

What telescope should I buy?

After quite some time, I'm getting back to this question. Since the holiday season is approaching and fall is one of my favorite times to get the scopes out... Here are my opinions on telescopes to buy.

If I'm on your list and money is no object here are the scopes I want. ☐

[The Questar 3.5 inch anniversary model](#). This has a lot of sentimental value for me, and if money were no object I would own one.

[Any really large reflector](#). This one is from Orion Telescopes.
[A good sized goto Scope](#) and an observatory to go with it.
[Or maybe a dedicated Solar Scope???](#)

OK, I understand you are not buying one for me, but if you are a first time telescope buyer, you may see those prices and just stop your shopping. Or you will go to Walmart and buy the telescopes they have during the Christmas shopping time with all the pretty pictures on them.

In shopping for a telescope, size matters. You want the biggest scope you can afford and move around. Magnification power however does not matter. I don't care if the telescope at your local super store is 150 power or they say it will magnify 200 times. You'll never use it. Most of the time, even with the best telescope, you can't use it. So are you going to be able to with the \$30 – \$40 scope from the super store?

Even though my first suggestion would be binoculars, I won't go there, you want a telescope... I know this, because I was there once. I still don't have my binoculars...

Second suggestion a 4 to 8 inch reflector on a Dobson mount. The mount is very simple. It moves Up and Down – Left and Right. Very stable and inexpensive. An 8 inch reflector would

probably be more of an intermediate scope, but it may be the only telescope you ever need. (want is another matter). The 4 and 6 inch scopes are excellent for beginners.

3rd suggestion a 60 or 70 mm refractor on a good mount. These tend to be more expensive. The mount design makes the cheaper models almost unusable. But they do look like the telescope everybody expects to see. This may be important to you.

4th suggestion.... Stay away from computer controlled models for your first scope. You really don't want to have to learn how to use the computer end of the telescope when you are just starting out. That just adds to the frustration.

So here are some actual telescopes that fit my suggestions. I'm using the Orion Telescope company site, because they have nice pictures, many different scopes, and a lot of other good information on their site. I don't own an Orion Scope, and I'm not suggesting they are the only place to get telescopes. In fact, I will add links for other sites main pages.

Refractors (lenses)

[80mm table top model](#) Nice looking little scope with what looks like a very nice mount. A good solid table will be needed to use this. A used end table from a garage sale would work nicely. A solid picnic table (that nobody is sitting on) would work well too.

[70mm refractor](#) The mount looks nice, but the tripod looks a bit on the flimsy side. This may make an shaky mount. Weight can be hung from the center support to help stabilize it.

Reflectors(mirrors)

[100mm tabletop scope](#) This mount is the same as the first refractor I mentioned. Nice size, looks easy to move around.

[4.5 inch tabletop scope](#) Slightly larger mirror than the one above. I've actually used this scope once. It is an excellent first scope.

[4.5 inch equatorial](#) Same scope as above, but a different

mount. Adds to the cost, but you don't need the table.

Some Telescope web pages

[Orion](#)

[Meade Telescopes](#)

[Celestron Telescopes](#)

[Optics Planet](#)

[Anacortes](#)

[Discovery Telescopes](#)

The Dark Night & Man Of Steel Public Enemies

Bats and Supes doing battle against other superheroes... President Lex Luthor... a kryptonite meteor on its way to Earth. These are just three of the major plots in the new animated PG-13 rated movie from the D.C. Universe: [Batman/Superman: Public Enemies](#). And as far as I am concerned, the best so far.

Following a country-wide economic collapse, the megalomaniac, billionaire is elected leader of the United States, apparently he was in the right place at the right time and promised prosperity for all (HEHE). The movie, nor the comic stated such, but I have a feeling ol' Lexy was more of the problem surrounding the collapse than the recovery. After taking over the Oval Office, some of the Justice League for some reason came to join Luthor to make the country "safe."

In a scheme to lure Superman into a trap, the president asks to meet to discuss working together to destroy the approaching meteor. Instead, he has the cybernetic, kryptonite-hearted Metallo lying in wait. During the battle with assistance from

Batman, Metallo is “murdered” and a billion dollar bounty is placed on the Man of Steel. This draws out almost every greedy minor villain conceivable. Not only the supervillains, but also those heroes who are somehow blinded by Luthor’s machinations.

There is non-stop action throughout the movie which was really cool... definitely more suited for an animated feature. My one complaint: where are all the major villains besides Luthor (no Joker, Catwoman, Bizarro)? Instead, we get cameos by Gorilla Grodd, Solomon Grundy, and a bunch of others I barely recognized. But that is only a minor quibble. I also liked the return of Luthor’s battle suit.

