

Anthony Oettinger <anthony@seas.harvard.edu>
To: Lynn Ritchie <lritchielynn@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 9, 2012 at 9:24 PM

Dear Lynn,

Several kind folks in the University are now enlisted in a search for clues as to what took place.

For starters, I am told that there is no copy of Dennis' thesis in the SEAS library. This is significant because in his day, as in mine ('54) it was an ironclad rule that a bound copy of the PhD thesis had to be delivered to the SEAS (then a Division of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences) library before the degree could be granted.

On a personal level, I can understand why Dennis might have preferred stopping at his draft and not bothering formalizing the PhD degree by not fulfilling this requirement if he thereby saved money and moreover got an early start climbing the then enormously prestigious Bell Labs Staff ladder. It's not exactly parallel, but I never took a Master's degree to save significant tuition money (the rules were quirky that way) and instead went directly to the PhD.degree.

There may, perhaps, be more to it and I'll be back to you if and when I get any further information.

All the best,

- Tony

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