

Shelley Miller



A Celebration of her Life

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by and for her family and friends

Lawrence, Kansas

1996

Published by the University of Kansas Libraries

On March 6, 1994, some hundreds of Shelley Miller's family and friends came together in the Kansas University Memorial Union to mourn her death and celebrate her life. The following pages reproduce the words: they will perhaps help to recall the feeling of the occasion for those who were there, and convey a little of it to those who could not be there.

Tim Miller: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to break down and a time to build up, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to seek and a time to lose, a time to keep and a time to cast away, a time to rend and a time to sew, a time to keep silence and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace."

We are gathered today to mourn the death and celebrate the life of Shelley Miller, one of the persons put on the earth to show us all what we truly can be. We are here with reactions of shock, of disbelief, of anger, because whatever hope we harbor of justice and order in the larger scheme of things now seems hollow. Nothing we can say or do here today will make this a happy occasion because our fine friend, and sister, and daughter, and example has been cruelly taken from us. What remains for us today is to salute the extraordinary presence Shelley had among us, and to sear into our memories the immeasurable degree to which our lives have been enriched by her entirely too brief presence among us.

Shelley was supremely a person whose life was lived in community. She lived for her friends, her neighbors, her political comrades, her fellow librarians, her family, and the downtrodden of society. Service to the extraordinary circle of people who were her community was the hallmark of her life. If we are to honor her memory today, we must reaffirm the ties that bond all of us, all humans, in our

search for answers to the puzzling mysteries of life. That she was a person of community is demonstrated nowhere better than by the people gathered here today, who probably amount to something like one per cent of her true good friends. Friendship comes when you earn it and no one earned it more fully. Shelley's been my best friend for years and I think a measure of her expansive generosity is that I know that dozens, at least, of persons here also knew her as their best friend.

We humans are accustomed to wanting to add life to our years and we work hard at that. Given her family genetics, Shelley expected to live to be a hundred. She only got forty of those years, but there was more life packed into those forty than most of us would have in a hundred. In her death, she reminds us that life in one's years is fully as important as years in one's life. When Shelley first received the diagnosis that she had a brain tumor, she made no secret of it. She walked down Jayhawk Boulevard, running into friends and acquaintances. As she ran into them, she said, "Hey, I've got a fuckin' brain tumor. Bummer!" She wasn't ready to die, but she knew that some things were beyond her control. She told us her illness and death would be harder on her family and her friends than it would be on her and I think she was absolutely right about that. I think our sorrow is beyond consolation.

Retta Hendricks-Backus: Shelley died March 1, 1994, at St. Francis Hospital in Topeka. The cause of death was a brain tumor. She was born January 17, 1954, in Peoria, Illinois, the daughter of Leland D. and Mary P. Miller. She attended Lawrence schools and graduated from high school at Liceo de Señoritas Anastasio Alfaro in San José, Costa Rica. She graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in Spanish and Social Welfare. She did graduate work in Latin American Studies at KU and at the University of California, Los Angeles, and received a Master of Library Science at UCLA.

At her death, she was a bibliographer and the head of the Department for Spain, Portugal, and Latin America at the University of Kansas Libraries. Previously, she had worked at the Library of Congress as Senior Acquisitions Specialist in the Hispanic Acquisitions

Program. Her career also included teaching at the KU Center of Latin American Studies. She belonged to a number of professional organizations, devoting special attention to the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials and work on the *Hispanic American Periodicals Index*. She belonged to the Latin American Studies Association. She traveled extensively in Latin America.

Shelley was very active in the Lawrence community. She was the immediate past president of the East Lawrence Improvement Association, also serving as the newsletter editor, coordinator of neighborhood projects, and liaison with the City Commission and the Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission on behalf of the neighborhood. She was a founding member of the Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods and was an organizer and fund-raiser for the East Lawrence Historic Project. For several years she served as the East Lawrence representative to the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Board and volunteered on the New York School's Project Management Team. She was also an active member of the Lawrence Preservation Alliance, Community Mercantile Food Coop, Free State Credit Union, KU Latin American Solidarity Committee, and the Committee to Elect a True Amphibian.

As a child, Shelley attended the Unitarian Sunday School and is a member of the Unitarian Fellowship of Lawrence. She was preceded in death by her father; survivors include her maternal grandmother, Mrs. A. G. Phillips of Baxter Springs, her mother, Mary P. Miller, and her brother, Byron, both of Lawrence; two sisters, Dianne, of Aurora, Oregon, and Kim, of Omaha, Nebraska; and two nieces and a nephew.

Marianne Schnebel and Jim Stringer : Two songs, with guitar

1. "Tears in Heaven," by Eric Clapton.
2. "Close your eyes," by James Taylor.

Trudy Travis : My name is Trudy Travis and I qualify as one of Shelley's old, old friends. I have known her since she was about five or six years old and I was—— younger than I am now. These words from Dylan Thomas:

And death shall have no dominion.
Dead men, naked, they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the west moon;
When their bones are picked clean and the clean bones gone,
They shall have stars at elbow and foot;
Though they go mad they shall be sane,
Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost love shall not;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
Under the windings of the sea
They lying long shall not die windily;
Twisting on racks when sinews give way,
Strapped to a wheel, yet they shall not break;
Faith in their hands shall snap in two,
And the unicorn evils run them through;
Split all ends up they shan't crack;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
No more gulls may cry at their ears
Or waves break loud on the seashores;
Where blew a flower may a flower no more
Lift its head to the blows of the rain;
Though they be mad and dead as nails,
Heads of the characters hammer through daisies;
Break in the sun till the sun breaks down,
And death shall have no dominion.

