

“Virginia Tech Danger!” Part 4

We continue a series taken from “*Virginia Tech Danger!*” *Echoes of Mississippi Supremacists at the University of Southern Mississippi* by Chauncey M. DePree, Jr., DBA, a longtime professor at USM. [If you’ve missed [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#) or [Part 3](#), they’re reported below.]

Patty Polk Munn



Ms. Patty Polk Munn is an instructor of accounting at USM for decades, and a student at USM for many years before that. She creates gossip, acts on gossip, and passes on gossip as if it is The Truth. This is verified in her deposition and is reported below in her own words.

Why was Ms. Munn an instigator and participant in the mobbing? One can only speculate on what goes on inside someone's head. However, in Ms. Munn's case, her own words may provide insight.

On several occasions, Ms. Munn screamed in my face that she didn't like being portrayed as a character on one of my novels. Others witnessed these rants. I got her to calm down and asked who she was supposed to be and in which novel. She said Sadie Putz in *Choking Dead Chickens*. I was surprised, to say the least. I didn't know Ms. Munn except to say hello in the hallway at school. I had no idea what her life was like. I tried to tell her that she was mistaken. She, nevertheless, insisted she was Sadie Putz in the novel. She wasn't, but no matter what I said, she was convinced that she was that character.

Actually, Sadie Putz was a minor character who sought power, position and control through sexual favors. Blackmail was her *modus operandi*. Venal administrators were her targets.

Ms. Munn claimed she was identified with the character because Sadie was short and her friends said it must be her. She acted as though she was the only short female accounting instructor on the face of the earth. I have no idea who her friends are or whether her friends were teasing her for fun or whether they knew something about her that I didn't. I did tell Ms. Munn that when I revised the novel—which I had planned to do—I would change the character's physical attribute, but that did not calm her rants. In the revised novel, renamed "*Rufus McCoy and Profiteers in the Ivory Tower*," there is no longer a Sadie Putz character. However, no matter what I said or did, Ms. Munn remained red-faced and furious with me. And, as discussed below, ultimately she created a fiction intended to destroy my career.

I have read about authors who have had similar experiences: acquaintances and strangers seeing themselves as a character in the writers' novels. Let me say once again, I don't have any idea whether Ms. Munn was or is in any way using sexual favors to blackmail venal administrators. I will say this. If Ms. Munn sees herself as Sadie Putz, perhaps she should take a hard look at herself and leave me out of her fantasies.

The following is taken from the sworn testimony of Patty Polk Munn, on June 10, 2008, in the case, *DePree v. University of Southern Mississippi* (Q. is my attorney's questions directed to Munn; A. is Munn's responses):

Q. I believe you just stated you had heard of things that happened in the community that led you to believe that Marc DePree was unstable; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. What had you heard of in the community prior to February of 2000?

A. The first thing the first occurrence was I don't know the exact date. I think it was in late 80s or early 90s. He was bitten by a dog...

Q. Was he seriously injured?

A. I'm not -- I don't know how seriously. I'm sure he his version of it in the hearing was that he was. And that's I don't have any other knowledge. So I

don't know, but he certainly he was he was bleeding. He it bit his hand I think, it did some damage to some tendons. I'm not sure. I can't -- I don't know.

Q. So how did Marc being attacked and bitten by a dog and being hospitalized as a result lead to your conclusion that he was volatile or unstable?

A. I'm just saying this is when it started. Marc had them put the dog to sleep...

Q. And tell me who you got the understanding of these events from?

A. From the daughter and grandson of the couple [who owned the dog]. They [owners] are now dead.

Q. What are the names of this daughter and the grandson?

A. Mr. and Ms. Little are the grandparents [the dog owners]. The daughter is Billy Jean Williams and the grandson is John David Williams.

Q. And they communicated these facts to you?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever talk to Marc to determine if they were true?

A. No.... I don't know much about the case itself.

Q. And you didn't bother to check up or check it out and confirm it with Marc?

A. No, I did not...

Q. Okay. You use the term sober with connection with Dr. Depree a minute ago. What did you mean by that?...

A. I guess I meant rational, stable, **person who views the world in the correct manner...** [Emphasis added.]

Q. Okay. So what did you -- do you recall what you explained to Carl Nicholson? [Carl Nicholson is a local CPA, and was a member of Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), who received a letter from me outlining misconduct of then-Director of Accountancy, James Crockett. Ms.

