
Pin the Tales on the Donkey: The Life of Libraries by Don Krummel As Told to Linnea Martin

LINNEA S. MARTIN

ABSTRACT

THIS ARTICLE FOCUSES ON THE PROFESSIONAL LIFE and experiences of D. W. Krummel, professor emeritus of Library and Information Science and Music at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In twelve interviews conducted in the spring, summer, and early fall of 1998, Krummel discussed the persons, places, experiences, and ideas most influential to him as a veteran and historian of librarianship; as a professor and bibliographer; and as he progressed from undergraduate and graduate study in librarianship and music at the University of Michigan (1951-1956), to the Library of Congress (1956-1961), to the Newberry Library as head of reference and associate librarian (1962-1969). His remarks and stories address the essence of libraries and librarianship.

BACKGROUND

Libraries, where one takes on the smell of books, stale and attractive. Service with no motive, simple as U.S. Mail. Fountains and palms, armchairs for smokers. Incredible library where ideas run for safety, place of rebirth of forgotten anthems, modern cathedral for lovers. Library, hotel lobby for the unemployed, the failure, the boy afraid to go home, penniless. Switchboards for questioners: What do you know about unicorns? How do you address a duchess? Palladian architecture of gleaming glass and redwood. Window displays of this week's twelve bestsellers. Magnificent quarters of the director, who dines with names of unknown fame. Lavatories, rendezvous of desperate homosexuals. In the periodical room the newspapers bound with a stick, carried like banners of

surrender to pale oak tables. Library, asylum, platform for uninhibited leaps. In the genealogy room the delicate perspiration of effete brains. Room also of the secret catalogue, room of the unlisted books, those sought by police, manuscript room with the door of black steel, manuscripts stolen in delicate professional theft from abroad, sealed for seventy-five years. Sutras on spools of film. And all this courtesy and all this trust, tons of trash and tons of greatness, burning in time with the slow cool burning, burning in the fires of poems that gut libraries, only to rebuild them, more grand and Palladian, freer, more courteous, with cornerstones that say: Decide for yourself.* (Shapiro, 1964, pp. 20-21)

I first met Don Krummel at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in August 1992 when I was on a tour of library schools in the Midwest. Curt McKay, assistant to the dean, encouraged me to sit in on classes to get a feel for education at Illinois. Krummel's course on American research libraries fit my interests and my schedule. I remember taking a seat near the door. No matter how short classes generally are on the first day, I thought it provident to provide myself with a quick exit. Every librarian I had spoken with in the process of researching my career choice told me library school ranked at the top of tedious times in their professional life: "It's what you have to go through to become a librarian," they said, "don't expect to like it and don't be turned off from the profession when you don't."

The class was large. Professor Krummel discussed the syllabus and the format of the course and what students could expect to get out of it. It was clear that his standards were high and one could anticipate doing quite a bit of work for his course throughout the semester. It was also clear that he viewed the territory of academic research libraries to be a fertile one that included texts, people, institutions, and the dynamic ways in which they come together. Toward the end of class, he gave students a handout of a list of gifts of various kinds that had been offered to academic libraries: "Don't spend more than ten minutes on this," he said, "just decide whether or not you'd take the items offered and why or why not. Expect that whatever your decision, I'll take the opposing point of view, not because there is necessarily anything wrong with your argument, there aren't right or wrong answers to many of these questions, but because there are many things one needs to take into consideration" (Krummel, lecture, August, 1995). One of the items on the list was an x-ray of Ernest Hemingway's ulcer.¹

Now, six years and four classes later (I didn't start library school the following fall), as a candidate for a Certificate of Advanced Study at the University of Illinois, I am engaged in an oral history project focusing

on Don Krummel's professional life. Who is Don Krummel, why is this project important, and what relevance does it have to the profession at large?

Krummel's e-mail moniker has, according to his latest count, fifty-eight possible interpretations (Krummel, personal communication, September 18, 1998). All of them, or at least all those I've thought of, are keys to his professional identity and outlook, including the fact that fifty-eight may be a very short list.² "Donkay" resonates with associations. Do I hope that if I pull the tail on the donkey he will kick up a storm of gold dust and it will settle on me? Am I trying to pin the tail on the donkey so that finally, once and for all, I can close the textbook and set out on my own professional journey? Or, do I sincerely believe, after my exposure to Krummel and his teaching, that he is a person of unusual insight into his profession with interesting stories to tell that should be shared with a larger audience? Probably all three.

A veteran and historian of the profession, Krummel was educated at the University of Michigan. He served as reference librarian in the Music Division of the Library of Congress (1956-1959), and as head of reference at the Newberry Library (1962-1964) and associate librarian there (1964-1969). Since 1970 he has been a professor (now professor emeritus) of library science and music at the University of Illinois. He was named a University Scholar (1991) and was the first Centennial Scholar of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (1993). His principal music interests include printing, publishing, and early American music (Sadie, 1980, p. 283). He is the author or editor of between eight and fifteen books (depending on what one calls a book), nearly a hundred articles, and several hundred reviews, and is now at work on a new book on the history of bibliographic records. In addition to bibliography, he is also interested in library history, research library collections, and rare books. His concerns and audience are not as esoteric as one might assume. In an article for the *Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette* he wrote: "We judge people, sometimes by the books they own, more often by the ones they quote for us, and always by the ideas they select from the books they have read" (Krummel, 1978, p. A2). This statement could apply equally to a person's choice of friends or television programs.

What is a library, what are books, and why should we care anyway if, according to popular opinion, everything will soon be online?

