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PRESS RELEASE

Shock Waves in the North American Deaf Community—Student Protest Leader Carl DuPree Killed by Gallaudet Campus Police, November 9, 1990

Gallaudet Vice President shifts blame, unjustly making scapegoat out of Deaf professor

(Washington, DC)

Chronology and synopsis of events (initials used to refer to the instructors involved):

Carl DuPree, an undergraduate student at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, had made several unsuccessful attempts to pass a remedial English course prior to the Spring semester in 1990.

The normal practice at the time was for the English Language Program (ELP) coordinator to be listed as the instructor in the schedule for all English 50 classes, as is what happened in this case.

DuPree signed up for English 50 for the Spring of 1990 under MB, because MB was the coordinator of the ELP. MB then assigned DuPree to attend CS's class.

On April 24, 1990, DuPree was involved as a co-leader of a protest at Gallaudet, protesting the university's remedial English policy. It was a "Deaf Professors Now" protest. DuPree told the *Washington Times* that Gallaudet's English instructors weren't able to teach them effectively because most of them were hearing instructors who couldn't sign well. As part of the protest, two or three hundred students boycotted the English Placement Test.

In May, at the end of the Spring semester, CS reported to MB that, technically, DuPree received an "F" grade for the class (to a large extent for missing too many classes and assignments), but that MB needed to bear in mind that DuPree *successfully passed* all four parts of the English Placement Test, and therefore, according to a statement in the handbook, *he should qualify to receive an "A" grade.*

CS never discussed the issue of the statement in the handbook with DuPree, but CS told DuPree that technically MB was listed as the instructor of the course and that MB assigned him (DuPree) to the class (CS's class).

In late May or early June of 1990, when DuPree discovered on his own that (according to the English Language Program student handbook) he qualified to receive an “A” if all four parts of EPT were passed, DuPree approached CS. CS went to look for MB but couldn’t find MB. NK (the English Department chair) was not there, either. The English Department was almost empty, so CS decided to check with Robert “Skip” Williams, the dean. CS and Williams agreed to change DuPree’s grade to an Incomplete so that the Department could look at the student handbook. When MB discovered that DuPree’s grade was changed to an Incomplete, MB became apoplectic and then decided to change DuPree’s grade back to an “F”.

NK informed CS that MB wanted to fire CS, or have CS be fired, but couldn’t find a way to do it. NK then pushed CS out of the English Language Program, and transferred CS to the Freshmen/Sophomore Program where CS taught college composition for the next two years.

At some point during the summer, after considering the issue of the statement in the handbook, MB reversed the decision and changed DuPree’s grade back to an Incomplete.

In approximately September 1990, DuPree finished writing his essays that CS requested and turned them in to CS. CS gave the essays to MB. MB evaluated the essays and found them unacceptable. MB then changed DuPree’s Incomplete grade back to an “F” (the third time that MB changed his grade).

DuPree complained about the “F” grade and NK attempted to compromise on the issue and keep everything cool by changing his grade to a “D”. This was the fifth time his grade had been changed overall—once by Skip Williams from “F” to Incomplete, three times by MB, and once by NK.

DuPree still insisted that (according to the handbook) he deserved an “A” grade, but that he would accept a “C” grade. He needed a “C” grade in order to receive money from Vocational Rehabilitation.

NK refused to change his “D” grade to a “C”.

DuPree then withdrew from all his classes (in approximately early October 1990.)

CS attempted to discuss the issue with NK, MB, and DO (the EPT coordinator), however each of those three people refused to speak with CS about the matter.

On Friday, November 9, 1990, DuPree met with CS in the morning and CS explained to him that CS had no authority to change the “D” grade to anything else. DuPree then went to NK’s office, only to discover that NK was scheduled to return at 1:00 pm.

DuPree then returned to CS's office and said he would try to catch NK after NK's class was finished that afternoon.

