

Sins of Omission

What George Carter Failed to Tell EFIB Faculty about J. Corey Miller

On 20-July-2007, USMNEWS.NET released a **Breaking News** story regarding the EFIB's search for a new Director of its Center for Economics Education. That story presented a troubling e-mail from EFIB Chairman George Carter to EFIB faculty, stating that a national search for the Directorship generated just two (2) applications – one from Corey Miller of Mississippi State University and the other from Susan Doty, wife of former CoB Dean D. Harold Doty, and currently serving as the CEE's lead economics education provider (to K-12 teachers in Mississippi). That news story indicated how Carter had presented Doty's case for the Directorship in the best possible light, while at the same time downgrading Miller's qualifications for the post. Carter also indicated in the same e-mail that the CEE search committee, consisting of Carter, William Gunther, and Akbar Marvasti, favored Doty's candidacy over that of Miller.

Since that story broke, reporters at USMNEWS.NET have obtained a copy of Corey Miller's vita. While a number of comments Carter made about Miller can be verified by Miller's vita, there are a number of items listed on Miller's vita that should have been relayed by Carter to the EFIB faculty in his (Carter's) e-mail of 20-July-2007. This report goes through parts of Miller's vita in an attempt to point out where Carter was accurate, and where Carter was horribly misleading in his, and the committee's, characterization of Miller's qualifications. While reading this report, it should be kept in mind that Carter failed to provide EFIB faculty with the vitae of either candidate.

James Corey Miller

Place of Birth: Brookhaven, Mississippi

The first thing our reporters noticed about Miller's vita is that he was born in Brookhaven, Mississippi. As such, he has ties to Mississippi. During a spring 2007 meeting with EFIB faculty, former EFIB professor Charles Sawyer, who is described by Carter as a job-search master, informed EFIB faculty that hiring for a CEE Directorship is one of the most daunting tasks that could be faced in economics hiring. One would think, then, that Miller's candidacy might receive a boost from his local ties. USMNEWS.NET has been reporting for over a year that, since arriving in 2003, the Dotys have been using every tool at their disposal to leave Hattiesburg and USM.

EDUCATION

- **Master of Science**, August 2000
- Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi
- Major: Agricultural Economics
- GPA: 3.68
- Thesis: An Analysis of a Counter-Cyclical Alternative to Market Transition Payments
- Advisor: Dr. Barry J. Barnett
- **Bachelor of Science**, May 1998
- Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi
- Major: Agribusiness
- Minor: Economics
- GPA: 4.0
- Summa Cum Laude
- **Other Education**, August 2000-December 2001
- Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia
- Economics Ph.D. Courses
- GPA: 3.08

The education-related insert above shows that Miller has both bachelor's and master's degrees from Mississippi State University, the latter being in agricultural economics, and that he (Miller) completed about 1.5 years of PhD coursework in economics from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The fact that Miller has completed a significant amount of PhD coursework was pointed out in Carter's e-mail to EFIB faculty. But, the insert above shows that Miller completed a Master's Thesis in agricultural economics in 2000 – a feat that indicates that Miller has actually “done” some economics (writing) of substance.

To sum up here, Miller has a master's degree in agricultural economics (MSU, 2000), which included a Master's Thesis, and a significant amount of PhD coursework in economics (VPI&SU, 2000-01) under his belt. Meanwhile, according to Carter's e-mail Susan Doty has an M.B.A. from Bryant College (in 1982). On the educational front, Miller is clearly the leading candidate between the two.

As Sawyer explained to EFIB faculty in the spring 2007 meeting, the CEE Directorship would be a difficult task for anyone to handle given that it involves not only K-12 program delivery across South Mississippi but also course teaching at USM and academic research. According to Miller's vita, he has the final part of the task, arguably the most daunting part, nailed down (see the insert below).

REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Miller, J. Corey and Keith H. Coble. Cheap Food Policy: Fact or Rhetoric? *Food Policy*. In press.
- Coble, Keith H. J. Corey Miller, Manuel Zuniga, and Richard Heifner. The Joint Effect of Government Crop Insurance and Loan Programs on the Demand for Futures Hedging. *European Review of Agricultural Economics* 31, 3(September 2004) pp. 1-22.
- Miller, J. Corey, Barry J. Barnett and Keith H. Coble. Analyzing Producer Preferences for Counter-Cyclical Government Payments. *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics* 35, 3(December 2003): 671-684.

In addition to an in press article at *Food Policy*, Miller has published two additional journal articles – one in the *European Review of Agricultural Economics* (2004), and the other in the *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics* (2003). Not only is Miller “Academically Qualified” now (based on the CoB's definitions of AQ), he (Miller) will continue to be so when the AACSB Peer Review Team arrives in February of 2008 for the CoB's 6th Year Review. In fact, considering only the research shown above Miller would be AQ in the CoB all the way through December of 2008. Susan Doty does not offer such a windfall/bonus to the CoB by being AQ. One source puts things a little differently by pointing out that, in terms of research, Miller's vita is better than that of CoB assistant professor of economics Daniel Monchuk, which is a nice comparison given that both work in the same general area.¹ Thus, throwing in the additional solo-publication from Miller shown below seems like overkill.

- Miller, J. Corey. “Growing Pressures on Farm Policy.” *Regulation* Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 46-52. Winter 2004-2005. Available from <http://www.cato.org/pubs/regulation/regv27n4/v27n4-6.pdf>.

¹ It is quite possible that members of the EFIB search committee, particularly Marvasti, may have been turned off to Miller by this aspect of his record.

Add to these some book chapters (shown below) and a large number of reports, presentations, etc., and Miller looks like a middle-of-the-pack (or better) EFIB faculty.

BOOK CHAPTERS

- Shaik, Saleem, Barry J. Barnett, Keith H. Coble, J. Corey Miller, and Terry Hanson. 2006. "Insurability Conditions and Livestock Disease Insurance." Chapter in The Economics of Livestock Disease Insurance: Concepts, Issues and International Case Studies. S.R. Koontz, D.L. Hoag, D.D. Thilmany, J. W. Green and J. L. Grannis, eds. Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing North America, pp. 53-67.
- Coble, Keith H., Terry R. Hanson, Stephen H. Sempier, Saleem Shaik, and J. Corey Miller. 2006. "Investigating the Feasibility of Livestock Disease Insurance: A Case Study in U.S. Aquaculture." Chapter in The Economics of Livestock Disease Insurance: Concepts, Issues and International Case Studies. S.R. Koontz, D.L. Hoag, D.D. Thilmany, J.W. Green and J.L. Grannis, eds. Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing North America, pp. 252-271.

By allowing Carter to tout Doty's candidacy over Miller's, given these facts about Miller's research (and the lack thereof with Susan Doty), it is difficult to maintain confidence in Interim CoB Dean Alvin Williams' abilities to recognize how to guide the CoB through its current AACSB accreditation difficulties. Williams told CoB faculty on 10-April-2007 that the CoB needed refereed research now more than ever before. Miller's record of AQ-level scholarship over the period 2003-present presents Williams with a silver-platter opportunity, yet it appears as though deference to cronyism and sycophancy in the EFIB, through the search committee's efforts to hire Susan Doty, will nix that opportunity.

In his 20-July-2007 e-mail, Carter seems to suggest that Doty is more qualified to deliver K-12 economics education programs (and head a Center) simple because she's been doing so for some time, not because she is proficient in economics as a field of study. At the same time, Carter is critical of the fact that Miller has not been delivering economics education lectures, or working in economics education, even though Carter admits that Miller is clearly proficient in economics as a field of study. If the CoB has gotten to the point that this type of reasoning has merit, then it might just be the case that the 2008 AACSB decision is the last thing CoB constituencies should be concerned about.