So... I highly recommend this movie to anyone who enjoys the animated world of D.C. Comics. I read the graphic novel a few years ago and still greatly enjoyed the movie! Plus, Allison Mack joined the list of *Smallville* cast members to voice another animated D.C. character.

You Haven’t Heard Of Bulbo, The Wicked Witch Of The West’s Dimwitted Son?

I found a big behind-the-scenes book about my favorite movie, *The Wizard of Oz*. I remember getting this book as a kid, but I read the juicy parts (many of the rumors about wild Munchkin behavior are true), skipped the rest of the book, and forgot about it. So I came across it as an adult; it’s one of the few things that somehow clang to us through more than a few moves throughout the midwest. I’ve been enjoying reading many *Oz* secrets lately, and I’m currently on the chapter about the

script. In the '30's, MGM (the movie studio that made the Wizard of Oz) had salaried writers, so they would assign a few to write a "treatment" of a project, or a sample of script. Several of the writers had some interesting ideas for L. Frank Baum's Oz project; including bizarre characters. For example, one writer created a son for the Wicked Witch of the West – a dimwitted guy named Bulbo. She wanted to attack Oz with "ten thousand armies, 2 thousand wolves, and 200 flying monkeys" to defeat the Wizard and make Bulbo the king of Oz. In another treatment, the cowardly lion was actually a man who was to marry a girl named Sylvia. The witch wanted Sylvia for her son Bulbo's bride, so she turned the man into the cowardly lion. A couple of the writers who were working as a team decided that there shouldn't be any death in their family-friendly picture, so they decided that when the house falls on the Wicked Witch of the East, she should turn into something less threatening; like a parrot or a white tabby cat. That would have been silly!

While all of these possible Oz variations are fun to read about, I'm really glad that the Wizard of Oz ended up as the movie its legions of fans are familiar with – we love it just the way it is!

Good boots for bad feet

I'm not sure how many people know this, but my feet tend to give me problems. Nothing really serious, but at the end of most days, my feet are always sore and tired. It doesn't matter if I'm wearing dress shoes, casual shoes, running shoes, walking shoes, work boots or even no shoes, the end result is the same. Except for two days this week.

I have been looking for a pair of square toed harness boots. My brother had a pair that he wore until they completely wore out. He always said they were the most comfortable things he ever wore. I found a pair on Friday evening. They were a bit pricey for me, but I said what the heck. I needed some new shoes, and these could also be worn on stage. Two things for the price of one. Stage and shoes/boots for the winter months. Not the same brand my brother had, but they were a good pair of boots.

Anyway, I wore them all day Saturday (and into the early morning hours) and put them on again on Sunday. After 24+ hours of wear (and remember these are 'new' boots), my feet on both evenings felt fine. Good support all day without any binding. I don't think my feet would have felt any better if I had stayed in bed all day... That was totally unexpected.

And the strange thing about all this... My brother (even though he has been gone from this earth since 2003) was right again. At least this time he can't rub it in...

Just watched a little football

I took my two youngest daughters to lunch today, and then scampered back home to allow my youngest to get her stuff together to head back to school. On the way to Fort Wayne, we stopped in Hicksville to see a play Jamiahsh was in. About 10 minutes into the play, I mentioned to my daughter that I was guessing Jamiahsh's character would be the murder victim. Not just because he was annoying the 'director', but because, these shows are predictable. At least to some extent. I will

admit that I didn't get the 'real' murderer. A very fun performance.

Then off to Fort Wayne with a stop at a Walmart to get pictures developed and some scrap booking supplies. That took some time this evening. A rather late dinner and I got my daughter back to school some time after 8:00pm. Then the hour drive back home.

When I got here, I decided to relax and watch the end of Sunday Night Football. By the time I started watching, the game was just about over and it was only halfway through the 3rd period. At least during the game I did find out that most of the teams for the league championship series have been decided. Only the Phillies and Rockies need to complete their series. And they had a snow out... I think some cities should have domed stadiums (or more exactly retractable domes) if they start competing in October/November. Sometimes it is just too cold for baseball.

I also heard that the Bears won, so we should see another Whatever post... ☐

Off To The ALCS

for the first time since 2004. While posting about the final performance and wrap party, I was watching the Yanks sweep the Twins to move on to face the Angels on Friday. The ["unbiased" announcing](#) seemed to be leaning a bit to the other side. During the marathon top of the 9th inning, I went downstairs to watch my mother nervously trying to keep her emotions in check as two of the granddaughters were sleeping on the couch (no school tomorrow... not because of C-bus Day but for Parent/Teacher Conferences). There was a bit of a delay in

the bottom half as a crazed fan ran on to the field in an apparent attempt to throw off the pitching prowess of Mariano Rivera to no avail. The fan was apprehended and the Yanks win 4-1.

