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To Blog or Not to Blog-Academic Blogging

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and objectives of the activism it describes. It is further important to note that such engagement in no way diminishes the rigor or accomplishment of these works. Perhaps no other work better exemplifies how scholarship can document resistance — or, in its study of the **Kahnawà:ke Mohawk** people, a “grounded refusal” to accede to ongoing settler colonialism — and serve to advance both cause and scholarship than **Audra Simpson’s** *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (2014).¹⁰ An exquisite contemporary ethnography and powerful political act, *Mohawk Interruptus* encourages readers to appreciate not merely the tenacity of a people, but the audacity and activism of everyday lives. This and the other works discussed here are complex, sophisticated, and thoughtful scholarly treatments enlarged and enriched by interest, empathy, and in some instances profound commitment to activism and the historical record. They belong in many academic library collections, particularly those engaged with American Indian, civil rights, or social justice studies. 🌿

Endnotes

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4. **McKenzie-Jones, Paul R.** *Clyde Warrior: Tradition, Community, and Red Power*. Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2015.*
5. **Shreve, Bradley G.** *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011.*
6. **Hoxie, Frederick E.** *This Indian Country: American Indian Activists and the Place They Made*. New York: Penguin, 2012.
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8. *Indigenous Women and Work: From Labor to Activism*. Edited by **Carol Williams**. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012.*
9. **Davis, Julie L.** *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.*
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Editor’s note: An asterisk () denotes a title selected for *Resources for College Libraries*.

To Blog or Not To Blog — Academic Blogging

by **Pat Sabosik** (General Manager, ACI Scholarly Blog Index; Phone: 203-816-8256) <psabosik@aci.info>

Academics blog. They are fond of writing about their work and about developments in their field. How does their academic blogging mesh with their more formal research and publication? Let’s look at some active scholarly bloggers and discover why they blog and about what.

Scholarly blogging is becoming important in its own right as a continuation of published research, updated with new information, developments, or commentary as a new paper or presentation is in the works. According to **Sarah Bond**, Assistant Professor of Classics at the **University of Iowa**, and author of the blog *Sarah E. Bond: History from Below*, not enough quality scholarly blogs are cited nor archived. This is a similar theme that was discussed in a panel I moderated at the **Charleston Conference** last November and recapped in a blog post I wrote about the panel: “Why We Blog.” The three issues scholarly bloggers identified as important to their blogging efforts are having their blogs discovered, cited, and archived for future research.

Bond questions in a recent blog post, “Legitimizing the Blog: On Reading, Citing & Archiving Blogposts” why more academic blogs are not cited in the footnotes of journal articles or within academic books. She states: “While there are certainly still specious blogs that abound on the web, the number of trusted, well-sourced, and highly researched academic blogs is on the increase.” She gives a few examples of well-researched blogs in the classics and then describes how to quote blogs, cite them, use citation tools like Zotero, and how to archive blogs. It is a worthwhile and practical guide for scholarly bloggers. **Bond’s** blog post was also published in a recent issue of *Forbes*.

Another academic blogger who provides practical insights into scholarly blogging and the craft of writing is **Lucy Allen**. In a January 2017 post, **Allen**, a Lecturer in Medieval Studies at the **University of Cambridge**, wrote in her blog, *Jeanne de Montbaston: Reading Medieval Books* that blogging helped improve her writing. This comment is frequently made by academic bloggers. **Allen** also suggests that writing blog posts can help to break writer’s block when dealing with difficult concepts in academic research. She provides tips for

academic bloggers and insights into scholarly blogging in addition to insights into her work in medieval studies, feminism, and the topics of gender and memory.

Humanists don’t have a lock on scholarly blogging since we know that scientists also blog. In a novel blog post, represented in fifteen Tweets, **Morgan Jackson**, an entomological researcher at the **University of Guelph**, recounts his seven years as a blogger stating that blogging and other social media activity provided “countless professional and personal opportunities.” His blog, *BioDiversity in Focus*, was selected by *From the Lab Bench*, another science-focused blog, to “help researchers understand how readers use and view science blogging.”

William Yates, a physician and research psychiatrist at the **Laureate Institute for Brain Research**, blogs regularly about aspects of neuroscience in his blog *Brain Posts*. He started Tweeting about his work to sharpen his writing skills and then transitioned to writing blog posts so he could explain complex neuroscientific developments and diseases in clear and simple language. We can read about this contemporary topic in a recent blog post:

“Opioids, Benzos, and Risk for Overdose” where he summarizes the findings of a study by the *British Medical Journal* that found a link between concurrent benzodiazepine prescriptions with opioid overdose, an important step in treating opioid addiction.

What is emerging from the scholarly blog literature is disciplined academic writing that calls for citing and archiving in the scholarly press. Credentialed

academics are writing and publishing outside the formal channels of publication and are looking for ways to have this work recognized as components of their research and scholarly communications. Scholarly blogs are becoming an important component in this research chain. 🌿

Column Editor’s Note: Blogs mentioned in this article can be found in the **ACI Scholarly Blog Index**. “Why We Blog” is published by **ACI** and can be found at <http://aci.info/blog/>. — PS