

An Editorial

Does Evil Lurk In Our Community?

by Marc DePree



Roderick Burl Posey

A recent [breaking news report](#), Another (Dangerous?) USM Professor Steps Forward, published at usmnews.net, reminded me of the [apparent ease](#) with which University of Southern Mississippi faculty are accused of being dangerous. Apparently, there's an epidemic at USM of "dangerous people."

All too often hidden in the background are the mobbers, the "colleagues" who lurk behind the scenes and act in an effort to destroy the lives and careers of others with whom they disagree. A favorite of USM mobbers is to accuse them of being "dangerous." Here's the obvious question. Why should those who are mobbed get all the attention and the horrendous publicity that inevitably accompanies accusations of "dangerous" behaviors? Those who mob deserve to be pulled from the darkness where they lurk and be seen in the bright light of sunshine for what they are.

Roderick Burl Posey

Even Ordained Ministers lie...

Rod Posey may seem an odd choice for inclusion in the "Does Evil Lurk in our Community?" series. He is widely known as a [minister](#), a man of god. Yet here he is. Read his deposition and draw your own conclusions.

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

Q. Let's talk about what you wish Marc hadn't done.

A. Let's see, apparently he kept putting -- talking negatively about the other faculty.

Q. Can you give me specifics?

A. I can give you what **they may have told me...** I know he upset Marvin Albin. And that was in the '90s, somewhere back in the '90s when I was associate dean. And he upset Jim Crockett. **This is just them telling me some things.**

Q. Right. That had to do with some allegations concerning the truthfulness or untruthfulness of some representations that were made in connection with a merit raise; was that not the circumstances that was involved there?

A. Where he upset them?

Q. Yes.

A. I think it did have to do with Marvin Albin's raise, that Marc's opinion on his raise upset Marvin.

Q. **Do you know if anybody ever took a look at the allegations that Marc made to determine whether or not there was any merit to the allegations?**

A. I remember Clyde Ginn mentioned it had gotten to him.

Q. Who is Clyde Ginn?

A. What was Clyde Ginn's position? Was he vice president? He was one of the vice presidents for the university.

Q. **So do you know if Clyde Ginn conducted an inquiry or an investigation or made some determination?**

A. I think he did.

Q. And what was the result of that?

A. **Oh, I don't know for sure....**

Q. Who else or what other things do you point out to as being things you wish that Marc had not done?

A. Let's see, what other things that he said about other faculty **that they mentioned.** I believe that **Patty Munn had the feeling** that he was saying that she slept

around. And she didn't like that.

Q. That came out of Choking Dead Chickens [a novel]?

A. It did...

Q. **Who came and told you that Marc wasn't doing his job** or doing his work or holding up his end of the bargain on a committee?

A. Okay. Let's see, each fall we sit with all the chairs and try to determine who should be on committees. And Marc had been on -- what was that committee -- the library committee, and he hadn't spent the money. **Who would have told me** he was not doing that? It would be a meeting with the chairs. It might have been chairs and the dean and the associate. **It might have been Niroomand, may have been. I may not be right about that.**

Q. Well, do you know of anything that occurred with regard to committees and Marc DePree?

A. Before I was chair?

Q. Yes.

A. Let's see, would the associate dean be bothered with -- you need to talk to directors before I was director.

Q. So what you're telling me --

A. **He [DePree] just didn't work on any committees that I was on.**

Q. **You would agree with me that Marc was within the top two publishers as far as the quality of publications --**

A. **No.**

Q. You would not? And as far as the school of accountancy goes, he was probably within the top two.

A. No.

Q. No?

A. No, that would have been Charles Jordan and Stan Clark in the top two.

Q. Were they hitting A journals?

A. No.

Q. Who hit the most A journals in the School of Accounting?

A. **I would guess Marc hit the most A journals.**

Q. At some point ... you [Posey] seized upon two negative comments [in DePree's student teacher evaluations] by certain -- by two students [from over 100 evaluations] to level some criticism at Marc; is that correct?