I'm inclined to see [the library] as people, politics, reading, as a zoo, not necessarily a happy place because the animals in the zoo I'm sure are often miserable, but still a place where there's lots of activity going on and beyond anyone's comprehension. Libraries, library science, most research universities today, are Aristotelian in construction. Plato sees it more holistically, indeed the Platonic notion is a lot what you find in Borges' "Library of Babel," namely, that the library

is something, which is constantly being redefined and is indestructible. This is the distinction that I am really working on more and more—Plato’s conception of the library as a center of ideas, all ideas in the world—what Borges says, the library is limitless and universal. The books in the library are part of the library that happened to be in one place at one time. In other words, the library is ideas, these ideas are expressed in books, recorded or latent. You can extract whatever content you want from reading the books. The library consists of all the wonderful things it signals. It’s rubbish . . . there’s a lot of junk in every library. What is junk? Infinitely subject to redefinition. (October 28, 1998)³

The library Krummel describes, while virtual in conception, is physical in reality. It is a Bruegelian universe, populated by readers who also serve as resources, sometimes more profitably than books. It is grounded in time and localized in space but it still introduces readers to the “real world,” the open system, according to its ability to provide and their ability to interpret. Its contents, whatever they are and however vulnerable they are to theft, abuse, deterioration, and neglect, are open to examination, comparison, and verification. They are acquired and destroyed by various means, both legal and illegal, according to plan or by accident. As a guest lecturer in Information, Organization, and Access, one of the core courses for master’s students at GSLIS, Krummel was asked what impact he thought the electronic revolution would have on the organization of knowledge. Characteristically, he did not provide an answer but instead asked a question: “Will information displace knowledge and knowledge displace wisdom?” (Krummel, personal communication, 1994). “Everybody loves to write,” he commented during an interview, “nobody loves to read or listen” (August 12, 1998).

SLIDING INTO A PROFESSION

Krummel’s interest in libraries began at home with his father, a German Evangelical minister, who delighted in abstract ideas and encouraged him to read. He remembers being fascinated with Will Durant’s *The Story of Philosophy* in his teens. One of his earliest memories of books is graphic and prophetic not only with respect to the profession he would enter but also the librarian and teacher of librarianship he would eventually become:

How did I end up in libraries? One of my first memories, I had forgotten it until just a few days ago. Back during World War II, there were a lot of drives for materials in short supply, metal drives, paper drives among them. And on one occasion, the high school library was preparing to throw out a number of books that it didn’t need. Here was a Ninth Edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the whole thing lacking one volume. Big, thick, black, very difficult stuff to get through. I asked the superintendent “do you really want to throw that out?” And he said “well, if you’ll pay for its weight in

paper, you can have it." Well, we weighed it and it came to, I think, ninety-five cents. I had to borrow some money to buy it. I remember loading it up (shades of Rosebud) on my sled and carrying it home in a huge box. And could I read it? The Ninth Edition is pretty impenetrable—it's long articles on bad paper in small type. I did use it, I did browse through it, and it became my introduction to the big world. (April 29, 1998)

The set was not a virtual library in today's sense, but it was the kind of overpowering experience that a library should be. When, years later, Krummel read Borges's announcement that "the library is limitless, universal," he did not find it hard to understand. He had few experiences in libraries as a boy growing up in small towns in Iowa and Michigan, but his memories are vivid. They include the location of libraries he rarely visited, and the fact that books in one of his school libraries were organized by color⁴ (July 14, 1998). His interest in, and knowledge of, libraries began to take shape during his undergraduate years as he pursued interests outside of music in history, philosophy, and art: "I was attracted to libraries, I did find myself hanging out in them more and more, for no good reason other than to browse and read" (April 29, 1998).

At this time, Krummel was enrolled in the School of Music at the University of Michigan from which he received both a bachelor's and master's degree. His interest in music also dates back to his home life—his father was a violinist—and his experiences composing and performing as a teenager and young adult. For a short time he served as an organist in his father's church where he began to learn music theory on his own. "I just did not have the performer's instinct. I took to theory, but practice needs a different discipline and, while I knew what I was excited by, I never learned how to exteriorize it . . . how to make music out of it" (April 29, 1998).

Reflecting on his career, he sees his move toward librarianship as something of a homecoming:

I have a very strong affection for music but, not being a performer, I can never really understand it On the other hand, with libraries, I feel both the affection and an understanding, although the understanding has changed over the years as the affection has ripened. It is certainly different now from what it was when I was a student. I do feel I understand what a library is and what it ought to be. What did attract me to the work? In many ways it was not the work itself—sitting behind a desk or helping people, or doing cataloging, or anything like that—but just being part of the institution, part of the library. Like so many people, being a reader. (April 29, 1998)

A CAREER

Libraries are human networks and Krummel has many stories about the readers who use them, both his own and those others have shared with him. He says readers (whom he never refers to as patrons or users)

have defined the library for him; they are its "lifeblood" (May 30, 1998). One story, from his days as head of reference at the Newberry, is compelling not only because it reminds one of how interesting libraries and their readers are but also because it reflects Krummel's humorous, yet compassionate, perception of them:

DWK: Good old Edgar, I have forgotten his last name. Edgar was a benign genealogist who came in regularly—sweet, old, harmless. On one occasion, though, the circ desk person said "help, you've got to come out and help us, old Edgar is giving us a problem." And I went out and said "look, Edgar, you can't do (whatever he was doing, I've forgotten)." "You can't say that to me, I'm the King of England." "Okay, Edgar, yes you are, but let's talk about this outside here."

LSM: Did the guards come in?

