I won’t give the plot away; it’s no sillier than most other early Westerns. The big problem here, other than sheer implausibility and the likelihood that anyone who’s as much of a jerk as Steele plays would have been gotten rid of *somehow* long before the end of the flick, is that the first portion of the print’s dark and difficult to watch. It improves, but it’s never very good and there are enough bad cuts to be annoying. Generously (again), \$0.75.

Daniel Boone, Trail Blazer, 1956, color. Albert C. Gannaway and Ismael Rodriguez (dirs.), Bruce Bennett, Lon Chaney, Faron Young, Kem Dibbs, Jaqueline Evans. 1:16 [1:14].

Color! (Sort of—sometimes the scenery fades to grayscale, but people and foreground items are always in color.) Singing! (Four songs, odd for a movie that’s definitely not

a cheery musical.) The Shawnee protagonist, Chief Blackfish (played by Lon Chaney!) sees Boone and his ilk as “white men,” but doesn’t treat the villainous French renegade or a whole bunch of uniformed British Redcoats as white men, particularly when he’s declaring war on the white men. (Boone and Chief Blackfish did have dealings, but there’s not much in common between apparent history and what’s in this flick.)

Daniel Boone tries to convince the Shawnee that the French villain is lying to them when he says the settlers are out to run them off their land. That may not have been true in 1775, when the movie’s set, but down the road a bit... Anyway, lots of action and, of course, the hero eventually saves the day. \$1.00.

Kentucky Rifle, 1956, color. Carl K. Hittleman (dir.), Chill Wills, Lance Fuller, Cathy Downs, Sterling Holloway, Henry Hull, Jeanne Cagney. 1:24.

There’s a Conestoga wagon headed west—with a hundred Kentucky rifles in one wagon, along with their owner (and would-be gunsmith/gun shop owner), who’s hitched a ride with a wealthy settler who distrusts him. With good reason: The wealthy guy’s fiancée decides she prefers the handsome young gunsmith. This wagon keeps breaking spokes on one wheel, and finally breaks a rear axle—in Comanche territory.

The wagon train proceeds; the group left behind (including one very pregnant settler) tries to find a tree for a replacement axle while coping with Comanches who demand tribute. The wealthy guy wants to give them everything—specifically including the rifles—in return for safe passage. The gunsmith (and his crusty old sidekick) don’t trust the deal. Various stuff ensues (based on this movie, it was nigh impossible to miss with a Kentucky rifle).

You won’t be surprised to learn that the rifles stay on the wagon, which eventually gets moving. You probably also won’t be surprised that the Comanches are portrayed as double-dealers, whereas the settler’s attitude (“this is public land, no matter how long you’ve been here or what you might say about it”) is of course honorable. Lance Fuller makes an interesting hero/gunsmith, given that he was part Cherokee. Sterling Holloway does a cute job as a nervous young settler (who keeps a still on the side).

I’ve always thought “your money or your life”—the deal offered here—was a stupid situation: Choose “my life” and the enemy winds up with both. Choose “my money” and you’re trusting that someone willing to kill you will choose not to. The picture’s sort of in color, fading to gray in some (not all) nature shots—and it has a problem with nighttime action, in that scenes suddenly turn to full daylight when we need to see what’s going on. Ah well. Chill Wills makes an amusing crusty old coot, going a little (well, a *lot*) overboard about the virtues of Kentucky rifles and singing a mean “Sweet Betsy from Pike,” accompanying himself on a zither. It’s a mess, but I’ve seen worse. I’ll give it \$0.75.

Disc 5

American Empire, 1942, b&w. William C. McGann (dir.), Richard Dix, Leo Carrillo, Preston Foster, Frances Gifford, Jack La Rue, Guinn Williams, Cliff Edwards. 1:22.

The setup: Just after the Civil War on the Sabine River between Texas and Louisiana, with Dan Taylor and Pax Bryce running a riverboat freight company. The boat gets grounded where Dominique Beauchard is driving a “there for the taking” herd of cattle across the river from Texas to Louisiana. Dan and Pax offer to transport the cattle, for a fee, if he’ll get the boat back afloat. Beauchard stiffes them on the fee—and they take off with a bunch of the cattle, which they sell to buy Texas land, then sell all the “free for the taking” cattle on the land to buy more land, then...