MR. HOOKS (USM attorney): Object to the form of the question.

MR. FOUNTAIN: Q. Do you understand my question?

A. I understand your question. I believe I mentioned two of the comments. The problem with Marc's evaluation was not that. **It was that the students**, going through them [DePree's student teacher evaluations], **mentioned nowhere that his course was difficult**. Going through, whatever, 100 evaluation... **Marc's had nothing ... where the student said, boy, he is a good teacher... but this is a tough class. It just wasn't there... they said nothing about him [Marc] being a difficult teacher...**

Q. **So you were looking to students to tell you this [DePree's] is a difficult course to tell you what? You are willing to live with the answer you've given me?**

A. **Uh-huh. [Affirmative]**

Q. I hand you a document and ask you if you can identify that?

A. This is from Marc to me, March 4, 2004. This is comments on his faculty activity report **and demonstration of rigor**.

Q. And attached to that I think you will find Marc's student comments for the period of time that was covered by that evaluation.

A. Okay.

Q. Look at Number 5 and read it for me, please.

A. He [DePree] needs to slow down a little. He goes a little fast for normal students.

- Q. Read the positive comments, Number 5.
- A. Number 5, [DePree] Explains content with clarity, difficult course but made the material fun and interesting.
- Q. So there is one student that said it was a difficult course.
- A. **One student.**
- Q. Okay. Well, let's look at 11.
- A. Eleven, this material was difficult to learn but repetitive use of material was very helpful.
- Q. Let's look at 42.
- A. This professor [DePree] is the first professor I had -- I have had that could teach a class that is difficult and still make it relevant, informative, and enjoyable. I wish USM had more of his caliber.
- Q. Let's look at 44.
- A. Thoroughly enjoyed this [DePree's] class. He presented difficult material in a way that you could follow and learn.
- Q. How about 48? [Editor's note: *Posey was furious at this point.*]
- A. Dr. DePree has the ability to take an incredibly complex subject and break it down into logical steps. His method of teaching is wonderful. I really learn what he says instead of memorizing it.
- Q. Let's look at Number 57, what's it say?
- A. His [DePree's] ability to explain. The patience he used while teaching. Explaining the complicated material until you understand...

My attorney could have continued for an hour but he made the point.

- Q. Who told you that Marc used a voice recording device to record conversations?
- A. [Mary Anderson](#).
- Q. Have you ever known Marc to record anything?
- A. I remember -- now, I don't know if he did or not.

- Q. That's what I'm asking you. **Do you have any objective firsthand information that would lead us to believe that Marc DePree ever employed a recording device?**
- A. Other than the faculty member just coming and saying he is recording, **I don't know.**
- Q. You are saying that **Jerry King told you that Marc had** broken the lock on the safe?
- A. That was way back [late 1980s]-- and I was surprised when he told me that because that was back not long after Marc came... And that was a surprise to me because Marc was always nice to me... And then came in one day and the safe where we keep the tests, came in one day and, all the sudden, this lock is sticking up out of it, as if somebody has tried to pry it open. And, of course, I asked questions about it. And **Jerry King said Marc did that.** I said, Marc. It was just a surprise to me.
- Q. Did you go ask Marc about it?
- A. ...I didn't investigate.
- Q. You never even asked Marc?
- A. **As a faculty member, I didn't investigate. I did not investigate another faculty member.**
- Q. You never **asked Marc?**
- A. **No.**

Conclusion

Posey and the other mobbers did not support their claims with evidence. We followed their rumors searching for evidence. And their rumors and malicious gossip cycled from one mobber to the other and back again. USM administrators, like Martha Saunders, learned the hard way: they had recklessly supported incompetent accounting faculty and College of Business administrators. The proof: I'm still a tenured full professor at USM drawing full salary and benefits.

However, let's return to the premise of this series: Does Evil Lurk in Our Community? Is it evil when someone who claims to be a minister, a man of god, traffics in lies and gossip in an effort to destroy another's career?