DWK: The guards came in and took him out, poor old man. How do you handle these emergency situations? And in this case, in the genealogy reading room, where some would have thought "My God, maybe he is the King of England." (May 30, 1998)

Krummel's vision of a library was shaped, both positively and negatively, by his experiences at the Library of Congress and the Newberry and by libraries he has used for his own research, particularly the British Museum. Stanley Pargellis, head librarian of the Newberry, who hired Krummel and for whom he worked in 1962, was an important influence. In his introduction to Pargellis's festschrift, *Essays in History and Literature*, Ray Allen Billington (in Bluhm, 1965) remarks: "Not the least of his [Pargellis's] qualities was the ability to infect others with his conviction that librarianship was both a challenging and an essential profession and that upon it depended much of man's success or failure in mastering his fate" (p. 5). Billington credits Pargellis with taking a library, little known outside of Chicago, and building it into an internationally famous institution that attracted scholars from all over the world (Billington, 1965, p. 5). Reading Billington's essay, one recognizes in Pargellis some of the beliefs and qualities one appreciates most in Krummel, including the view that no institution is more central to the fundamental health and well-being of a society, particularly a democracy, than its libraries. One story, a particular favorite, reflects Pargellis's administrative style at the Newberry. It concerns the time Krummel asked to see the Newberry organization chart:

Donald, my boy," he recalls Pargellis saying, "the organization chart of this library is a pig pen. You get in, and like a pig you have to find a rut, and, if any other pig tries to push you out, you push them out and that's the way this place runs, that's the organization chart. (May 30, 1998)

Krummel's approach shows the influence of this experience:

DWK: My most meaningful experiences in libraries have been ones that were not predictable. They are random rather than routine, with human elements, flesh on the bones. The story of Pargellis's pig pen recalls that behind the organization chart lies the invisible organization chart, the way things really work. I've often used a handout, a summary of Hazzard Adams' *The Academic Tribes*. The tribalism of communities, the invisible network of libraries, is very important and I've been more concerned, not with the rules, the laws, the science of it as with just making things work, the processes that make libraries function.

LSM: What is the difference?

DWK: The difference when it comes right down to it I suppose is the difference between Plato and Aristotle and don't ask me to explain that briefly. The one is essentially concerned with attributes, characteristics, qualities, and the other with analytical processes, the idea that the duty of a proper scientist is to destroy chaos, to see that chaos no longer exists. The problem I have with this is that I rather like a certain amount of chaos. It's one of the reasons why I've been a bad cataloguer I suspect. There's also the adage that a good historian is like a vampire attracted to blood. Good librarians are attracted to human elements as well as principles and processes. (June 4, 1998)

Pargellis's conception of the Newberry and his responsibilities as librarian were large and imaginative. Among its special assets was The Irving,⁵ an apartment complex of four-floor walkups where the Krummels lived. This community comprised an important aspect of life at the Newberry and its society reflected the library's cultural activity:

It was a wonderful living condition because of the group that was there. Across the hall from our apartment were members of the Czech nobility. . . . On the first floor, below us, were Wright Howes, the bookdealer, author of *US-iana*, and his wife Zoe, . . . the other first floor apartment belonged to a secretary for an ad agency, whose great love was her grand piano, and she played Chopin on it after work as late as she could. *Poetry* magazine, then edited by Henry Rago, had one of the apartments for its headquarters [Karl Shapiro was its editor when he wrote the poem that opens this article]. A few apartments were reserved for those with direct ties to the Newberry, and with the undergraduate program with the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, apartments were needed for resident scholars and students in the program. Other people were also eminent in their own specialties. Among other Newberry staff members, Hans Baron, the great Renaissance historian, and Colton Storm, the Western Americana bibliographer, lived in other units with their families. (May 30, 1998)

But what really emerged, what Stanley Pargellis encouraged and I think was very valuable, was a microcosm that would reflect the library. It would help establish the library as part of the community,

would not be the only community that was reflected in the apartments, but would establish an identity. (August 12, 1998)

INFLUENCE AND CONFLUENCE

For Krummel, as scholar and academic research librarian, the best collections stimulate, reflect, and further the interests of good minds in frequently unpredictable ways; collections of people parallel collections of books. His personal and professional life and work as librarian, teacher, and scholar cannot be separated from his complex network of colleagues, friends, acquaintances, and students. While he was associate librarian, the Newberry acquired the J. Francis Driscoll Collection of sheet music—a good example of how networks such as his benefit institutions and future scholars. During the 1950s, when Krummel was working on his dissertation (*Philadelphia Music Engraving and Publishing, 1800-1820: A Study in Bibliography and Cultural History*, 1958), he met Driscoll, a pioneer collector of early American sheet music. In *The Newberry Library Catalog of Early Printed Sheet Music* (1983), Bernard Wilson, his friend from Ann Arbor and colleague at the Newberry, describes the strong, mutual admiration that existed between Krummel and Driscoll, and Krummel's role in the complex negotiations, at least a decade later, that brought the Driscoll collection to Chicago.

Krummel thinks the library's organic and elusive systems, rather than theoretical models, are the ones on which library practice is based and should be taught. These are the systems for which he has genuine affection. He has delighted in their labyrinthine and surprising perspectives as gleaned from his journeys and examinations. Art Young, his first doctoral student, focuses on the professional significance of this approach in a letter written to Krummel on the occasion of his retirement:

You have always sought to discern the patterns, interconnections, and parallels. As we plunge into the age of discontinuity, momentariness, and ahistorical posturing, one can only value more those like yourself who have sought to probe and explain. It may be said that you have practiced in full measure what I would term "fractal librarianship," the study of recurring essences. (Young, personal communication, May 7, 1997)

Krummel's attitude toward human systems and their architects is playful, affectionate, and familial to the extent that he respects the result or the expenditure of effort. This is evident in his lectures and in conversations with him. Sometimes it is also reflected in his writing: "ESTC [*Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue*] is most usefully viewed not as a single work, but better as a complex lineage of parent projects, cousins overseas, siblings, in-laws, house guests both welcome and unwelcome, and offsprings of stepchildren . . ." (Krummel, 1985a, p. 1459).

