Ethernet

- One of the first, and definitely the most successful, local area network (LAN) protocol and implementation
- Notice that also targeted at multiprocessing, not just distributed computing
- CSMA/CD wire protocol – carrier sense multiple access, with collision detection
  - a shared physical medium, even with repeaters
  - randomized exponential backoff after a collision
  - error detection using checksums on medium, still need end-to-end error detection since whole packets can be lost
- Modern Ethernet protocols are different – for a switched physical medium to scale better
  - original at 3Mb/s (shared), 1Gb/sec (switched) common now, with 10Gb/sec and 100Gb/sec in HPC environments

Infiniband

- Designed to support I/O and network connectivity, from a single PCB to a cluster network to a LAN
  - over copper (twisted pairs) and fiber
- Targeted at cluster networks, SANs, and even embedded systems
  - scalable, and provides RAS – “bandwidth out of the box”
  - idea is to extend the on-processor I/O bus to off-chip network
- Switched point-to-point I/O fabric
  - endpoints (host machines, I/O devices, …) connect to switches, which route connections to other endpoints
  - link speed from 2.5Gb/sec (1X) to 30GB/sec (12X) by adding more wires – parallel transfers
- Protocols described in terms of standard network layers
  - physical, link, network, transport