Karen Hummel, Rachel Miller, and Marcia Quiros, from "Las Cuatro": Today we're going to do two songs in Spanish so I wanted to translate a little bit about what we're going to sing. The first one is called "Mis razones"—My reasons for singing—and I'd like to translate the first verse of the song. She says, "I will die singing, they will bury me singing, and when I arrive at the feet of the Lord I will still be singing. From my mother's womb it was decided that I would come to this world to sing."

Song: "Mis razones," with guitar and percussion

That song is by a group named Sabiá which Shelley really loved. The next song you can sing with us, those of you who know it. It's called "Gracias a la Vida"—Thank you to life.

Song: "Gracias a la Vida," by Violeta Parra, with guitar and percussion

Elizabeth Schultz: This is Emily Dickinson . . . for Shelley.

By a departing light
We see acuter, quite,
Than by a wick that stays.
There's something in the flight
That clarifies the sight
And decks the rays.

The last Night that She lived
It was a Common Night
Except the Dying—this to Us
Made Nature different

We noticed smallest things—
Things overlooked before
By this great light upon our Minds
Italicized as 'twere.

As We went out and in
Between Her final Room
And Rooms where Those to be alive
Tomorrow were, a Blame

That Others could exist
While She must finish quite
A Jealousy for Her arose
So nearly infinite—

We waited while She passed—
It was a narrow time—
Too jostled were Our Souls to speak
At length the notice came.

She mentioned and forgot—
Then lightly as a Reed
Bent to the Water, struggled scarce—
Consented, and was dead—

And We—We placed the Hair—
And drew the Head erect—
And then an awful leisure was
Belief to regulate—

Because I could not stop for Death—
He kindly stopped for me—
The Carriage held but just Ourselves—
And Immortality.

We slowly drove—He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
for His Civility—
We passed the School, where Children strove
At Recess—in the Ring—
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain—
We passed the Setting Sun—

Or rather—He passed Us—
The Dews drew quivering and chill—
For only Gossamer my Gown—
My Tippet—only Tulle—

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground—
The Roof was scarcely visible—
The Cornice—in the Ground—

Since then—'tis Centuries—and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity—

Color—Caste—Denomination—
 These—are Time's Affair—
 Death's diviner Classifying
 Does not know they are—

As in sleep—All Hue forgotten—
 Tenets—put behind—
 Death's large—Democratic fingers
 Rub away the Brand—

If Circassian—He is careless—
 If He put away
 Chrysalis of Blonde—or Umber—
 Equal Butterfly—

They emerge from His Obscuring—
 What Death—knows so well—
 Our minuter intuitions—
 Deem unplausible—

I stepped from Plank to Plank
 A slow and cautious way
 The Stars about my Head I felt
 About my Feet the Sea.

I knew not but the next
 would be my final inch—
 This gave me that precarious Gait
 Some call Experience.

The Love a Life can show Below
Is but a filament, I know,
Of that diviner thing
That faints upon the face of Noon—
And smites the Tinder in the Sun—
And hinders Gabriel's Wing—

'Tis this—in Music—hints and sways—
And far abroad on Summer days—
Distils uncertain pain—

'Tis this enamors in the East—
And tints the Transit in the West
With harrowing Iodine—
'Tis this invites—appalls—endows—
Flits—glimmers—proves—dissolves—
Returns—suggests—convicts—enchants—
Then—flings in paradise—

I dwell in Possibility—
A fairer House than Prose—
More numerous of Windows—
Superior—for Doors—

Of Chambers as the Cedars—
Impregnable of Eye—
And for an Everlasting Roof
The Gambrels of the Sky—

Of Visitors—the fairest—
For Occupation—This—
The spreading wide my narrow Hands
To gather Paradise—

Julia McLaren: "It Could Have Been Me," by Holly Near, with the following special verse by Barry Shalinsky and Julia McLaren; guitar accompaniment by Jack Klinknett.

On a cold and snowy Thursday in Nineteen Ninety-four
 A tumor took our Shelley at the age of two score.
 Although our hearts are aching, we feel her love today.
 Her legacy of hope and strength will guide us on the way.

It could have been me but instead it was you;
 So I'll keep doin' the work you were doin' as if I were two.
 I'll be a student of life,
 A singer of songs, a farmer of foods,
 And a righter of wrongs.

It could have been me, but instead it was you;
 And it may be me, dear sisters and brothers, before we are through.
 But if you can live for freedom, freedom, freedom, freedom,
 If you can live for freedom, I can too; I can too; I can too.

Tim Miller: Shelley was never one to stand on outward forms, or appearances, or ceremonies. Were she here among us today, she'd not be nearly as dressed up as a lot of us are; some of us, maybe, but not all of us. Anyone who ever saw her desk at work, or her house, or her yard knows that she was a disastrous housekeeper. And in the spirit of her plain earthiness, I just want to share with you one paragraph from the first chapter of *Walden*. Incidentally, the non-inclusive language is Thoreau's, not mine.

