

## What blogs do you read and why?

\*The following responses are available on AALLNET only. For the responses published in the November 2008 issue of *AALL Spectrum*, please see the issue in its entirety.

“Oh, my poor newsreader. So many blogs, so little time...but some of the blogs I make sure to keep up with are:

“(1) [How Appealing](#): Howard Bashman’s blog is one of the best sources of breaking news in the legal world; I’ve often discovered a story on this blog that’s proven useful for a professor.

“(2) [FP Passport](#): Commentary on international and U.S. events that’s both entertaining and provocative. Also a good source for interesting links; some of the recent linkage included an article on criminals ditching dollars for euros, a collection of Kim Jong Il propaganda posters, and information on the new Monopoly World Edition (most expensive rent: Montreal).

“(3) [WisBlawg](#): Bonnie Shucha’s blog isn’t just for Wisconsinites; it’s also a good place to get a heads-up on new technology developments that law librarians might find important.

“(4) [Faster Forward](#): *Washington Post* technology columnist Rob Pegoraro offers useful reviews of new tech toys and thoughtful commentary on developments in the technology world (like the recent experiments some Internet providers made with searching their users’ browsing history in order to serve up targeted ads).

“(5) [GamePolitics](#): What can I say? I like video games, and this blog keeps me up-to-date on important legal and political developments that affect the videogaming world. How does the German video game rating system work? What sick puppy criminal is trying to blame their actions on Grand Theft Auto this week? Tune in and find out.

“(6) [The Comics Curmudgeon](#): Okay, not really law-related, but still fun. Josh offers wonderfully snarky commentary on a selection of the day’s comic strips, often focusing on the soap-opera and adventure strips like Rex Morgan and Mark Trail. Fun reading, even if the comics he covers aren’t.”

- *Frederick W. Dingley, reference librarian at the College of William & Mary Wolf Law Library in Williamsburg, Virginia*

“I especially like [Librarians Matter](#) by Kathryn Greenhill in Fremantle, Western Australia. She is a librarian who is on the cutting edge, often the bleeding edge of emerging technologies and how libraries can use them.”

- *Roberta Woods, electronic services librarian and assistant professor of research at Franklin Pierce Law Center Law Library in Concord, New Hampshire*

“I can’t start my day without a scalding hot caffè Americano grande and a slow perusal of [This Old Money Pit](#). Why? I find the articles to be entertaining, educational, and just downright funny. I constantly find information that is important to me in my daily life and am simply amazed at the insights and intelligence of the blogger. The photographs are clear, crisp, and consistently illustrative of the accompanying articles. If more blogs were composed like this one, I probably wouldn’t ever leave my computer, and my children would see even less of me than they do now.”

- *Francis X. Norton, Jr., reference librarian and associate professor at Loyola University College of Law Library in New Orleans*

“Your question made me realize that I read two work-related blogs daily and one weekly self-improvement blog. The work-related ones are actually online discussion lists: Law-Lib and the Law Library Association of Greater New York (LLAGNY). I think they can be considered blogs, because they are interactive and allow replies and comments. I see Law-Lib as the ‘international’ news and LLAGNY as my ‘hometown’ paper. I also subscribe to the Technical Services and Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Special Interest Sections’ online discussion lists, but do not visit them as much.

“The self-improvement blog is [www.Speakstrong.com](http://www.Speakstrong.com), run by Meryl Runion. It was listed as a source in the Compassion Fatigue Workshop that AALL ran

## member to member

a couple of years ago. We receive an online newsletter with new topics each week. The objective is to improve communication skills in order to solve work-related or personal problems.”

- *Phoebe Ruiz-Valera, technical services librarian at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP in New York*

“Too many and not enough! I always find new ones that interest me professionally. Plus, I actually have to do my job, so I monitor a bunch for our various practice areas. I read my own for the *Wisconsin Law Journal* (someone has to check the links)—does that count? For professional reading, I love Bonnie Shucha’s [Wisblawg](#), [LawLibTech](#), [Inter Alia](#), [beSpecific](#), and [Law Librarian Blog](#).”

- *Beverly Butula, reference librarian at Davis & Kuelthau, SC in Milwaukee*

“I started reading [Phil Bradley’s blog](#) (Phil Bradley: Internet searching, Web design, search engine developments, and anything that will interest librarians!) when I reviewed his book, *How to use Web 2.0 in your library*. I find that it’s a good way to keep up with technology.

“I also read [SCOTUSblog](#), The Supreme Court of the United States blog for both news and analysis.”

- *Christina Tighe, librarian at the library of the U.S. Courts in East St. Louis, Illinois*

“I read several blogs on several topics. The content is what drives me there. [Law Librarian Blog](#) is a good overview. [BeSpecific](#) summarizes governmental publications and actions. [ResourceShelf](#) has a variety of resources beyond law. [WisBlawg](#) is a must read for Wisconsin law librarians. [Law Firm Intranet](#) and [Strategic Librarian](#) by Nina Platt have been very good. [LawLibTech](#) by Cindy Chick is great for new tech tips. [LLRX](#) is also a must read.”