Anyway, the two build an “American empire” of Texas rangeland—but lose lots of cattle to Beauchard’s continuing attitude that any cattle his men can take are his property. They believe they’ve killed Beauchard because he falls off his horse into a river after a shot: Gee, apparently nobody but Dan’l Boone ever thought of hiding underwater breathing through a straw. When thousands of cattle keep disappearing, one increasingly arrogant partner decides it must be the other cattlemen and says they can no longer drive their herds across his range. That leads to a forced stampede and the death of the partner’s son—which is *not* the climax of the movie (as one IMDB reviewer claims), although it helps make the rancher more bitter and difficult to deal with.

That’s just part of a fairly large and plausible plotline, with Beauchard a continuing and nearly unstoppable villain and one of the two empire-builders as, well, a horse’s ass. There’s an odd mix of tones, as Beauchard (Leo Carrillo, perhaps best known as Pancho on *The Cisco Kid*) seems as much comic relief as town-destroying villain. The climax is a remarkable and extended three-way battle after the rancher (his partner’s asked to be bought out) orders up barbed-wire fence, the rest of the cattlemen decide to attack him, as Beauchard’s gang decides to destroy the town...it’s quite something.

My biggest problem with this otherwise-interesting flick, other than the curious way Beauchard’s character is played and yet another sheriff too stupid to prevent a jailbreak, is something I’ve never seen in a DVD transfer before: motion ghosts, the kind you’d get on old LCD displays. They’re sometimes pretty bad, with streaks trailing behind the action. That problem (and some sound distortion early on) reduce this to \$1.

Billy the Kid Trapped, 1942, b&w, Sam Newfield (dir.), Buster Crabbe, Al St. John, Bud McTaggart, Ann Jeffries, Glenn Strange, Walter McGrail, Ted Adams. 0:59 [0:55].

This one’s a little different. Billy the Kid (Buster Crabbe) is a *good guy*, with Crusty and another sidekick (the first sidekick’s not named Crusty—actually “Fuzzy Jones”—but

he’s yet another crusty ol’ sidekick), but three *real* outlaws are dressing up as Billy and his cohort and running around robbing and killing. An evil mastermind who runs Mesa City, a hideout for criminals, is behind it all, of course. (Note: I used actor’s names as credited in the film, not as in IMDB.) Enough missing frames to interfere with continuity keep this from getting more than \$0.75.

Vengeance Valley, 1951, color, Richard Thorpe (dir.), Burt Lancaster, Robert Walker, Joanne Dru, Sally Forrest, John Ireland, Hugh O’Brian, Will Wright. 1:23. [1:21]

This is more like it: Full (and very good) color, some serious acting (and serious actors), cowboys who *herd cattle* (you know, like *cows*), grand scale and scenery, an interesting and adult plot. The basic plot: An aging and ailing cattle baron has a son who’s pretty much worthless—and a foster son (Lancaster) who tries to keep the bad seed in shape while acting as ranch foreman and being far too loyal for his own good. The rotten kid’s married—but also impregnated a good local woman, for which her rotten brothers blame the innocent foster son. Various treachery ensues, all of it making a lot more sense than many western plots. Good narration and more detail about (and footage of) spring and fall cattle drives than you might expect. Some damage to portions of the print, but it’s still worth \$1.50.

The Sundowners, 1950, color. George Templeton (dir.), Robert Preston, Robert Sterling, Chill Wills, Cathy Downs, John Litel, Jack Elam, Don Haggerty, John Barrymore Jr. 1:23

Also full color, with significant star power, some well-written dialog and pretty decent acting—Robert Preston makes a *great* villain. Distinctly filmed on location: It starts with a screen identifying the four Texas ranches used by name and brand!

The plot, as far as I can tell, is that two guys have a cattle ranch but are under siege from their neighbors (who formerly used the land as free grazing country) and keep losing cattle to nightriders. The Wichita Kid (Preston) shows up and, with the help of the younger guy and a ranch hand, starts stealing *back* cattle—and also shooting people when he feels like it. The “good guy” (Robert Sterling), the older of the two ranch owners, approves of the new thefts but isn’t quite so hot for the casual shootings. There’s a deep dark secret (given away fairly well, but I won’t mention it) that prevents Sterling from gunning down Preston to save his own hide.

It all leads up to a three-way gun (and whip!) battle (three *groups* of people) and an ending of sorts. I have two problems with the movie, one of them specific to this print. First, there really aren’t any good guys in the flick (although one woman seems honorable enough), but there are lots of movies that set various shades of badness against one another, so that’s OK. Second, it’s a choppy print: While the color and sound are both good, there are enough missing frames and words to interfere

with continuity, even though it's not even a minute short. I'll give it \$1.00.