Before CS left for home at 12 noon, CS stopped by the English Department office for a mailbox check. CS ran into NK and told NK that DuPree was not satisfied with the "D" grade and that DuPree would come to see NK later that afternoon. NK became furious and declared an intention to alert campus security about DuPree.

CS then went to pick up CS's child and the child's friend from the Day Care Center and they all spent the entire afternoon off campus.

Shortly after 3:00 pm, DuPree went back to the Hall Memorial Building to speak with NK, the department chair (while CS was off campus.)

At some point during the meeting, NK called campus police (DOSS) and two officers appeared in the English Department office. The campus police officers ordered DuPree to leave the campus and they followed DuPree when he left the English Department office.

Previous to the meeting, DuPree had asked his wife to wait with two of their children in the Ely Center and that he would return after his meeting with NK.

The officers continued to follow DuPree as he turned to enter the side entrance of the Ely Center. DuPree signed to them: "leave, leave I will leave," indicating that he was complying with the demand that he leave the campus, but the officers did not understand him and they did not understand that he was in the process of leaving by picking up his wife and kids at the Ely Center.

The officers later claimed that DuPree shoved one of them and that they were afraid that he would throw them down the stairs.

Six more campus police arrived, eventually making a total of 8 on the scene. Two of them were new officers who did not even have uniforms.

One of the campus police officers put an illegal chokehold on DuPree. There were multiple officers piled on top of DuPree and it was difficult to even see him under the pile of officers.

The chokehold had been outlawed in the District of Columbia since 1984. It rendered people unconscious by cutting off the air supply to their lungs.

Students at the scene saw DuPree signing that he couldn't breathe and they attempted to communicate that to the officers, but the officers didn't understand and continued the chokehold.

A bone was broken in DuPree's neck and he suffocated to death.

By about 5:30 p.m., CS received a TDD call from CS's spouse, who said that CS needed to call campus security immediately regarding DuPree. CS's spouse told CS that DuPree had died, but didn't explain how he had died.

CS then called the campus police via TDD. They asked if CS could come to Gallaudet to make a statement about DuPree. When CS arrived there, CS saw Paul Kelly together with campus police chief Bernard Holt. (Paul Kelly had been Vice President of the Administration & Finance division at Gallaudet for two years, since Gallaudet President I. King Jordan, Kelly's personal friend, selected him for promotion to the position in 1988.) Both Kelly and Holt asked CS when the last time was that CS saw DuPree. CS told them it was about 10:30 that morning. They seemed upset and asked if CS saw him that afternoon.

CS explained that CS picked up CS's child and the child's friend from the Day Care Center at noon and they were off campus for the rest of the day. Holt asked CS if CS knew what happened to DuPree, and CS said that CS's spouse had said on the TDD that DuPree died, but that CS didn't know what caused it. Neither Paul Kelly, nor Bernard Holt told CS what happened to DuPree.

Per Paul Kelly's and Bernard Holt's insistence, CS wrote a statement saying that DuPree stopped by CS's office that morning to talk about his final grade and that the meeting ended with DuPree intending to see NK about the matter. CS learned later, over that weekend, that Holt was involved in wrestling/restraining DuPree and that DuPree had suffocated.

The next day on November 10, 1990, MS, director of Gallaudet PR, told multiple lies to the *Washington Post* reporter, claiming (as the Post indirectly quoted MS as saying) that the "...incident began Friday afternoon when Dupree and a former teacher got into an argument. The teacher summoned campus security and asked that Dupree be removed..." MS may have been partly motivated by a professional conflict that MS had with CS, because MS disliked American Sign Language.

Carl DuPree and CS never, ever argued with each other. DuPree often stopped by CS's office to talk, which was sometimes bothersome, but they never argued. DuPree was always respectful toward CS. CS's impression was that DuPree understood that he registered under MB's name as the instructor and that he had to deal with the English Department about his grade. CS harbored no hostile feelings toward DuPree. During the upcoming trial, CS was asked if CS was ever afraid of DuPree, and CS said no. CS was asked again in other words if CS ever felt intimidated by him. CS said no.