- *Carol A. Bannen, director of information resources at Reinhart, Boerner, Van Deuren, S.C. in Milwaukee*

“I read a little over 300 blogs, RSS feeds, and e-mail discussion lists through my RSS reader, Bloglines. ‘Monitor’ would be a more accurate term because I don’t actually read all of the content. Rather, I skim through the headlines and only open the posts that peak my interest. In this way, my RSS reader allows me to stay current by monitoring a lot of information in a relatively short amount of time.

“A large portion of the blogs that I follow are written by other law librarians. Often, it is through these blogs that I learn about exciting new resources and projects. I maintain a list of blogs by law libraries and librarians at <http://library.law.wisc.edu/wisblawg/blogslistpublic.htm>.”

- *Bonnie Shucha, head of reference at the University of Wisconsin Law Library in Madison*

“I subscribe to more than 80 blogs via Bloglines and Google Reader. Many of these blogs are legal or library related. Mostly, I simply look at them quickly and if something strikes me I read further. But there are a few blogs that I cannot live without. I read anything by Robert Ambrogi. He seems to be in the know and is always relevant. I read [PI Buzz](#), by Tamara Thompson, because I teach a class on Skip tracing. She keeps up with what the states are doing when it comes to public records. I read Mary Whisner’s [Trial Ad blog](#) because of her great coverage of litigation in Washington state. And I read [Rhapsodyinbooks](#) because her reviews of non-fiction books are brilliant! Plus, she is a friend of mine and the smartest person I know. Since we at the King County Law Library started our own blog (called [KCLL Klues](#)) in August, I am appreciating the other bloggers I read much more. Blogging about something interesting and of use to your library patrons takes time, patience, and an ability to write clearly and succinctly. I am working on that. I have a long way to go...”

- *Rita A. Kaiser, reference services librarian at the King County Law Library in Seattle*

“Oh, let me think...

“[Andrew Sullivan](#), [Americablog](#), [Huffington Post](#)—technically not a blog, you may argue, but..., [Fired Up Missouri](#), [Politico](#), [Atrios](#), and [Television Without Pity](#)—which is also not technically a blog, but I gotta get that occasional dose of snark...”

*-Elliott C. Blevins, manager of library and information services at Sandberg, Phoenix & von Gontard in St. Louis*

“I currently buzz through about 60 blogs daily with my RSS feed reader. They range from tech blogs to library-related ones to pure entertainment fluff to personal diary-types on [LiveJournal](#). However, if I were trapped on a desert island and could only read five, I would pick (in no particular order):

“(1) [Infodoodads](#), which is a group librarian blog that concentrates on Web 2.0 tools and how they can be used and adapted by librarians;

“(2) [Mashable](#), a social networking-centered blog that allows me to pick up on new advances in technology often weeks before they are officially announced or released;

“(3) [Law School Innovation](#) because, as an academic librarian, I like to investigate the newest trends in legal education and see if I can somehow position my library to implement them at my home institution;

“(4) [Jezebel](#), part of the Gawker Media blog empire, concentrates on celebrity news and current events with smart writing and a feminist slant and makes me feel better about the fact that I am 32 years old and can name all three Jonas Brothers;

“(5) [The Watchtower of Destruction](#) is a personal journal not for the easily offended. While I don't often agree with or understand what The Ferrett writes about, he writes very openly and honestly and—best of all for a personal blogger—he's prolific.”

*-Sarah Glassmeyer, reference librarian at the University of Kentucky Law Library in Lexington*

“I have been monitoring many blogs. I scan the headlines of most and only read the full blog entry for a few. I started reading the [News - Impact - Times-Picayune - NOLA.com blog](#) to get current local news

from New Orleans. That was my first try at learning about RSS feeds and the Google Reader. Then I started looking at job-related information and found the [AALL News blog](#).

“I had noticed the Friday Fun e-mail on the LawLib online discussion list, and that led me to the [Law Librarian Blog](#). The Law Librarian Blog said that it was a member of the Law Professor Blogs Network. I tracked down other blogs of this network and found that one of our Tulane law professors, Alan Childress, was an editor for the [Legal Profession Blog](#).

“From there I looked for other library and/or legal information resources. I found interesting information on the [Legal Research Plus](#) blog written by the advanced research instructors at Stanford Law School. [Libbig](#), ‘your career, your community,’ lists jobs and has library news talk forums.

“I found our main campus library blog a good source for relevant campus information, [Library News @ Tulane](#). The Louisiana Federal Depository Library Program, [Louisiana FDLPGroup blog](#), gives me Louisiana Federal Depository Libraries information, and it is not very busy. [WestBlog.net](#) presents news and information about the products and services of West and other legal businesses of Thomson Reuters.

“I have recently become interested in law library applications of virtual worlds and found [Virtually Blind](#), which informs me about legal issues that impact virtual worlds. Another resource about virtual worlds is, [Virtual Worlds News](#), which gives business news, strategy, insight, and analysis. [Terra Nova](#) is a Weblog about virtual worlds. Terra Nova authors include scholars and practitioners from a variety of disciplines. [The Second Life Herald](#) was founded in October 2003 by philosophy professor Peter Ludlow. Its mission is to observe, record, and study ‘the legal, social, and economic implications’ of life in the virtual world (this blog sometimes has pictures of naked avatars, which I find awkward at work). And last but not least, [New World Notes](#) ‘reports first-hand from Second Life.’”

*-Carla Pritchett, reference and government documents/microforms librarian at Tulane University Law Library in New Orleans*