A man who has at length found something to do will not need to get a new suit to do it in; for him the old will do, that has lain dusty in the garret for an indeterminate period. Old shoes will serve a hero longer than they have served his valet,—if a hero ever has a valet,—bare feet are older than shoes, and he can make them

do. Only they who go to soirées and legislative halls must have new coats; coats to change as often as the man changes in them. But if my jacket and trousers, my hat and shoes are fit to worship God in, they will do; will they not? Who ever saw his old clothes,—his old coat, actually worn out, resolved into its primitive elements, so that it was not a deed of charity to bestow it on some poor boy, by him perchance to be bestowed on some poorer still, or shall we say richer, who could do with less? I say, beware of all enterprises that require new clothes, and not rather a new wearer of clothes. If there is not a new man, how can the new clothes be made to fit? If you have any enterprise before you, try it in your old clothes.

Mona D'Astarte: Well, Tim, thank you, because I don't have on any new clothes—in honor of Shelley.

We had to change what we were going to sing a little bit because my partner's having some voice problems. So we'll do a song that makes me real nervous to do, but it's my anthem to Shelley.

Song, "Broken Arrow", by Robbie Robertson; with guitar accompaniment

The next song we are going to sing is a Grateful Dead tune because Shelley, like us, was a Deadhead; and the song is called "Ripple" and I bet a whole bunch of people know the words to it and we want you to sing along. (Peter Van Coutren: Because I need all the help I can get!)

Song, "Ripple," by Robert Hunter; with guitar accompaniment

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg: This is a poem I wrote for Shelley, a Valentine's Day poem that I wrote on the spot at the Mercantile a few weeks ago, and it's called "We Are Thinking About You."

We are living our lives thinking about you, asking ourselves,
"Why is this happening; how is she doing; when will she come home; what can we do?"

We are thinking about the surprise, the injustice, the strangeness, the unbelievability, the suddenness of this cancer.

We are thinking about your goodness.

We are thinking about all the subtle and overt differences our lives tell us your life has made, is continuing to make.

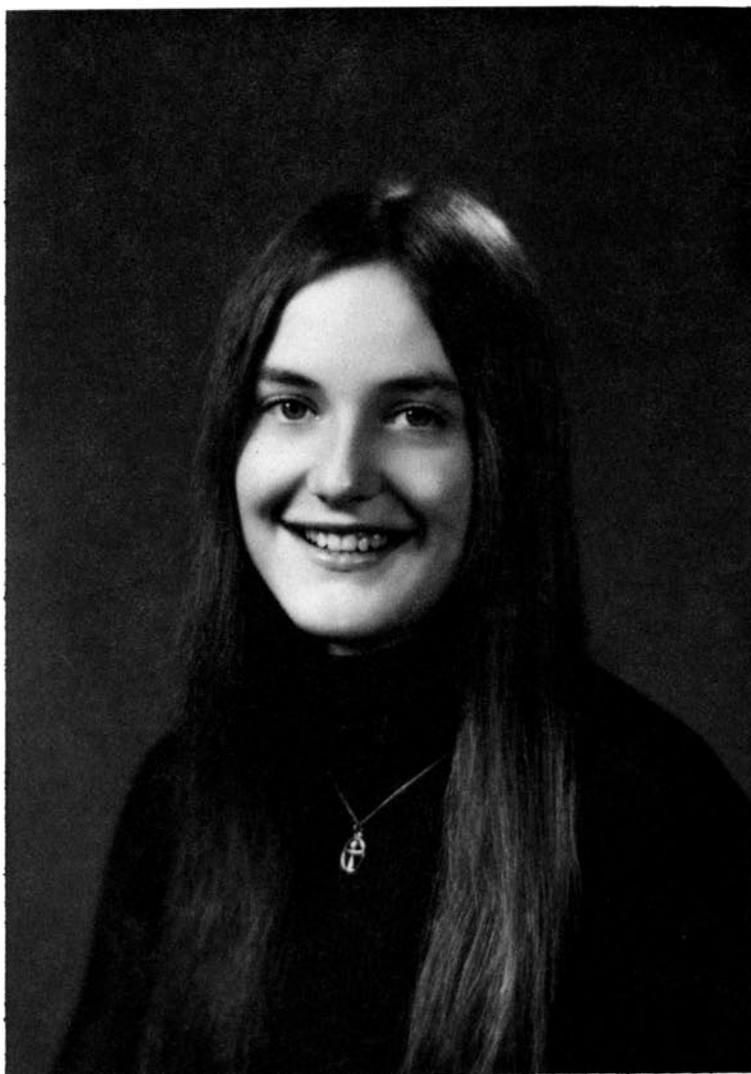
We are thinking about you so alive it almost blinds us. You sorting clothes at free sales, tromping dogs across campus, passing sign-up sheets around at meetings, loading your basket full of groceries at the Mercantile, drinking tea in your kitchen.

And our thinking breaks up the usual lines of our lives, makes us walk in circles, makes us find each other in a circle of people who love you, a circle of people thinking so hard that we stop thinking. Each carrying within us a vision of you. A circle of people learning how the circle is made, loving the person who drew this circle: You.

Vicky Virgin: I am Vicky Virgin and I had the great pleasure and privilege of living with Shelley in Washington. Last night a couple of people said to me, "I just can't see Shelley in Washington." I just want you all to know that Shelley did Washington just fine.