Collections are particular to institutions and reflective of the institution's nature, its location, and the interests of its librarians and

readers.⁶ They include tangential intended to spark the imagination and expand the reader's notion of what is possible. During the 1960s, research libraries had a great deal of money to spend on collection development, and there was pressure to spend it on "high spots" (expensive rare books) in subjects in which they specialized. I asked Krummel to what extent he thought imagination played a critical role in building a good library:

Imagination *is* important, and in many ways the opposite of it is the idea that imagination is determined by the institution. This is what we *need* and therefore this is what we have to *get*, which turns out to be, of course, what every other institution is getting too. Imagination is what's involved in defining the unusual collection. (August 12, 1998)

He recalls being caught in a tough spot at the Newberry when James M. Wells, associate director, and the late Richard Colles Johnson, a librarian, disagreed on the acquisition of materials Johnson believed were important:

Being a loner in his own right, Rick was interested in building a collection of books on hermits in America: "How I lived in a cave in Pennsylvania, Western Pennsylvania, in 1810," and the memoirs of somebody in Missouri in 1870. The study of hermits, he argued, was an extension of the strong Newberry collection of Indian captivities, narratives of "how I was caught by the Cherokee and then was held in bondage for three months and broke away and lived to tell about it". . . . I was very much on Rick's side on this one. Jim wanted to celebrate great books, we wanted to get the interesting things that might be useful some day. (August 12, 1998)

Krummel's recollections of his career at the Library of Congress and the Newberry abound in acquisition tales—great detective, espionage, and adventure stories—that involve international travel and interactions of intrigue far from the exhibition halls of ALA conferences. They focus on the strategies of hunting, courting, and chasing involved in building great collections, not to mention the villains and fellow collectors one must elude, and the accidents (happy and sad) that sometimes intervene to determine one's success or failure. The negotiation skills involved are apparent in this story Krummel told about attending the movie "The Sound of Music" with three friends of the Newberry's, two of whom who had a very different reaction to the film:

As the Newberry started getting interested in fundraising, developing a friends group, one person who we got to know quite well was Mary Langhorne, a very elegant and sweet lady. The Langhorne's were a distinguished Virginia family; Lady Astor was a cousin. We knew Mrs. Langhorne and many of her closest friends. One of them was Mrs. John Alden Carpenter, whose grandchildren studied piano with my wife. Another was the great opera singer, Claire Dux, who

had married into the Swift meat packing family. She was one of the great Mozart singers of her day and an early patroness of the Mozarteum in Salzburg. On one memorable evening in Chicago, Marilyn [Mrs. Krummel] and I were invited to attend a movie with the three of them. We were driven in Mrs. Langhorne's limousine by her chauffeur. I had the unfortunate pleasure of sitting between Claire Dux Swift, who thought [*The Sound of Music*] was a perfectly awful movie . . . "she [Julie Andrews] does not know how to sing. . ." on the one side, and Mary Langhorne on the other, "Oh, isn't it lovely, isn't it beautiful, what do you think?" And how do you sit between the two of them and say anything? (Krummel, personal communication, July 14, 1998)

The movie the five attended is particularly interesting in light of a later event. Claire Dux Swift left her personal papers to the Newberry and when she died the original manuscript of "Conservate, fidele" (K. 16), one of the first manuscripts in Mozart's hand, was found among them. It now resides at the Newberry, a tribute, perhaps in more than one way, to "The Sound of Music."

Just as the acquisition of collections is unpredictable, so is their benefit to readers. Krummel recalled this adventure with Rudolph Ganz:

Rudolph Ganz, this was the great concert pianist. I knew him just a bit in Chicago. On one occasion he particularly wanted to see a very little-known Liszt piece. "Oh, you've got this here, I've been looking for this for so long. Ah, here it is! Yes, this proves that A-flat is the navel of the keyboard." I was talking to a female member of the staff at the time, and when we looked puzzled, he took great delight in embarrassing us by explaining that A-flat is best played by the third finger. I still have no idea what he was talking about, but we were glad he had finally found Liszt's navel. (Krummel, personal communication, September 3, 1998)

MENTOR AND SCHOLAR

Libraries are complex organic systems that serve to educate readers, not just provide information in relation to their expressed needs. They are filled with readers, also librarians, who benefit from experiencing them:

I do feel I understand what a library is and what it might be. It's been a lifetime project. And I believe I understand how information works, at least as much as anyone. It can mean either facts—as simple units of data processing, and to me these seem mighty trivial—or basic ways of controlling people through them—so as to involve management activities that brought our Hitlers and Stalins to power, and these are mighty scary. Allowing people to grow, so as to become more responsible as they become more informed—such as takes place when you read what's in a library—is what warms my soul. (September 10, 1998)

He resists the idea of librarianship as a science:

I dislike the idea of the discipline being called library science, if science is meant in the English rather than French sense,⁷ but again,

we're stuck with that. It's not scientific although it is synthetic, a mixture of other fields, of social sciences, humanities, science. This blending makes it rich if it is also limiting. Other academic departments specialize in their own subjects, so that as librarians become historians, or sociologists, or writers, they do get marked as second class citizens. (September 10, 1998)

Openness and an unbiased approach to the world of knowledge is essential to a good librarian. Thus, the fact that students have traditionally entered library school without an undergraduate education in librarianship can be an advantage, since this means they must be self-starters. They need to be "people who easily make the transition from one field to another, learning on their feet and learning quickly" (September 10, 1998). Many of Krummel's students come with master's degrees or even Ph.D.s in other fields, or have deep interests in subject specialties and thus end up working in academic or research libraries:

The people I've been most attracted to as students and faculty and colleagues have been the ones who have worked *in* books rather than *with* books (July 20, 1998).

