

# Leaving Reflections | Projections 2009, travel marathon part two

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Thanks, everybody, for coming out to the Job Fair and attending my talk at [Reflections | Projections 2009](#). Though I should have predicted that scheduling a talk on Saturday morning means that attendance will be somewhat sparse. Thanks to [the conference staff](#) with special shout-outs to [Kim Vlcek](#), Bhargav Nookala, Jim Wordelman, and Matt Dordal for taking care of me during the conference. Returning to Seattle was also a minor adventure. On my way out of town, I stopped by Papa Del's, generally considered the benchmark for Chicago-style pizza, but they don't sell single slices for take-out, and I didn't feel like eating an entire pizza. I guess I'll have something to look forward to at my next visit. For the drive back to O'Hare, I once again stopped in Bourbonnais, this time at [Mancino's Grinders and Pizza](#), which appears to be another Midwestern restaurant chain, though I didn't know it at the time. My rule of thumb when traveling is "If I've heard of it, then don't eat there." Translation: Avoid the national restaurant chains; eat something local. It may be great, it may not, but it'll be different. I took too long of a dinner break, and when I arrived at the airport, the ticket agent told me my flight was taking off in five minutes. I went through security (no line!) and raced through the terminal. Of course, when you're running to your gate, your gate is inevitably one at the far end of the airport. As I ran past a pair of twentysomething white guys, one of them shouted, "Run, [Chinky](#), run!" Wow, I haven't heard that epithet since elementary school. Up until that point, my interactions with the fine people of Illinois were uniformly positive, and I had found them all to be unfailingly polite and helpful. I'm going to give the state the benefit of the doubt and say that the guy and his buddy were visiting from another state. (Like maybe New Jerkland or something.) I arrived at the gate in time. I'm not sure, but if I wasn't the last person on the plane, I was definitely one of the last. We landed in Seattle at around midnight, but since the last train to downtown Seattle departs at 12:06am, I asked my wife to pick me up. Although I caught [Alexis Ohanian's talk](#) (and enjoyed it), I had to leave early to catch my flight and missed [Ryan North's talk](#), which the post-conference chatter suggests was a monster hit. I'll have to wait to catch it when the [video](#) is posted. ... **until I met a man who had no feet**: My travel day was nothing compared to the gentleman in the seat next to me, who was in hour 25 of a 30-hour itinerary: Minsk to Kiev to Warsaw to Chicago to Seattle to Kennewick to home (the last leg by car).

**More travel day chatter:** The scientists on the Polaris Project have to suffer through a four-day trek from Bellingham, WA to Cherskiy, Russia even though the two cities are only 3000 miles apart. Reason: Federal regulations.

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