The death was ruled a homicide and four DOSS officers were charged by a grand jury with involuntary manslaughter.

The charges against one of the four defendants, James R. Rossi, age 35, were dropped in the middle of the three-week-long trial.

The prosecution at the trial never identified a specific DOSS officer as being the officer who placed the chokehold on DuPree.

The prosecution produced students as witnesses who saw the chokehold, but a major error by an interpreter caused one of the students to lose credibility in the jurors' eyes. That student was referring to one of the DOSS officers by using his nickname, "Spider," but the interpreter thought the student was referring to an actual spider, and the interpreter caused the student's testimony to seem nonsensical.

The jury acquitted the remaining three, mainly because the prosecution never identified a specific DOSS officer as being the officer that administered the chokehold. The three were: Bernard A. Holt, (age 42 to 44) (Chief of DOSS); Paul C. Starke (31 or 32); and Steven L. Young (26 to 28).

After the trial, Paul Kelly gave Bernard Holt a promotion which included being head of Facilities as well as chief of campus police (DOSS), then later PK fired Holt when Holt refused to sign a memo which contained false statements about why \$4 million had not been spent to hire and train new campus police officers.

At some point, Paul Kelly had hired the law firm of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey to investigate the whole incident and they wrote a report, but the administration never allowed the report to be released.

BB observed CS teaching a freshman/sophomore-level English class twice and wrote a letter stating that CS was the best English teacher of the deaf BB had ever seen and wrote that the English Department could learn a few things from him.

In 1992 Paul Kelly decided to make CS a scapegoat in the DuPree matter and get CS fired.

Carl DuPree had an open and shut case against the English Dept. The handbook said he deserved an "A" grade because he passed all four parts of the placement test. CS recommended to MB that he be given an "A", due to the rule in the handbook, even though his coursework was deficient.

At the time DuPree organized this protest in April 1990 he didn't know about the rule in the handbook. When he found out about it during the summer, he approached CS. CS

then approached Skip Williams, the Dean of CLAST who agreed that the matter needed attention.

Obviously, MB, the head of the English Language Program, was retaliating against DuPree because of his instigation of the protest only a few weeks earlier (which got major coverage in the local press and probably damaged MB's career) and MB changed his grade back to an "F" – which the rules of the handbook said he didn't deserve – then MB reversed it back to Incomplete, realizing the error. Then later during the fall, MB deliberately ignored the rule in the handbook and gave him an "F" for the class after he turned in his work to make up the incomplete.

This was a horrible travesty of justice. DuPree did not "stress out the system." The English Department chair, NK, had *already* planned to call the campus police *three hours before* DuPree came to meet NK on November 9, 1990. Obviously, it wasn't anything he said or did during the meeting which was the actual, or underlying reason for summoning campus police.

And then DuPree attempted to tell the campus police that *he was indeed leaving* the campus, just as they required. He needed to pick up his wife and kids on the way out. But they were unable to understand him and they ended up killing him as a result.

After this, Paul Kelly got involved and decided to put the blame on CS. *CS was actually completely blameless and had handled the situation in a very proper manner the whole way through.* MB, NK and DO refused to speak with CS about DuPree's grade.

Paul Kelly then orchestrated a dishonest plan (which almost certainly violated employment law) to get CS fired. That accomplished two goals, because, since CS was a highly effective teacher and [strong advocate of ASL and Deaf culture](#), Paul Kelly would have perceived CS to be a political stumbling block to the continued acquisition of power that he was imposing on Gallaudet.

The plan was so blatantly wrong that even Jordan's close personal friend, Skip Williams (the dean of CLAST) refused to go along with it. They had to break the proper hierarchy and get Howard Busby, the dean of students, to fire CS.

