

## Dan Cohen's Digital Humanities Blog » Blog Archive » Leave The Blogging To Us

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The history of genres is filled with curious transformations, such as the novel's unlikely evolution from wasteland of second-string prose to locus of Great Literature. One of the founding notions of this blog was that despite its inauspicious beginnings and high-profile overcaffeinated incarnations the genre of the blog has always been well suited<sup>[1]</sup> to the considered pace and output of the scholar.

Original functions of the blog (and the stereotypical blogger), like the transcription of the day's minutiae or logging of interesting websites (thus the inharmonious neologism, weblog), have, in the last two years, swiftly emigrated to other platforms and genres, such as "microblogging" services like what-I'm-doing-right-now Twitter<sup>[2]</sup> (with its one-sentence "tweets") and gee-look-at-me social networks like Facebook<sup>[3]</sup>. If you're a trend-seeker, this makes it seem like blogging is passé<sup>[4]</sup>, abandoned by both the masses and the digerati.

But to me, it's simply confirmation that the genre has found its most appropriate writers and readers. It reinforces my initial view of the genre<sup>[5]</sup>, which is that personal content management systems (what blogging platforms really are) are, despite the genre's early, unpromising forms, perfectly suited for serious thought and scholarship. With blogging, there is no requirement for frequent posting, and I subscribe to many scholarly blogs that have infrequent, but substantive, posts. Put us in the slow blogging camp<sup>[6]</sup>. As Barbara Ganley<sup>[7]</sup> puts it<sup>[8]</sup>: "Blog to reflect, Tweet to connect."

And while we're reflecting, it should be rather obvious at this point that thoughtful, well-written blogs can rival other forms of publication. For instance, a baseball statistician and political junkie armed with little more than a free Blogger<sup>[9]</sup> account and considerable intelligence and energy was able this year to rival<sup>[10]</sup> the election analysis of most

professional newspaper reporters. What are the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s "[Brainstorm](#)<sup>[11]</sup>" blogs than op-ed columns by another name? As I said in the *Journal of American History*<sup>[12]</sup> earlier this fall, good writing and analysis rises and makes an impact, no matter the medium or editorial or peer-review system—or lack thereof.

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## References

1. ^ [the genre of the blog has always been well suited](#) (www.dancohen.org)
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3. ^ [Facebook](#) (facebook.com)
4. ^ [blogging is passé](#) (www.wired.com)
5. ^ [my initial view of the genre](#) (www.dancohen.org)
6. ^ [the slow blogging camp](#) (www.nytimes.com)
7. ^ [Barbara Ganley](#) (bgblogging.wordpress.com)
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9. ^ [Blogger](#) (blogger.com)
10. ^ [rival](#) (www.fivethirtyeight.com)
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13. ^ [View all posts in Academia](#) (www.dancohen.org)
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15. ^ [View all posts in Publishing](#) (www.dancohen.org)
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17. ^ [RSS 2.0](#) (www.dancohen.org)
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