Music: Gånglåt of Trollvinden, a Swedish Walking Tune (accordion solo)

Shelley in 8th Grade, Fall 1967

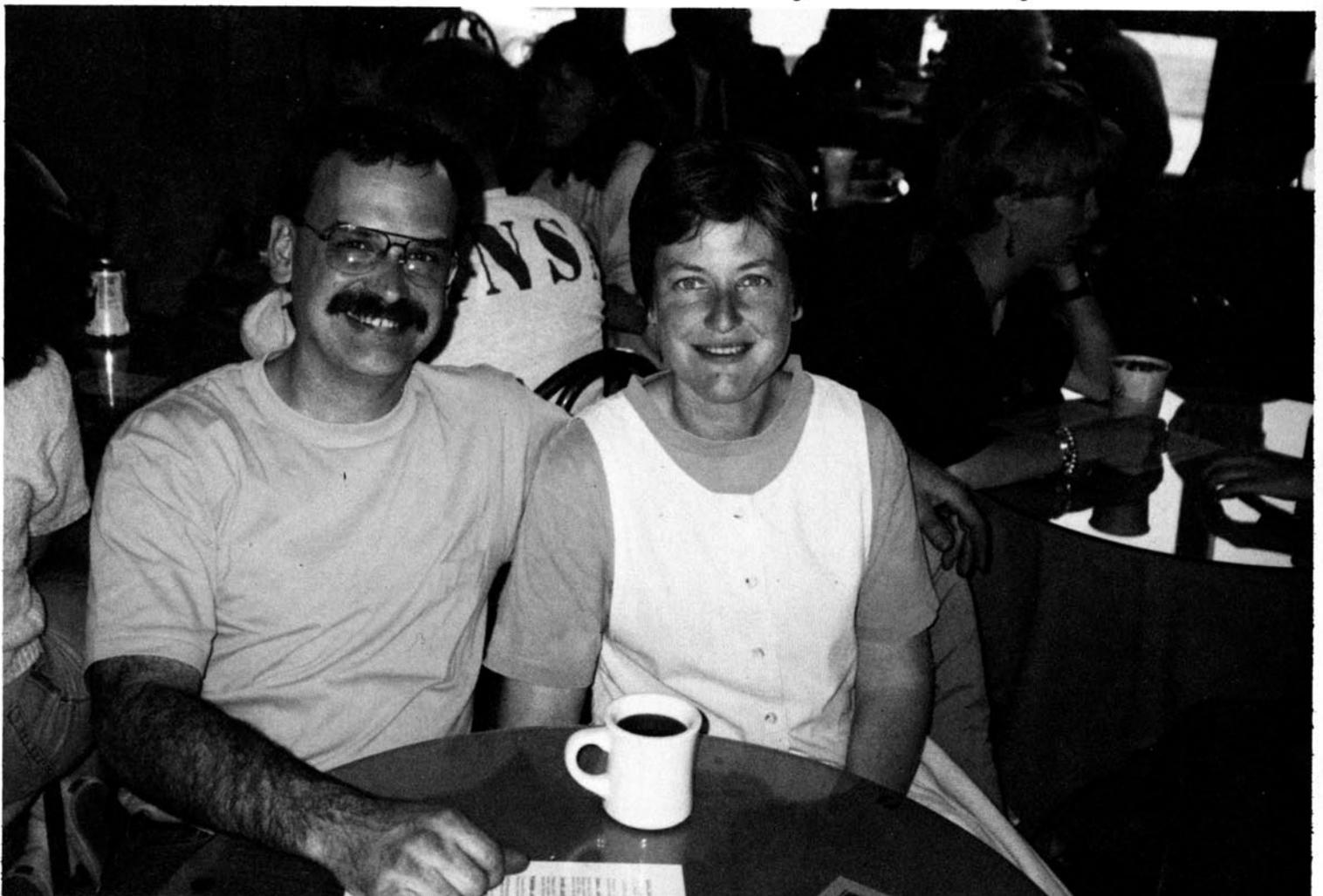


Shelley, 1972



Dianne, Mary, Kim, Erin, and Shelley

Byron and Shelley at the Glass Onion





Shelley in SPLAT, April 1992

John Curry, Shelley, Richard Kershenbaum, and Jennifer Lattimore—East Lawrencians





Shelley and The Yard, 1991

Shelley, 1991



Byron Miller: I'm Shelley's brother, Byron, and I'll always feel pretty lucky about that. We grew up together and I feel we had a very special relationship with each other as adults over the last few years. I'll miss her, but I wish her well. I can't get up in front of all you and say that I know Shelley any better than you do. Shelley had a lot of different qualities and abilities. She has shared different parts of herself with each one of us. Shelley had a hell of a month leading up to her death last Tuesday. I was really sorry to see her go through that. It hurts me very deeply. I would like you to know that all of your support and caring meant an awful lot to Shelley and her family. It really did and it does. It just blew her away to know that so many people cared; it really blew her away. I have a lot of good memories of Shelley and she will always be welcome in my heart. I think I'll miss the Fourth of July with her the most. It's kind of a family tradition we got from our dad and it will continue.