Students must make leaps rather than follow along in a systematic lock-step way. Arthur Koestler's book, *The Act of Creation*, provides a wonderful exposition on the ability to make creative leaps. (September 10, 1998)

There are many sides to issues, and Krummel acknowledges that his approach to education is not for everyone:

In some library work, creativity can be disastrous. Cataloguers with wonderfully original quantum leaps of mind are dangerous. One of my limitations in teaching in a professional school is that I make heretics out of students who could become bad cataloguers. Should teaching be a matter of rote learning? Where do originality and critical thought leave off and heresy and incompetence begin? (September 10, 1998)

In describing his approach to teaching, he comments:

You wanted me to talk a little bit about general philosophy, whatever that is, of teaching, my relationship to the discipline, to the activity. . . . I do like to bring in contexts from all over the map. Some of them are probably irrelevant, but that's the way my mind works. One of the great things about libraries is that they specialize in the whole world, the range of human knowledge, and librarians have the privilege of introducing everything, and the responsibility to range widely and imaginatively. One of the things I most respect in colleagues, [whom] I admire is their ability to move all over the map. (September 10, 1998)

Over the years, Krummel has taught almost everything from core courses, designed to introduce students to librarianship, to cataloging (once), and library administration. His focus has been on reference,

selection, bibliography, library history and, of course, music bibliography. The typical syllabus includes an introduction to the course, outlines of the lecture format, and an extended bibliography of suggested readings and sources. Rarely is there an assigned textbook. His lecture notes consist of a loose-leafed version of the syllabus interleaved with material (articles, examples, jokes) to share with the class:

There is first the fixed agenda, elements that need to be covered. In addition, there are the added perspectives, the spin that I want to put on the whole lecture. These perspectives change, and they often include anecdotes. The perspectives are often dichotomies, ways of seeing the yin and the yang of things. These often hit me the day before or the morning of. Some of them come suddenly into focus in the middle of the night when I can't sleep. If I remember them when I wake up they go into the outline, the crib sheet that I come up with. (September 10, 1998)

Krummel makes a commitment of five to ten years to the architecture of a particular course to allow for flexibility in emphasis, anecdotes to be included, and adaptation to special student projects: "I will often work against [the outline] with a perversity, in that I anticipate points, repeat points, jump from one point to the other to bring out some new organic unity. A library is organic; it changes to reflect and also determine the needs of its community; this also holds true for courses" (September 10, 1998).

Students often become frustrated at the independence of thinking required. Most syllabi include from 200 to 800 sources, most of them books not articles. I asked Krummel why he doesn't provide short-cuts:

The quick perspectives are useful, but again, you will rarely completely agree with any one of them. Being quick, they will miss particular perspectives and will emphasize others too much. Some students will need to work from this angle and some from that. What will be meaningful? The basic monumental source is different to rare book librarians, children's librarians, automation specialists, the general public, professors, administrators. There are many different takes one should get on one given achievement and, furthermore, the right perspective cannot be embedded in any single text. You need at least two melodies if any counterpoint is to emerge between them. I really would wish for more. One way is through your own writing. My history overview, "Fiat Lux, Fiat Latebra" (1994), is one such text. (September 10, 1998)

Information needs to be seen in context, students must read for themselves, think for themselves, make connections, and draw their own conclusions. His approach to reading is hypertextual:⁸

The important experience is taking what you read, sizing it up, and asking what you want to get out of it. Is my own habit of reading really uncommon? I don't know; I doubt it. Some books I read cover-to-cover but most I bounce around in: Read chapter seven, then go to the index, find another section and spend several hours

in it. In other words, I use them as reference books. Right now I'm reading several books. I have yet to read any of them cover-to-cover but I will. As soon as I know what I may want to say, I will go through each one of them from page one to the end. In order to get a gist of a book, my practice has been to start with the table of contents and the footnotes and gradually figure out where I am going to find what interests me. It may not be the way authors want you to do things, but in this case they're not the readers, I am. (September 10, 1998)

Generous with his time in helping students develop papers or bibliographies, Krummel is elusive when asked for guidance on grades and useful shortcuts to getting good ones. I remember his response to one student who asked how many citations it was advisable to include in a bibliography for his academic research libraries course. "I really can't answer that question" he said, "I received a brilliant one once with only three; I've received some bad ones with several hundred" (Krummel, 1995). Students must want to learn.

KNOWLEDGE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliographies, to many, are lists they consult at the end of books or articles to find out which sources authors use to research and think about a particular topic. They are the means by which readers judge the background and authority of authors to make the assertions they do. Boswell noted that in browsing the shelves of a library, Dr. Johnson saw two kinds of knowledge: Subjects and guides to subjects. His "backs of books" were surrogates for bibliographies and catalogs. Subject bibliographies are portals to knowledge. However, subject bibliography is just one aspect of bibliographical work.

Simply stated and broadly speaking, bibliography is the study of books. One activity is devoted to compiling lists, called bibliographies . . . because library catalogs mostly are centrally planned, the lists prepared by subject specialists and enthusiasts, describing new titles and obscure writings are all the more essential. Another field of bibliography involves work with printed documents as physical objects. As part of the graphic arts, layout and type design need to be studied as a means of conveying good taste and readability. Detective work of a sort calls us to look at early paper, type, ink, presswork and binding as we examine authentic and falsified documents, often of great historical or monetary value. Textual critics need bibliographical skills as they decide whether Hamlet's flesh was solid or sullied or whether Melville's fish was soiled or coiled. Growing out of both these fields is another which considers the impact of printing on our civilization. It is no coincidence that Gutenberg's invention coincided with the Renaissance in Western thought, [which] first reached a wide audience during the Reformation and the emergence of the large European nations, and was well established in time to advance the great scientific Age of Reason. (Krummel, 1978, p. A2)

In *Bibliographies: Their Aims and Methods*, Krummel (1986a) discusses the origin of subject bibliography in greater depth:

The earliest bibliography, however defined, is lost in the dawn of historical records. It perhaps coincided with the origins of research in the time of Aristotle, blending scholarly exposition with the identification of relevant evidence. This was also the characteristic of several medieval Byzantine and Moslem texts that function both as exposition and bibliography. Lists from the late Middle Ages were mostly inventories of particular collections; only with the Renaissance and the advent of printing do we find lists conceived mostly for the purpose of defining the literature of particular topics. (p. 7)

Bibliographers set about their task in myriad ways. Bibliographies, the results of their passions and quandaries, are libraries in and of themselves:

The fascination of bibliographies stems from their evocative power. We muse over their riches, envying those who may actually have the time to look into their contents They are virtual libraries, devoted to everything we might wish to read (or may not—the choice is always ours). Subject bibliographies are our ideal special collections. They include treasures that no single library can ever possess, but scaled down for those who like the things we like, arranged to suit our tastes and needs, with access features needed by specialists in our area, with citations suited to our needs, and with none of the superfluous features other readers might need. It is no surprise that real libraries, in search of new missions, should use subject bibliographies as desiderata lists. (Krummel, in draft)