The end of the season for the Minnesota Twins spelled the end of the team's home in the Metrodome as the team will be moving to Target Field in 2010.

Wrap Session

Well today was our finale for *You Have the Right to Remain Dead*. You just had to be there to understand how much fun the entire experience was. The show itself was brilliant but the cast was another memorable group to work with and I befriended a 4th grade boy who was one of our "plants" in the audience. Was it Saturday night when John exclaimed that he heard "gunshots fired... sounding like Pt-oo! Pt-oo!" Today, I KNOW it was him who nearly gave away the KEY clue to the entire show when he stated that instead of Harnell saying "Carefully" as he exited the stage he actually said "Careful, Leigh." Yesterday, as I mentioned previously, an innocent member of the audience figured out the clue by herself which is understandable.

And yes, I played Harnell Chesterton, "Your narrator for our little bit of mayhem. A host to a muhdah as it were." And I WAS the one who was murdered. I must tell you that the first few times I practiced being carted out in a wheelchair with my head down, eyes closed, and trying so hard NOT to move was some of the hardest times I have ever had on stage because some of the accents from the other characters and the lines are so funny that it was nearly impossible to not crack up.

Then I am covered up and wheeled off the stage “with the rest of the props” (how degrading). The funny thing is... I never knew what position I would be in after the others are finished poking and prodding me to make sure I was indeed “dead.” This afternoon, I was so messed up that my head was dangling over the side so far that I could not possibly fit through the door frame. I attempted to slowly but unobtrusively straighten enough to be pushed off stage.

At the end of the show after the murderess is revealed, I am pushed back on stage still covered with the afghan (“You were knitting a dog?” a line that got a groan most performances). Last night, I tried to raise my arm and give a royal wave. This did not work as, somehow, I became caught up and ended up bringing part of the door frame with me. I always did manage to have “Fat Daddy’s” hat on top of my head on top of the afghan.

[Justj](#) and his youngest were in the audience this afternoon on their way to Ft. Wayne. He knew from the outset that I would be the one murdered (or maybe he was hoping that I would be but “Don’t assume”). He however thought that the killer would be Blanche, the long suffering director who has had enough of Harnell’s “padding his part” by giving the audience insight on how to solve a murder. She very nearly gives the narrator the old hook treatment while he is giving his spiel from his box seat. I felt like both Statler and Waldorf but was not able to offer my sarcastic remarks to the play within the play. Instead, I read “Doris’s” book of Complete Shakespeare (usually the Scottish play beginning with the letter M that is considered bad luck to mention in a theatre).

Following the show this afternoon of course came the striking of the set. Travis and Mary came over after their Little Shop production was over. Then, the remaining cast and crew members enjoyed pizza and each others company. I have a really difficult time breaking away from a show; this one has been so much fun that I think it will take a bit longer.

Hopefully, I will not have to wait too long for the next show. In a few weeks, I do plan to return to the Huber to audition for *It's A Wonderful Life*.

Not much really...

It has been a few weeks now with nary a post from me. You'd think in all that time I would actually have something to say, but sad to say I don't. Not much at least. This new job so far is keeping me a little poorer than subbing alone. Finding half-days for subbing to go along with this job is not easy and I have gone a few days without. Also, I just learned my commission is based monthly so the couple of weeks I was ahead did not make up for the weeks I was behind. Base only again. Sigh. Soon... This season has been none too friendly for this job either. About 70% rain in the last couple of weeks. In fact, I had to completely take off Friday and go to one of the dealers Saturday instead. I wanted to go to the other one tomorrow since it's Columbo day (or something like that... ☐) and therefore no chance of subbing, but it looks like the rain will likely make a return. Looks like I'll have to take half a day off of subbing Tuesday instead. I already took a half-day sub job, and have jobs for Thursday and Friday as well, so aside from Wednesday I'm pretty set for this week.

Speaking (writing?) of subbing, no interesting subbing stories I'm afraid. Mostly upper grades (4th+) and once with a student teacher whose observing professor came in to watch her teach. I am now two days toward the five I need in order to get paid for the annual sub-training in Hometown district-both middle school days. The last one was science. I essentially led a small chemistry project for 8th grade. I hope their teacher gave them more time the next day as no one

finished.