Kim Miller: I'm Kim. I'm the baby sister of the family—but then Byron's younger yet—and I just am overwhelmed with all of this. I feel kind of selfish claiming Shelley as a sister. She was a sister to so many people and I've lived in so many places around the country, but I've always been in real close contact with Shelley. I'm always talking with her on the phone and hearing about all the things she's involved with, and it's so wonderful to be here and see all these people because she lived with you, and talked about you, and cared about all of you so much. I was family, but all of us were family. Shelley and I promised each other when we were little that we would live with each other when we grew up and I'm afraid I broke that promise, but I felt like I could live with her through all the sharing that we did over the phone, and with our visits, and hearing about all you folks. We thought we would do a trip to New York one time, at some point, and I kept having kids and that kind of got in the way, but we still said we'd try when maybe my children, Bill's and my children, would get a little bit older we could just take off and do it. Well, some day somebody's going to show me

around New York, I hope. I don't know who it's going to be. Kaplan, I'll be there someday.

I also wanted to share some really fun memories of Shelley. Shelley was really an incredible sister. She did some wild things. She loved to have her back scratched, and I shared a room with her so I was the one that got to scratch her back. Well, it got to be a little much sometimes so I started charging her a quarter. Sometimes she'd want me to rub her feet but I really wasn't about to do that. I did sometimes, but I made her pay me 50 cents.

In our neighborhood there was a store down on the corner there across from the high school. It's a laundromat now, used to be an old kind of variety goods store, but we knew it as "the candy store." We'd take our allowance down there and blow the whole wad on those little wax pop bottles, and you'd bite off the wax top and suck down that little bit of juice in there, or those Godawful candy ice cream cones that probably sat in a warehouse for who knows how many years. But boy, you could get I don't know how many of them for a nickel, and so that's what we got. Well, the store closed and all of us in the neighborhood just like, "Where we going to get our candy now?" And so after a few years of fretting this, Shelley, the Capricorn, entrepreneurial, make-a-buck woman that she was in her youth, decided that she could earn some money by having her own candy store at home. So she'd go buy the box of candy bars that you'd pay howmuchever that it usually worked out that you'd get one free, and she figured she could make a nickel profit or whatever off a box. Candy bars back then didn't cost that much. So anyway, she figured out a profit margin and she'd go and save up and buy a big amount of candy and she was the neighborhood candy store, and kids would come knocking on our door to buy candy. My mom would always get a little frustrated with it because right around dinner time, when all the parents were saying no more snacks, dinner soon, they'd come knocking on our door to buy a candy bar.

Then also, Shelley, of course she never made any profit at it because she'd have candy throws: "Candy throw! Candy throw!" We'd go around the neighborhood telling everybody, "Candy throw!" On the house at 1709 there are three upper windows: that was Shelley's and my

bedroom (and Dianne's at one time). So we'd open up the windows, open up the storm windows and sit there on the window ledge and all the kids would gather in the front yard and we'd toss candy out the window as everybody made a mad dash at the candy. It was great! Who knows how much money she lost in this adventure. When we would go on trips and we'd be a few miles down the road, Shelley would sit back and say, "Candy store's open." It was just us in the car, but she'd bring her candy along and sell it to Dianne and Byron and me. And we'd buy it. She'd give us loans, that's right, she'd write credit. I was talking to Sally Fessler the other night, and I had totally forgotten this—I don't really know how this worked, Sally was kind of in a different neighborhood—but one time we were going out of town and Shelley entrusted the candy store to Sally to earn a few while Shelley was away. Yeah, Shelley was Shelley.

Ann Nunley:

Don't bury me in a deep, dark grave
Under dirt and dust and blend.
I want to soar o'er mountain vale.
My soul is on the wind.

Don't put me in a deep, dark hole
As if it were the end.
I want to fly with the gusty gale.
My soul is on the wind.

Scatter my ash from here to there
And let us not pretend
That anything is buried here.
My soul is on the wind.

Bob Nunley: We are Ann and Bob Nunley. Thirty years ago, when the Millers were at 1709 Indiana, we were at 1708 Louisiana. Ann was pregnant with our fourth and they were the only other couple we knew stupid enough to have four kids. We were very close to the Millers at that time. One of the things we had a lot of fun doing was singing Latin American songs and Shelley would really like to hear that before she was even ten years of age. The last song I sang for her was "Somos el barco" and I'll give you the words so you can sing along with us.

Song, "Somos el barco" (duet with guitar)

Somos el barco
Somos el mar
Yo navego en tí
Tú navegas en mí.

Ann: This is a lullaby. It works best if you kind of hang on to each other and help us sing it.

Song, "Like a ship in the harbor" (duet with guitar)

Bob: Goodnight, Shelley.

Barry Shalinsky: I was supposed to come up here and give a few remembrances of experiences with Shelley. The problem is that most of the best ones probably should not be told in public. My name is Barry Shalinsky. I've been a friend of Shelley's for close to 20 years. One of my earliest and fondest memories was in the summer of '79, when I was studying for and preparing to take the bar exam. I didn't let that get in the way of more important things, so I remember one of those Sunday nights at Hobbes Park playing softball when I came up to bat and the bar exam was just two days away. Shelley was there in the stands cheering for our team and she yelled out when I came up to bat, "Come on, Barry, this one's for Tuesday!" and I smacked a double down the left field line. That's the way that Shelley was. She spread a similar kind of energy everywhere that she went. She went far and wide in her lifetime,

traveling abroad, living for awhile in L.A. and in D.C., but East Lawrence was always home. It's always where she felt most comfortable and felt a kindred spirit.