Krummel's interest in bibliography began in library school at the University of Michigan. There was no course in descriptive bibliography (Fredson Bowers' [1949] *Principles of Bibliographical Description* had just appeared), but two instructors whose work he found particularly exciting were Raymond Kilgour on the history of books and printing, and R.C. Stewart on regional and national bibliography. The first led to his work in historical bibliography, the second to his specialty of bibliographical searching. Out of both of them came his dissertation; its analytical bibliography components are seen in his first scholarly article on "Graphic Analysis" (1959):⁹

At this time there was growing interest not only in European but also in American music and somehow that sort of caught my fancy. Because of my music background, it was natural that research for my Ph.D. should focus on something having to do with music librarianship, and I hit on the idea of looking at printing. One man on my committee, Allen Britton, had done landmark work in American religious music. I pointed out: "Do you realize there were only two type faces that were used in early American religious music?" Out of this I became interested in typography (or engraved music, the study of punch forms). The question, in the '50s, is my dissertation: How can you look at a piece of music and say Philadelphia

1793 or 1821? . . . How does a romantic piece of music look? Why does it work the way it does? Why do performers like this particular arrangement of notes? Why is one tradition legible and another less so? This question of the picture, the sign, the image you read. How is it distinctive of a particular period, a particular tradition? (April 29, 1998)

Publications that grew out of this work include, on the one hand, his book on assigning dates (an anthology that reflects his work in the International Association of Music Libraries) and, on the other, essays such as "Early German Partbook Type Faces" (1985b) and "Clarifying the Musical Page: The Romantic Stichbild" (1986b).

Krummel's mentors in bibliography were Irving Lowens, whom he met in 1953, and William Lichtenwanger and Richard S. Hill, for whom he worked in the Music Division of the Library of Congress from 1956 to 1960. Lichtenwanger's amazing memory contrasted with Hill's eccentric interests. The two would spend twenty years untangling the complicated history of the "Star Spangled Banner" as a result of a request from Harold Spivacke, head of the Music Division, for a 500 word pamphlet to reduce the number of individual replies staff members had to write in response to reference requests (Bradley & Coover, 1987, p. 72).

Independently wealthy, Hill had grown up in Oak Park, Illinois, a classmate of Ernest Hemingway and Theodore Geisel¹⁰ (Bradley & Coover, 1987, p. 8). He had been on the Library of Congress/American Research Libraries mission to Germany after World War II, visiting bombed out libraries and publishing houses. "He knew what had been lost and what needed to be saved," Krummel commented (July 22, 1948). He loved to play piano four-hand. On one occasion, Krummel remembers Hill telling him that, while a student at Oxford, he and a friend stayed up all night playing four-hand arrangements of all nine Beethoven symphonies, ending, as the sun rose, with Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. Krummel recalls:

He [Hill] was widely learned, a man of great charm, also a bit quirky. I often recall the string quartet concerts; we sat outside the Coolidge Auditorium to talk about bibliography, Mozart first editions and the like . . . he generally filled me with a lot of lore. On one occasion, in the middle of the last movement [of Mozart's D-minor string quartet, K-421], the Budapest was playing "Oh, *that's* the Puddle Dum Quartet." "The what?" "It's the Puddle Dum Quartet." "What do you mean the Puddle Dum Quartet?" He said "it's the one that at the end goes puddle dum, puddle dum, puddle dum" . . . he also got me interested, as a result of all of this, in the whole question of how we identify works of music. (July 14, 1998)

One of Krummel's stories concerns the activities of a book thief who appeared and disappeared, elusively, throughout his professional life. The first encounter with Joachim Krueger took place after Krummel purchased books from the Bayreuther Musikantiquariat in the 1950s and noticed

that, while his books were sent from West Berlin, his check was canceled in East Berlin. Krueger was caught.¹¹ However, stolen books can remain on the market for a long time and, years later, Krummel was to innocently purchase two more of Krueger's stolen musical treasures for the Newberry:

At the Newberry, one of the things we were always looking for was early Renaissance lute books. It was well known that we had a great collection and we wanted to build it. We did buy a very important lute book, one of two known copies, and we were very proud of it and called it to people's attention. It was a major coup to get the Viera lute book. The only other known copy was in Trier in Germany. About two years later we were offered another lute book, and what do you know, the only known copy was in the city library at Trier. At this point I got suspicious. We were working with a major dealer in this country, very well respected, one of the top people in the country. I was often in touch with a Renaissance musicologist at the University of Chicago, Howard Brown, and knowing of Howard's bibliography of printed instrumental music, I suspected he had copies of a lot of these books on microfilm thanks to the Countess of Chambure and the Isham Library at Harvard. He had a microfilm of the copy at Trier. So I said, "look, what can you tell me about this book?" We began comparing points and found that an ownership stamp on the title page, clearly visible on the film, had been removed from the copy. It turned out there was only one copy of the book and it should have been at Trier. We made arrangements to return it, which is very complicated business in and of itself, because you don't want it to end up back in the hands of the crook. Happily, we were able to claim the first lute book as our own so it's still at the Newberry. This is the kind of a thing that makes one very interested in checking into original evidence. It's by hook or by crook that you get things like this. But how do you tell this to a class of students as an anecdote? However, it is part of the folklore of the whole world of scholarly books.