Disc 6

Man of the Frontier, 1936, b&w. B. Reeves Eason (dir.), Gene Autry, Smiley Burnette, Frances Grant, Booth Howard, Jack Kennedy, Champion. Original title *Red River Valley* (1:00). 0:54 [0:55].

Gene Autry plays Gene Autry—but maybe not as a singing cowboy (although he does sing in the movie). Delivering cattle for a fee, he finds that the Red River Valley Land & Irrigation Company, trying to build a dam and canal to irrigate the surrounding land, keeps getting locks blown up and losing its “ditch rider,” the guy responsible for keeping stuff in shape. So Autry takes the job. Naturally, there's a conspiracy afoot. Naturally, one of the most respected men in town is behind it (the banker, I guess, who wants to foreclose on all the land, in cahoots with the office manager of the company—I think). Naturally, Gene in his white hat saves the day—and, since there's a pretty young woman involved, you can reasonably assume that he winds up either going with or marrying her.

I'll admit, I think of “the frontier” as something a little more primitive than an area with telephone service working on a dam and irrigation systems (with construction trains running to the dam site), but what do I know? (Now it makes sense: The original title is *Red River Valley*.) I haven't seen that many Autry flicks, but he seems a bit less likable here than in some others: Sneering much of the time, with somewhat of a mean streak. Frog (Burnette), his lovable sidekick, is amusing as always and gets a more interesting musical number. There's also a fascinating novelty “hillbilly band” playing some interesting instruments. You can guess the key song for Autry, can't you, given the setting? Oh, and the big crew building the dam all sing multipart harmony in perfect tune, as though they're part of an oversize barbershop quartet. Interesting. In a charitable mood, I'll give it \$1.00

Riders of the Whistling Pines, 1949, b&w. John English (dir.), Gene Autry, Patricia Barry/White, Jimmy Lloyd, Douglass Dumbrille, Damian O'Flynn, Clayton Moore. 1:10 [1:08]

Gene Autry's Gene Autry again in this tale of the new post-WWII west—cropdusters, trucks, cars, ecoterrorism, but when trouble's afoot, everybody leaps on horses. This time, he's a forest ranger who's been given a new rifle as he's leaving to run a lodge. His buddy (there's no Crusty this time; instead, a regular-guy sidekick with a drinking problem) points to a mountain lion. Gene tries to shoot it, twice—and instead, believes he's shot somebody *completely out of sight* on a horse.

But we know the truth: This dastardly lumber company has an exclusive contract to log on Federal land (when they're allowed to)—and there's a spreading infestation that could kill off tens of thousands of acres of forest,

which would mean they could log all that timber and make a fortune. The guy was off to alert other authorities of the infestation; one of the timber honchos heard Autrey shooting and found it a convenient cover to kill this guy in cold blood. Naturally, Gene admits it; it's an accident, but he resigns his post and sells the lodge to the couple who've been setting it up. (Later, his forestry buddies tell him that they messed up the sight on the gun as a prank: He could not *possibly* have shot the other guy, as the gun was set to fire into the ground when he aimed normally.)

But wait! The infestation's discovered *anyway*—and spraying the whole forest with DDT from the air is the way to stop it. Nobody but Autry can manage the job—building the access roads and airstrip, organizing the crews to do the flying, all within 30 days—so, of course Autry says he'll do it. Meantime, the evil timber marauders (one of them's Clayton Moore in a distinctly non-Lone Ranger role) figure the only way to stop him and see that the forest dies off is to convince the ranchers that DDT will kill their animals. But, of course, as we all know, DDT wouldn't hurt a fly... So they fly *another* plane spraying *real* poison over various farms.

That's just part of a plot-heavy flick with lots of songs—apparently Autry by this time managed to be both a highly successful musician *and* an itinerant cowboy-of-all-trades just out to earn a living and pick up another girl by the end of the plot. (By this time, he'd done more than sixty flicks, always playing Gene Autry except for the one time he was Tex Autry.) Oh, and now when he's singing as he's riding along, invisible instruments and a background chorus show up from time to time.

It's not bad, certainly not the standard formula, although in this case the bad guy's such an obvious jerk that you'd think he'd have trouble convincing farmers to riot against the noble Feds just trying to do their job. This is also a movie of its time: Twenty years later, the concept that DDT is entirely benign might not go over quite so well. The print's mostly OK, but there's some choppiness, noticeable in a couple of songs. Still, I'll give it \$1.00.