Shelley was incredibly dedicated to the East Lawrence neighborhood. She got up early in the morning to go to weekly meetings at New York School to help with planning things for the school. She wasn't a parent, she didn't have a kid in New York School, but the neighborhood school was still very important to her. She was always the one that cooked the vegetarian chili for the Martin Luther King supper at New York School. She was very active in the East Lawrence History Project because saving old houses in the East Lawrence neighborhood was very important to Shelley. She was the person that organized building the trash racks and she didn't just take care of things like trash racks and houses. What she was best at was taking care of people. She was someone who helped out her neighbors who needed help, in particular some of the older people: taking them to the grocery store, helping do yard work, doing whatever needed to be done. And in her spare time she went to City Commission meetings and Planning Commission meetings, and was a very good advocate for the neighborhood.

Shelley took being a neighborhood advocate to extremes. When she was in the hospital, there was a time about two weeks before she died when she went into a coma. The first thing she said when she came out of the coma was to ask Barry what happened at the neighborhood meeting. Before and while she was hospitalized she did some planning and work on the neighborhood newsletter and made sure that information got passed on for the Community Mercantile Strategic Plan because she worked on the Strategic Plan for the University Libraries and wanted to make sure that what she had learned was passed along while she could still pass it along. The Mercantile is very grateful for that.

We all remember Shelley as being kind of a vibrant and joyful person, but her last year was a pretty tough one. Some of us who knew her well and that she confided in knew a little bit about this. She was pretty flipped out about turning 40 and as it turned out, her illness was

diagnosed within a couple of weeks after her fortieth birthday. She lost her grandmother a few weeks before she found out about her illness and a few months earlier she lost Hannah Leibengood. Hannah was like her surrogate grandmother and her best friend. It was really hard for Shelley to lose Hannah after they had been such good friends for so many years.

She took a lot of crap from a handful of people in the neighborhood association while she was president because she tried to be reasonable in dealing with City Hall and a lot of people sort of felt like she should be more militant, perhaps. But Shelley was very successful in dealing with City Hall.

She was loved by her friends and she was respected by her adversaries. When she called to tell me of her illness, I went over and visited later that evening. She was kind of matter of fact about it all. She said, "Well, they tell me that this could be the big one. I guess I might get snuffed," that was her words, and, "I guess if I get snuffed, I get snuffed." She accepted it all rather cheerfully really. It was almost like an adventure for her. She told me, "Well, this is something I've never done before." When Shelley was in the hospital I went to visit her and in the half an hour that I was there, two more bouquets of flowers were brought in to add to about 15 of them that were already there. Shelley really couldn't understand it. She said, "You know, I never sent flowers." I told her, "No, but you planted a lot of seeds and they're growing." Shelley told me that she wasn't scared of what might happen and she told me just a few days before she died that she really felt like she was at peace. She told me that she'd had a good life, and really met a lot of wonderful people, and did a lot of wonderful things, and she was ready for whatever was going to come. I hope Shelley has some peace where she is right now, but I sort of doubt it because there's a lot of hard work to be done and I'm sure she's there really organizing right as we speak. Shelley leaves an incredible legacy for all of us. It's literally going to take everyone in this room and then some to carry on the work that this one person was able to do and to give as much as she was able to give. Thanks Shelley, we love you.

Bill Crowe: I am honored to have been invited to speak at this memorial for Shelley. I will do my best to express something of how I and her countless colleagues and friends in the KU Libraries—and friends of the KU Libraries everywhere—feel about Shelley and her life.

I had a conversation last week with Terry Peet, one of Shelley's heartsick colleagues at the Library of Congress. Apparently they had checked her personnel records while preparing an article for their newsletter, and the question "Reason for leaving?" was answered in just two words: "Kansas Calls." Kansas called Shelley—in so many ways and to our great good fortune. Shelley did seem right for Kansas, especially if we think about those values and human traits that represent the best of this place.

The most immediate of the Kansas traits I associate with Shelley is openness: Shelley was one of those rare people who can establish rapport with others virtually on the spot. Indeed, my wife, who is also a child of this city and University, told me on hearing of Shelley's death that she felt she knew her well—that she had had this feeling almost from their first meeting three years ago—which was more likely to have taken place in Dr. Wempe's veterinary waiting room than at a crowded Library party.

Many others have spoken to me of Shelley's marvelous gift of openness to others. I have heard this from people in the Library, from others on campus, and from people around the country and overseas with whom we have been in contact on the blessed Internet, which has allowed Shelley's wider circle to stay in touch these last hard weeks. We all know that Shelley was open—but not only in accepting people as they are and respecting them as individuals. Shelley took that good Kansas trait much further: she revelled in humanity. It was always wonderful to see Shelley talking—with so much animation—with a student, a friend from another department in the Library, someone from town, or a visitor from Costa Rica. Shelley was so open that the rest of us could not fail to be open with her.

The second Kansas trait I associate with Shelley was her joy in learning and discovery. She was in so many ways the epitome of what we in education strive to be—a seeker after truth. During my first year

here, in 1990, as so many faculty went out of their way to praise Library staff to me, many mentioned Shelley. They cited her intellectual gifts, of course, her remarkable talent for languages, and her high energy. But most of all they called attention to Shelley's zest in reaching out to faculty and students. Shelley delighted in teaching—in all its manifestations—whether one-on-one on Jayhawk Boulevard, over a computer or a pile of Central American newspapers in SPLAT, or in the classroom. Last fall, for example, she taught a course entirely in Spanish—as a volunteer. (Since I mentioned "SPLAT," let me mention for those who do not know our jargon one brief insight that shows that even Shelley, who did not despair of much, could come close to giving up hope. She fretted on and off about training student assistants in SPLAT—*Spain, Portugal and Latin America*—not to answer the phone, and so startle many off-campus callers, with the greeting "SPLAT!")