Then there's church, something I haven't written about much lately. I have been able to give four of my five cabin kids their DVDs I made. Unfortunately the fifth hasn't been to church in awhile due to multiple surgeries- yes, the one with the dwarfism condition (is there an official name? I suppose if I had ever watched Little People, Big World I would know). They are just trying to fix his body, but even with a lack of an emergency which would normally lead to invasive surgery, I'm sure it is still trying for him and his parents- and undoubtedly painful. I pray he recovers well.

Well, sorry there isn't much here. Hopefully I'll have at least one more post before all of you come out this way. I'll try to be less lazy about posting interesting news and links as well. I think there were a couple, but I can't recall at the moment.

Finally, The Wedding!

I'm talking about the nuptials of Jim Halpert and Pam Beesly, of course! If you're not a fan of The Office, you can stop reading now. But for everyone else, how about that special 1-hour episode the other night? Hubby and I thought it to be amazing – I laughed, I cried, I laughed *until* I cried... Thursday's episode was heartwarming, hilarious, and humongous with its 1-hour run time!

Now I will be the first to admit that some of the plot lines contained within this episode were so outrageous that they were almost silly. But given this show's talented cast and production staff, things that would normally be ridiculous on other shows instead made for some great tv in this case. I

won't waste your time with a recap; you can get that [here](#) from the quick-witted tvguide.com writers. But I absolutely **loved** this episode, so after much deliberation, here are my top 3 moments from The Office episode "Niagara":

3. Pam's 80-year-old "Nema" saying, "I had to sit there while it happened to me." – Pam's grandmother is referring to the previous night in her hotel room when she couldn't figure out how to get the tv channel switched from the movie "Bruno". Having been exposed to the same trash, her line echoed my sentiments exactly!

2. This exchange was the one that had me crying laughing:

Pam Beesly: Hey hey! Where are you? Can you take Andy to the hospital?

Jim Halpert: What?

Pam Beesly: He tore his scrotum dancing.

Jim Halpert: What?

Pam Beesly: He is in my room icing his balls.

Jim Halpert: What?

Oh, my – TOO funny, enough said!

And the best moment of the episode was... (drum roll please)...

1. The wedding dance! The attendants and attendees of Pam and Jim's wedding danced down the aisle, imitating a popular youtube video. I struggled deciding which version to post on my blog, the real one or The Office's version, and I went with the original. Not only is it entertaining to watch this happen at a real wedding (can't believe they allowed this in a church, but if you look, the officiant is standing on the altar, grooving along!), but I decided not to post the clip from The Office because I think much of its entertainment value comes from being a fan of the show. If you are a fan of the show, then you've already seen the musical montage in this episode set to Chris Brown's Forever (shows what I know – after his arrest, I just assumed that Brown was another trouble-plagued hip-hop star, but this song actually has me tapping my toes. Am I a Chris Brown fan?). Non-Office fans

wouldn't appreciate all of the significance of the events that take place during this scene of the show, so I figured, why show it? I LOVED this part; it's the part that made me cry, albeit with happy tears, of course. Every moment between Pam and Jim for the past 5 seasons has been leading up to this moment, and despite all of the anticipation by fans and viewers, it did not disappoint! I won't say much more – don't want to spoil it for fans who haven't yet watched, but let's just say (assume Comic Book Guy's voice from the Simpsons): "Best. Episode. EVER." One I will be watching over and over, laughing and crying each time.

The original version of the Forever wedding dance (this couple also made a parody of their own wedding video with them doing the Forever dance in court during their (fake) divorce proceedings if you want to check it out):

Two In One

Day two of three of the play saw both an afternoon matinee as well as an evening show. I am glad that we had the extra performance so that some of my friends in the Little Shop cast could come and watch our show. I saw two of them, but the third must have been in a hurry to get out. Lucky [Mare](#) pretty well gave away the huge clue of the show during the audience participation part and she swore that she did not know but just used her deductive talents. However, the cast glossed over the revelation until the proper time.

Following the matinee, we walked to the nearby home of one of our youngest cast members who graciously hosted a cast party between shows. Ate some chili and other goodies. As a tip of the hat to the show, I took some donuts. Really fun time getting to know the cast further. Great times and we played some Apples to Apples.

I think our best audience so far was tonight's crowd and not just because I had quite a few family members and friends who are like family. And I got a gift bag! Erasable highlighters... very cool with two bottles of Coke Zero and a can of Lay's Chips. And a surprise guest that I did not see coming... Cathy DUKES! THANKS ALL! Extremely easy to perform for an audience who is really receptive and participates. I REALLY like these shows. A small faux pas, I was responsible for some minor set damage, but we won't get into that.

Tomorrow, the wrap up but like I said in a previous post... "whenever one door closes, another is soon to open."