Painted Desert, 1931, b&w. Howard Higgin (dir.), William Boyd, Helen Twelvetrees, William Farnum, J. Farrell MacDonald, Clark Gable. 1:25 [1:15].

I'm not sure which is more bizarre in this full-length Western: The plot or the acting. Two best friends are making their way through the old west, helping each other at every turn. They come upon a broken-down wagon (presumably the result of a raid?) and hear a baby's cry. There's an abandoned infant, which they take with them. Then they reach a watering hole. One person says that's it, he's found his grubstake (I guess this was during a homesteading period: Go there and you own it), he's settling down. The other says no, he's going on to find grazing land—and insists on taking the kid. End of Act 1.

Now the kid's grown up and back from mining school. The two men are bitter enemies, and the guy with the

watering hole—whose only living comes from renting access to the water to cattle ranchers taking cattle to market—forces the other guy to take his cattle the long way around, refusing water. And both of the old friends act as though zombified, for some reason. Oh, and the waterhole owner has a lovely young (that is, young woman) daughter (but no wife). And the son has found tungsten in the hill that's part of the waterhole property.

When the son tries to talk his father into mending fences, the father basically disowns him and throws him out. The son goes in with the other guy, starts the mine (on a loan), almost loses it because of various nefarious deeds...and, well, of course it all works out (albeit with both older men shooting the hero simultaneously, oddly enough). As it turns out, the real evildoer is some fellow who would do anything to keep people from taking what's his—and that's not quite clear, although I guess it's the daughter. (Apparently the evildoer is Clark Gable. Maybe his first talkie; definitely not his finest hour.) I don't know. Maybe it's a style of acting I just don't recognize. If I hadn't been treadmilling, I'd have fallen asleep. (Apparently the missing 10 minutes is mostly three big action scenes that were deliberately removed from the flick after its first showing, to be used in other movies—including one of them in *Red River Valley*.) The dozed-off acting, peculiar (not in a good way) plot and a mediocre print limit this to \$0.75.

Gunfight at Red Sands, 1963, color (original title *Duella nel Texas*). Ricardo Blasco (dir.), Richard Harrison, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart, Mikaela, Sara Lezana, Daniel Martin. 1:35.

Red certainly seems appropriate as part of this movie's title, since it's in an odd sort of sepiacolor that only includes shades of red, browns, wood, and other faded colors—no blues or true greens that I could see. It's apparently an early "spaghetti Western," with decent production values but not a whole lot in the way of acting or, well, logic.

Richard Harrison is Gringo—adopted son of a Mexican family working a little gold mine in a just-north-of-the-border town, who returns from four years fighting in the Mexican civil war. As he returns, three bandits kill the father and steal all the gold (most of it supposedly hidden). The rest of the movie deals with that—and with a town whose handsome sheriff and a group of variously mean-spirited sidekicks all hate Mexicans, even though much of the town appears to be Hispanic. (The most interesting villain is a giggling sociopath who is also, of course, a deputy sheriff.)

I guess I shouldn't expect logic in a flick like this. Seems as though the sheriff or his clearly-murderous sidekicks would have just shot Gringo in the back or in "self defense" fairly early in the plot, but that wouldn't make for much of a movie or get us to the inevitable (and really ludicrous) showdown. Maybe I should be impressed by Ennio Morricone's score. I guess it's OK. Let's see. Other than the pseudocolor, there's a short section where there seem to be holes

in the print (that is, real holes, not just the holes in the plot). I can't see giving this more than \$0.75.

Overall

Only four flicks out of 26 broke the "mediocre" \$1.00 mark—and one of those, the only \$2 rating, was a duplicate from another set, *Angel and the Badman*. Otherwise? *Vengeance Valley* is pretty good, with Burt Lancaster and a strong cast. Roy Rogers does a decent job as *Young Bill Hickock*, implausible as the plot may be, and again as Lieutenant Burke in *Colorado*.

Nine flicks might marginally be worth watching again, on a very slow weekend with nothing else to do. A fair number of those "barely tolerable" \$0.75 ratings were acts of generosity on my part. The first half totals up to \$24 (for 26 movies), but if you limit it to movies worth at least a buck that goes down to \$15, not a great showing. Let's hope the second half's better.

Masthead

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