Other Kansas traits that I will always associate with Shelley are integrity and forthrightness. I quickly learned that Shelley called them as she saw them. In fact, she and I had our first contact when Shelley questioned some action I had taken early in my time as Dean of Libraries at KU. She was plain-spoken and calm when she came to see me. She clearly did not hold me—an unknown quantity, an administrator!—either in awe or in automatic skepticism. Still, she wanted to be heard and to hear me. She asked questions. I answered. She expressed her opinions and listened to mine. Let's say that in the end she accepted what I had to say, but let me know—without mistaking her meaning—that she still disagreed with what I had done. But that was the end—there was no recrimination, no grudge, no disgruntlement.

Last, I recall Shelley's Kansas good humor and congenial wit. I remember hearing that someone once asked Shelley why she had left the center of librarianship to come back to Lawrence. Shelley said that while she had developed many warm friendships at the Library of Congress and in Washington, she found a sense of community hard to sustain in that place. She then gave the very Shelley-like example of not being able to recall ever having been asked, at least on an impromptu basis, to stop at the end of the day simply to lift a glass and talk about

the news of the day. Now in Lawrence . . . Let's say that many of us know how much Shelley looked forward to stopping at certain establishments—for good music, warm conversation, and cold beer.

With so many others, I count myself very fortunate to have known Shelley Miller, even for so short a time. Shelley was a committed, working leader in our city, a stalwart colleague, and a warm and giving human being. I suppose that in all these guises Shelley gave us light as intense as the fireworks and as warm as the bonfires that she loved so much. With so many hundreds, even thousands, of people who knew her, I will miss Shelley more than I can say.

For myself, but especially for all in the KU Libraries who had the privilege of working with Shelley for so many more years than I had, I want to tell you that Shelley's life remains for us a joyous example of the best that we can strive to achieve—for her openness, her joy in learning and discovery, her integrity and forthrightness, and her good humor and congeniality. We know how fortunate we are that Kansas called Shelley.

Jon Vincent: I'm Jon Vincent from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Shelley was the best bibliographer we've had in my long tenure at KU, and I emphasize *long*. She not only excelled at all the technical aspects of overseeing acquisitions, and cataloging, and going off to weird and dangerous little places to buy arcane journals for some eccentric faculty member, and attending national meetings and keeping up with the latest in everything, she did everything with enthusiasm, class, and something very nearly approximating glee. In fact, she was more than a bibliographer. She was more of a bibliomaniac cheerleader who never let the faculty forget that the library is our most important resource for research, nor that she was always prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to make it an even better resource. She communicated openly and frequently with all of us and she never kept

anything from us. If a journal had to be canceled, we were always provided with the information and the options we had. Although the options did not usually extend to canceling a journal in somebody else's department, unfortunately. I think I can speak for all the faculty in Latin American Studies, and in Spanish and Portuguese as well, in saying that she was a professional's professional.

I am further certain that every single faculty member in both departments has at least one slightly astounding Shelley anecdote to relate; and I think I will just tell you a couple of mine as examples because I think the anecdotes spell it out better than any other lengthy speech I could give. The first had to do [with] when, largely through Shelley's efforts, KU finally acquired the *Hispanic American Periodical Index*, or *HAPI*, an acronym which will always remind me of Shelley. We finally got *HAPI* and she sent out memos to everybody inviting us to come and learn how to use this thing. I am not computer illiterate but I am computer dumb, so it was not an easy thing for me to do. I went over and she spent about two hours teaching me to go through this labyrinthine thing on a topic in which I was convinced I was the only person in the world who was interested. I came up with 92 items relating to this thing, to my great astonishment. But this was in the middle of a very busy day. She took two hours out of her very busy schedule to help me do this and she was like that all the time. She was just super with the faculty.

The other story happened in the late '80s when I was making one of my all-too-infrequent trips to Brazil. I was just about ready to leave on my way back. I was lolling about in the bookstore, as I am wont to do, out in Copacabana and I had about an hour to go before I had to catch a cab to go to the airport. I only had thirty dollars in my pocket and I found this book. This was a book I had never heard of, I had never seen before. It was an enormous tome, a special edition. It was printed in less than 900 copies, on very expensive paper. It had facsimiles of all kinds of documents from the '20s and '30s, the Vanguardist period in Brazil, just full of all kinds of great goodies. This was before they accepted plastic in Brazil and so I was stuck. I didn't know what to do. There was just no way I could buy this thing. So I

wrote down very carefully all the information: the publisher, the publisher's address and phone number and everything. I thought, "Well, if I get back fast enough, maybe she can get to them. So I flew back to Lawrence and the next morning I called Shelley as soon as things were operating and I gave her all the information on this book. There was a pause and she said, "Yeah, just a minute," and there was a long pause and she came back to the phone and she said, "We have that; I'll have it cataloged for you this afternoon." Although this borders on the magical, I have no way to explain this. The only thing I can guess is that since she was on top of all these book catalogs and she knows all the interests, which are at times very bizarre interests, of faculty members, she would have known that that book was the ideal one for me and so she bought it immediately. I consider this kind of thing typical of her career. She not only was very open and giving but she had a bit of magic to her. She could get things done like nobody else could.