Hill had early recognized Krueger's signature on Krummel's cancelled check returned from the Baureuther Musikantiquariat. I pressed him to talk more about Hill and the impact Hill had on him:

A lot of it was really the fascination of an encyclopedic knowledge of the field. A fascination of being able to pick a fact here and one there and putting them together. Figuring out this means this if this means that and talking about the Puddle Dum Quartet, piecing together the Krueger story. Remember, Dick Hill was a person who read mysteries into the night . . . [he] was the first editor of *Notes Magazine*, also its financial patron.¹² The first issues were printed on his Varityper, an old, horrible, clattering typewriter. And when Dick died, I went down to the auction house and bought it; we still have it in the attic. We've moved it, with our possessions, ever since. (July 22, 1998)

Krummel has had an impact on others similar to Hill's impact on him, whether or not they attended his classes as students. Bill Brockman, En-

glish librarian at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, wrote to him at the time of his retirement:

I came to know you first through your *Bibliographies: Their Aims and Methods*, which appeared at just the time I, as a compiler, needed judicious advice on thorny problems of citation and sequence and the confidence to resolve for myself those problems. Your book offered me both, and confirmed for me the power of lists to offer insight into their subjects that transcends the details of their construction It's funny to see how the seemingly inconsequential things so often take on greater significance through time. You bought me a bagel and lox after one of the classes [Brockman was a regular guest lecturer in Krummel's arts and humanities reference class]; I hadn't had lox in years, and I won't forget my pleasure in biting into that tasty lunch. But the little things cohere and, in their coherence, come to mean more in sum than they do in part. Sort of like bibliographies, perhaps. (W. Brockman, personal communication, May 29, 1997)

As a librarian and a bibliographer in a competitive academic environment,¹³ Brockman is emphatic about the importance of good subject bibliography to good scholarship. When one considers the sources that go into the making of bibliographies, and the complexity of their design, one realizes why. In the syllabus for his bibliography course, Krummel (1996) defines what he means by the term "book":

But what exactly is a book? Several definitions are common: Hardbound, "book trade" publications; all printed matter involving verbal messages, excluding ephemera; all printed matter; maps, music, pictures, and other non-verbal communication; all communications media [for purposes of this course]: A concentric arrangement of all of the above, concentrating on the first in the center, and moving outward with a view to studying the casual and functional relationships between them. (p. 4)

In other words, the study of bibliography is the study of the whole range of recorded human knowledge, every bit as critical and overwhelming now as it has always been, if not more so.

TEXT AND URTEXT

During my interviews with Krummel and later, as we reviewed the draft of this article, he discussed his professional life and talked about the people, places, and ideas that have meant the most to him. In the process, he told many stories and spoke directly to the essence of libraries and librarianship and how much depends on our continued commitment to preserving their ideals.

I reflected on what I had learned: In the most philosophical, transcendent sense, a library is the center of all ideas in the world, limitless and universal, bearing the tradition of inherited wisdom upon its back. It consists of all the wonderful things it signals. Its best collections are organized both from the inside/out and the outside/in. Its tangents as well as

its essences spark our imagination and expand our sense of what is possible in totally unpredictable ways. It is subject to redefinition and is indestructible. It creates our interests and needs and reflects them. Its contents, upon which the continuing future of our past depends, are open to examination and verification. It smells, tastes, looks, and feels good and is environmentally rich on a multitude of levels. It serves as arch support for our flights of imagination, trampoline for our wild leaps, and arsenal for our revolutions. It is a not-for-profit educational institution, much more than an information warehouse, staffed for reasons of necessity by well-educated humanists who provide information without motivation: librarians whose area of specialty, the whole world, is viewed as both a serious privilege and a serious responsibility; librarians capable of transforming requests for information into open-ended journeys which delight, enlighten, and sustain, leading ultimately to knowledge and wisdom.

Legends survive in the telling of them. In agreeing to be interviewed for this project, Krummel stressed the importance of preserving library lore:

The lore of libraries reminds us that libraries are entities, both systems and human activities (May 30, 1998). As systems, they are rationalized if not always rational, and as human institutions, often impossible for outsiders to grasp. They are tools, which you can put to use, and objects of affection. The tool and the object are really one, but you use or react to it with different faculties. Babe Ruth loved his bat but that isn't how he looked at it when he stepped up to home plate. The anecdotes of library history need to be preserved to tell us how the library as a tool is constantly changing. They also need to be preserved to remind us that our understanding of libraries is grounded in our affection for them, both their faults to be tinkered with and their virtues to be cherished. (September 10, 1998)

As I brought this article to a close, Russell Martin, a GSLIS graduate, now Curator of Newspapers and Periodicals at the American Antiquarian Society, provided its ending. Martin had not read the article and supplied this anecdote coincidentally:

Recently, Professor Krummel was in Worcester to visit the Antiquarian Society (another institution he has served long and well, both as a member and as a prisoner on various committees). As we drove from the hotel to the library, he asked me how I liked my job. I told him all was well; it could not be better, in fact. What I enjoyed most about AAS was that it was not just a collection of books, but a collection of voices, all from the past. In fact, there were times in the stacks when I could hear them speaking. He smiled in agreement and told me "keep listening." (R.L. Martin, personal communication, November 12, 1998)

NOTES

- ¹ The basis for this item was a similar one at the Newberry in its Midwest Manuscripts Collections.
- ² Krummel's e-mail moniker has long been the source of curiosity to those who know him. A former student, Herman Peterson, wrote: "One of the things which has al-

ways intrigued me about you has been your alexia login: donkay. You said in class once that there are at least six puns hidden in it, but I have always thought of one being primary, namely the suggestion of Don Quixote embedded therein. On this occasion of your retirement, I decided to go to *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, a book about which I can remember you droning eloquently, to see if any of the quotes from Cervantes' work reminded me of you. I found several: 'Has a face like a benediction,' 'of good and natural parts, and a liberal education,' 'between jest and earnest,' 'the proof of the pudding [or the Australian Pavlova] is in the eating,' 'the bow cannot always stand bent, nor can human frailty subsist without some lawful recreation,' 'it is not the hand but the understanding of a man that may be said to write,' 'journey over all the universe in a map, without the expense and fatigue of traveling, without suffering the inconvenience of heat, cold, hunger, and thirst,' 'ne'er look for birds of this year in the nests of the last' " (Peterson, personal communication, April 23, 1997).

