

From Albert Meyer transcript, Computer History Museum

DMR thesis story – why it wasn't accepted

Meyer:

So the story as I heard from Pat Fischer, I believe, told this to me. I'm sure that it was Pat who told it to me. I've never had it confirmed elsewhere, though, but I believe it, was that it was definitely true at the time that the Harvard rules were that you needed to submit a bound copy of your thesis to the Harvard - you needed the certificate for the library in order to get your Ph.D. And as Pat tells the story, Dennis had submitted his thesis. It had been approved by his thesis committee, he had a typed manuscript of the thesis that he was ready to submit when he heard that the library wanted him to have it bound, and give to them. And the binding fee was something noticeable at the time. I forget whether it was, you know, \$50, \$250, something or other. But it was a-- not an impossible, but a non-trivial sum. And as Pat said, Dennis' attitude was, "If the Harvard Library wants a bound copy for them to keep, they should pay for the book, because I'm not going to!" And apparently, he didn't give on that. And as a result, never got a Ph.D. So he was more than everything but thesis. He was everything but bound copy.

Brock: EBT

Meyer:

But he apparently drew the line at that. It was a matter of principle, and didn't get a Ph.D.

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