And the final thing I would like to remember about Shelley is a professional courtesy I have always deeply appreciated from her and that was that she never, never (at least not aloud), never mentioned that I was in chronic violation of the library dress code.

Mona D'Astarte: Hi! I'm Mona D'Astarte and Shelley is my best friend. I know in talking to people over the last few days that, as Tim said earlier, many people considered Shelley their best friend. Of the 1.1 million friends that she had, weren't we all very lucky to know her? The first time I ever saw Shelley's sweet hippie face, we were in the kitchen at Douthart Hall scouting out whether there were any desserts left over after dinner. We weren't supposed to do that, of course. They were to be used at some other time. So we gave each other a look and bonded instantly and subsequently found out that we shared the same birthday, from the same year and we knew we were soulmates. We were 19 years old at that time. I was here in January to celebrate our 40th birthday together and it was a really joyous time. I also was back visiting Shelley many days while she was in the hospital, and despite all that was happening with her and my incredible sadness about what was happening to her, that too was also a joyous time for me because I got to be with her.

Someone asked me if I wanted to say something at Shelley's services today and I fancied myself a wordsmith and I couldn't think of a thing to say. So I thought long and hard and I had a dream about it, and planned out what I was going to say. So then I tried to think of what Shelley would want me to say. And I hope I'm not being presumptuous, but when I started to think what Shelley might want me to say, the words came a little easier to me. I think that she would want us to know that it's OK to grieve for her but not to get lost there and that it's OK for us to ponder the really weighty nature of life and death, but we can't stop there. And I think Shelley would want us to think that we need to pay attention because everything counts. If I were not to pay attention to the tenor of Shelley's character, and the depth of her compassion for people, and the vigor of her activism, then I do her disservice. I will pay attention and I'll keep on doing the work that she was doing as if I were two. Someone wrote Shelley a letter while she was in the hospital. What most impressed him was that she took her work and her life so seriously and yet she knew how to have fun. She would love that so many of us in this room today are exhausted from dancing and watching a bonfire last night, that we're all aching in the

bodies from throwing our arms up around to the sounds of Tofu Teddy. So, I danced last night as if I were two.

I would be remiss if I didn't keep Shelley in mind and share a couple of fun memories of her. In January 1987, my partner, Peter, and I, and Shelley drove to Mulegé, halfway down the Baja Peninsula, for a vacation. It was a beautiful four days. One day we were out on the beach, and the water—you could walk out for two hundred yards and it'd still be up to your calves. So we were sitting on the beach and I said, "Well geez, I wonder what the newspaper headlines are saying at home." And I got very politically correct and said, "I hope they say 'World Peace'!" And Peter said, "I hope they say 'Government Overthrown'!" And Shelley said, "I hope it says 'Kansas Woman Wins Irish Sweepstakes'." She really knew how to be on vacation. Also in Mulegé, it got rainy one day so we went and sat on a covered patio, and I bought Mexican cigarettes, and Peter and I were passing back and forth a quart of Tecate, which cost us 50 cents, and we were eating peanuts and throwing the shells, and Shelley was writing postcards furiously to people, probably all of you people. Then I would tell that story later on about her writing the postcards furiously and she said, "I drank beer too!" and of course she had been drinking beer. So what I want to say is this: like Shelley, I'm going to take me and my life seriously, I hope you do the same; and, let's have some fun; and remember to pay attention because everything counts.

Tim Miller: The Zen master D.T. Suzuki wrote,

Our life and death are the same thing. When we realize this fact, we have no fear of death any more or difficulty in our life. I went to Yosemite National Park and I saw some waterfalls and the water did not come down as one stream, but seemed to be separated into many tiny streams. So I thought it must be a very difficult experience for each drop of water to come down. It takes a long time for the water to reach the bottom. It seems that our human life may be like this. We have many difficult experiences in our lives but at the same time the water was not originally separated, it was one whole river. Only when it is separated does it have difficulty falling. After we are separated by birth from this oneness, as the water falling from the waterfall is separated by wind and rocks, then we have feeling and pain. When you do not realize that you are one with the river, with the universe, you have fear. Our life and death are the same thing. When we realize this fact, we have no fear of death any more and no difficulty in life.

We're going to close with a song—are you glad we're closing?—"For the Beauty of the Earth," which was sung every week in Shelley's Sunday School when she was a child and which remained a favorite of hers. And afterwards, her family and friends invite everyone to linger and share your memories of our extraordinary friend and colleague. Shelley was famous for, among many other things, her extraordinary supply of great cookies. And if anyone happens to have brought cookies today, when we're done let's get them out and share them. Feed each other, care for each other, and appreciate the loving community we have in the too few years we all have left.

For the beauty of the earth
For the splendor of the skies
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This, our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of ear and eye
For the heart and mind's delight
For the mystic harmony
Linking sense to sound and sight
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This, our hymn of grateful praise.

For the wonder of each hour
Of the day and of the night
Hill and vale and tree and flower
Sun and moon and stars of light
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This, our hymn of grateful praise.