- ³ Quotes are based on recorded interviews with Krummel and his reaction, in person or by e-mail, to the more than 200 pages of transcript they comprise. I asked him to look back over his professional life from the beginning and talk about it with me. With the exception of questions I asked in response to his statements, the structure imposed on the interviews is his own. This article expands upon some of the themes that emerged. Quotes from personal communications with him are cited by date only. My comments or questions, as they appear within the passages quoted, are preceded by my initials (LSM) as distinguished from his (DWK). In addition, quotes from e-mail messages exchanged during the process are also included. These take on a life of their own and form a separate, but related, oral history and record of the research experience.
- ⁴ Krummel grew up in an era before school libraries received federal support.
- ⁵ The Irving was torn down during the 1970s and the land on which it stood was sold. It is now the site of a high-rise apartment building.
- ⁶ "A library requires materials and their importance is something we may tend to be losing in library school today. Materials, the presence of documents, determine the character of the institution" (June 19, 1998).
- ⁷ Krummel comments: "To us, science has come to be seen as something separate from the humanities In France, science is all of learning and distinct from investigation (recherche).
- ⁸ The author thanks W. Boyd Rayward for this observation and also for suggesting that Krummel's pattern of reading is a good example of what reception theorists mean by textual appropriation. Krummel thanks him, too, although he asked the author to point out that one of the reasons he thinks computers are a big drag today is that he's been thinking hypertextually all his life.
- ⁹ Krummel's major contributions to the fields of music and librarianship include: *The Newberry Catalog of Early American Printed Sheet Music* (1977), *Resources of American Music History: A Directory of Source Materials from Colonial Times to World War II* (1981), *Bibliographies: Their Aims and Methods* (1984), *Bibliographical Handbook of American Music* (1987), as well as *Bibliotheca Bolduaniana: A Renaissance Music Bibliography* (1972), *Guide for Dating Early Published Music* (1974), *English Music Printing, 1553-1700* (1975), and *Music Printing and Publishing* (1990). He is also the compiler of *A Librarian's Collocon: An Anthology of Quotations and Aphorisms Reflecting the Moral Philosophy of the Library Profession* (1971).
- ¹⁰ Geisel is best known as "Dr. Seuss."
- ¹¹ Krueger was arrested in Hanover for selling manuscripts stolen from libraries to collectors worldwide (Olsen, 1960, p. L11) and sentenced to eighteen months in prison on March 25, 1960 ("Book Looter Convicted," 1960, p. L6).
- ¹² When the Music Library Association decided to turn its occasional journal, *Notes*, into a regular publication, Dick Hill was named editor-in-chief, which he remained until his death in 1961 (Bradley & Coover, 1987, p. 28). Hill was the guiding light behind the development of *Notes* and kept it going throughout his lifetime, donating his time and paying half its publishing expenses during the years he was editor (Bradley & Coover, 1987, p. 36). Bradley comments: "*Notes* was the first American periodical to have a regular department for music reviews (Bradley & Coover, 1987, p. 37). Krummel began writing book reviews for *Notes*: "I worked with the editor, I did get into book reviewing

too, and this has always been one of my special interests" (August 12, 1998). More than fifty of his reviews, and a number of his articles, have appeared in *Notes*.

- ¹³ William Brockman is the author of *Music: A Guide to Reference Literature* (Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1987) and bibliographer for the *James Joyce Quarterly*.

REFERENCES

- Book looter convicted; says he was Bonn spy. (1960). *The New York Times*, (New York ed.), March 26, p. L6.
- Bradley, C. J., & Coover, J. B. (1987). *Richard S. Hill: Tributes from friends*. Detroit, MI: Detroit Studies in Music Bibliography.
- Bluhm, H. (1965). *Essays in history and literature: Presented by fellows of the Newberry Library to Stanley Pargellis*. Chicago, IL: Newberry Library.
- Krummel, D. W. (1958). *Philadelphia music engraving and publishing, 1800-1820: A study in bibliography and cultural history*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- Krummel, D. W. (1959). Graphic analysis: Its application to early American engraved music. *Choice*, 14, 213-233.
- Krummel, D. W. (1977). *The Newberry Library catalog of early American printed sheet music*. Boston, MA: G. K. Hall.
- Krummel, D. W. (1978). Many activities fit under the term bibliography. *Champaign-Urbana News Gazette*, March 12, p. A2.
- Krummel, D. W. (1985a). Short-title catalogues for long scholarly agendas. *Choice*, 22, 1459-1462.
- Krummel, D. W. (1985b). Early German partbook type faces. *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 60, 80-98.
- Krummel, D. W. (1986a). *Bibliographies: Their aims and methods*. London: Mansell.
- Krummel, D. W. (1986b). Clarifying the musical page: The romantic *stichbild*. *Printing History*, 8(2), 26-36.
- Krummel, D. W. (1994a). Fiat lux, fiat latebra: Libraries and the stewardship of the human mind. Unpublished manuscript in course syllabus for L.I.S. 390, *Libraries, Information, and Society*, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Krummel, D. W. (1994b). Unpublished lecture to L.I.S. 380, *Information Organization and Access*, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Krummel, D. W. (1995). Unpublished lecture to L.I.S. 427, *Resources of American Research Libraries*, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Krummel, D. W. (1996). *Bibliography*. Course syllabus for L.I.S. 301. Unpublished manuscript. Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Olsen, A. J. (1960). Bookseller is accused of looting musical treasures in Germany: Manuscripts stolen from libraries were sold to collectors around the world—suspect posed as a scholar. *New York Times*, January 28 (New York ed.), p. L11.
- Sadie, S. (Ed.). (1980). *The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians* (6th ed., vol. 10). London: Macmillan.
- Shapiro, K. (1964). *The Bourgeois poet*. New York: Random House.
- Wilson, B. E. (1983). *The Newberry Library catalog of early printed sheet music*. Chicago, IL: The Newberry Library.