Munn used my letter, which was a Faculty Handbook authorized communication to the IHL, to exemplify that my behavior was unstable. (The IHL has oversight authority of Mississippi state universities)]

A. Well, he is talking about Crockett and Alvin and his [DePree's] allegations that about the equity pay and --

Q. What was Marc saying about that situation?

A. This it's been so long since I've even thought about testimony he was basically saying that Jim gave his good buddy Marvin a raise.

Q. Doesn't he allege certain facts to exist as to why the raise was improper?

A. He does.

Q. And can you tell me that those [DePree's] allegations are factually incorrect?

A. I can't tell you that...

Q. Early in your deposition when we were talking about volatile and violent -- capacity for violence you mentioned a confrontation with a Dean [Doty] involving Marc DePree. Do you recall that?

A. I think so.

Q. To what are you referring?

A. I'm referring to a confrontation that he had with the Dean Doty in the hallway...

Q. What's the nature of the confrontation?

A. I think it was about the website [USMNews.net, previously usmpride] and his putting up fliers about the website if I remember correctly.

Q. Do you know what the final result of that confrontation was?

A. I don't.

Q. You're not aware in April or May of '04, I'm sorry, '07 it was determined that Marc was to have a right and ability to post those handbills and was given written permission to do so by Stan Lewis [then-Interim Director of

the School of Accountancy]?

A. I really don't keep up with it. I don't know.

Q. You're not aware of that?

A. No.

Q. Did Marc go to Doty or Doty go to Marc?

A. My understanding was that they just saw each other in the hall.

Q. So you didn't observe this confrontation?

A. No, I didn't...

Q. Did you tell Ms. Judy McQueen that Dr. Depree was crazy?

A. Probably.

Q. Did you say that he was a psychopath?

A. Probably.

Q. Who else have you said this to?

A. I said it to probably most people in the college of -- in the school of accounting.

Q. What about in the college of business?

A. If we were discussing Dr. Depree and his actions and our concern about the things that were happening probably I said something about at least the fact that I felt he was unstable. And unstable.

Q. And you've also said that he was crazy on a number of occasions, haven't you?

A. Probably...

Q. No one has ever told you that they believed that one of the characters in Choking Dead Chickens was you, have they?

A. Many people have told me that they believe Marc meant it to be me...

Q. To defame you or put you in a false light in the public?

MR. HOOKS [One of USM's Adams and Reese attorneys]: I object...

Q. Did they say anything like that Dr. Depree wanted everybody to believe?

A. Oh, everyone said that...

Q. Have you reviewed USM pride dot com or USM news dot net at any time?

A. I have visited it.

Q. Have you found articles which you found to be objectionable? [usmpride.com and USMNews.net were examples of why Munn believed I was "unstable" and "psychopathic" and she insisted I be terminated.]

A. Yes.

Q. Which articles?

A. The ones that I felt presented my colleagues with half truths and innuendo.

Q. Have you or today Dr. Depree or anyone else connected with those websites any information to show that the facts are half truths or incorrect or innuendo?

A. No. Because I was told that others had and it was always twisted and it was never he never took that information and published it in the way it was meant to be.

Q. Who told you that?

A. I don't remember.

Q. You're aware of certain individuals who have had connections [corrections] or have presented their views on the website, are you not?

A. Have had connections?

Q. The corrections have been made or submitted or people have submitted opposition to articles that have been published?

A. I don't know, because I don't read it really...

Q. Has Dr. Depree ever come to your office?

A. To sit down and talk?

Q. For any reason?

A. Maybe way back he came and said something, I don't know.

Q. Well, let's say in the past seven or eight years?

A. No.

Q. Has ever said anything to you other than say hello?

A. No...

Q. Exhibit 6. In it you describe the situation in Joseph Greene Hall as being a little scary; is that correct?

A. I described the fact that Marc and I were alone on Wednesday night in our faculty suite as being scary.

Q. A little scary?

A. Yeah.

Q. But you never did go to campus security and Doctor Doty never did advise you to go to campus security, did he?

A. He said let me know if we need to make arrangements.

Q. Well, was it necessary to make arrangements to protect your sense of personal security?

A. I don't know.

Q. Well, did y'all make any arrangements?

A. We did not...

Q. I hand you a copy of document that's been produced D04322. Ask you if can you identify that?

A. This is a letter I wrote to Steve Jackson [Interim Director of School of Accountancy] in 13 August...

Q. Upon which Marc DePree's removal from the classroom was based?

A. Yes...

Q. Is it fair to say that your fear of Marc DePree was based upon what other people had told you or his reputation or was it based on what had personally observed...

A. Observed in what way?

Q. Well, did you observe anything?

A. Observed with my eyes?

Q. Yes, yes.

A. I think hearing from the mouths of Bill Powell and his name has left me... I'm old. I can't remember names. You know personal conversations with people I trust, if that is observing then I observed, yes.

Q. Other than that is there anything that you observed?

A. I observed his anger.

Q. Okay. Be specific about his anger please?

A. I observed it in his writings [In the novel, *Choking Dead Chickens*, the only violence occurred when the main character—a whistle-blower—at the beginning of the story, was bombed.].

Q. Can you be specific about his anger?

A. No...

Q. Now, Virginia Tech played a part in you being afraid of Dr. Depree?

A. It got everyone's attention.

Q. Okay. And you believe that Marc DePree is capable of doing something like what occurred at Virginia Tech?

A. He is very comfortable with arms [Munn is referring to the fact that I was a Captain in the US Marine Corp. In her view of the world, serving one's country became grounds to suspect they're a "Virginia Tech danger."] and I do think he could snap.

Q. During the period of time on Wednesday nights when you were encountered him did Dr. Depree do anything untoward or anything that caused you to be afraid or scared?

A. He didn't do anything, but it wasn't necessary for him to do anything in order for me to be afraid...

Ms. Munn believes I'm unstable because I, according to her testimony, am not a **"person who views the world in the correct manner."** Ms. Munn says I'm a "Virginia Tech danger," but has no evidence whatsoever. I'm violent because she "witnessed" violence in my novel, *Choking Dead Chickens*. And, she can predict who will become a "Virginia Tech" killer, when no expert in the world can make such a prediction.

Let me see if I can summarize Ms. Munn's view of the world. After more than sixty years of wonderful life, including being an infantry officer in the U.S Marine Corps, and thirty years as an excellent teacher, I am dangerous. Let me add: I'm financially secure. What are the odds of a well-to-do, sixty-plus year old who has about everything any rational person could want -- a loving wife, the ability to donate (and actually donating) tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships for USM students, external research awards, the best publication record in the history of the School of Accountancy, *etc.*, is going to "snap" and kill everybody in a "Virginia Tech" slaughter. Let's go one step further. Has anyone in fact with my background of success, ever "snapped" and killed a bunch of co-workers, *a la* Ms. Munn's lurid imagination? More important, Ms. Munn has absolutely no basis in fact to suppose I am a "Virginia Tech" danger. She does, however, have many reasons to falsely accuse me of being a "Virginia Tech" danger.

Furthermore, this purported ability to predict who will become a "Virginia Tech" killer is consistent with Ms. Munn's apparent ability to read other peoples' minds. Even though I had no idea who Ms. Munn was or anything about her personal life, she *knew* I intended the character, Sadie Putz, in the novel, *Choking Dead Chickens*, to be identified as her.

As you read her testimony, notice how many times Ms. Munn based her

accusations on facts? If you say zero, you are absolutely right. She said her accusations came from second- hand or third-hand information. Ms. Munn said she trusted these people, which translated to her belief that gossip is to be accepted -- without a shred of proof -- as objective evidence. In fact, she had observed nothing herself to support the allegations she made to fire me.

In effect, her testimony offers no evidence of anything except her perverted opinion that others should "**view the world in the correct manner.**" USM attorneys could have, as easily as my attorney did, determined that Munn was an incompetent witness with a brief Q&A before wasting taxpayer and student money on a witch-hunt.

Let me end Ms. Munn's section with one last question. If Ms. Munn decides you don't "**view the world in the correct manner**"—i.e., her view of the world, whatever that is—what will she grow from that evil seed? You may be next.