This is just one blatant example of how Paul Kelly was scheming behind the scenes to push through his personal agenda of power grabbing — by his characteristic method of pushing [faux decentralization plans](#),^{1,2} in combination with orchestrating repeated instances of [sham reorganizational plans](#), which were intended to displace political rivals and others, while soliciting the involvement of [neoliberalist pseudo-intellectuals](#)³ and [propagandists masquerading as historians](#)⁴ — all the while co-opting and corrupting Jordan in the process. Hypothetically, *if* firing CS had actually been the right thing to do, then Jordan could have easily persuaded Skip Williams to fire him, but Williams balked and he refused to order NK to fire CS.

To further compound the injustice, Congress allocated \$4 million to hire and train new campus police officers and the Jordan/Kelly administration received the money and then did not use it as Congress intended, *thus actually endangering more students' lives*.

The ultimate, underlying cause of Carl DuPree's death involved internal Gallaudet politics and Paul Kelly's (successful) attempt to grab power and play power-politics. This underlying managerial ethos (or rather, "anti-ethos"), that was heightened after Paul Kelly's ascension to the Gallaudet A&F Vice Presidency in 1988, became so pronounced as it grew unchecked from year to year after the Gallaudet campus police killed Carl DuPree that the faculty even gave it a name: "Management By Intimidation," referring to it by the acronym "M.B.I."⁵ The student protesters picked up on the usage of this term, too, by the time of the Unity for Gallaudet protest in 2006, with many of them connecting the dots and realizing that Paul Kelly was functioning to exacerbate and perpetuate the longstanding "plantation mentality" that had existed among members of the board of trustees for decades, or longer.⁶

Paul Kelly was the person who encouraged his close friend, King Jordan to apply for the presidency in 1988. Jordan mentioned during his resignation speech in 2005 that Kelly helped him *before* he applied to become president.⁷

In this respect, Jordan was actually Paul Kelly's dupe, and this is an extreme example of a hearing person scheming and maneuvering behind the scenes and exploiting Deaf people — *actually doing things that cause Deaf people to be killed*.

Paul Kelly, presumably, advised Jordan or concurred with Jordan's choice of Jane Fernandes to be hired as vice president of pre-college programs in 1995. Jane Fernandes (née Kelleher) had been on the Gallaudet campus and associated with Gallaudet since 1987, and had married James Fernandes, who himself had been a friend of both Jordan and Kelly for some years before that. They both, then, [worked in Hawaii](#) from 1988 to 1995, where Jane became head administrator of the Hawaii Center for the Deaf. They met Joseph Mesa in Hawaii, who later enrolled in the high school on the Gallaudet campus, then later was admitted to Gallaudet University, where he lived in the dorms and murdered two classmates. (See also [THIS ARTICLE](#).)

Paul Kelly surely knew that Jane Fernandes was Joseph Mesa's close mentor and protector and that Jane Fernandes surely contributed in Mesa developing aberrant behavior, and surely must have acted, along with Jordan, to cover up the issue.

Rather than doing the right thing, Paul Kelly supported Fernandes' elevation to the presidency – not only putting a [psychologically disturbed pseudo-intellectual](#) into the role of president (for his own political gain), but also causing a backlash which necessitated dozens of students heroically putting their lives at risk, during the

[Unity for Gallaudet protest](#) in 2006, in order to rectify the situation and cause justice to be done. And then still Kelly fought back *as if he were in an actual war*, rounding up Physical Plant Department (PPD) personnel and campus police officers (DPS) who threw objects at protesters' tents and scooped up the tents with a front-end loader/bulldozer (per objective third-party journalists' reporting) *without first looking inside to see if any students were in the tents*.

On top of all this, there was the issue of the very high incidence of rape on campus. This was even documented and written about in *People* magazine:

http://gallyprotest.org/silent_screams.pdf

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out why this problem of rapes of Gallaudet females was never properly addressed. [One female student was even kept isolated](#) (!) after she was raped and not given access to a TDD to call her parents.

The shock waves that spread all throughout the US and Canadian Deaf Community after the Gallaudet campus police killed protest leader Carl DuPree, and the negative fallout caused, will never be erased or healed as long as Paul Kelly works at Gallaudet.

True healing cannot take place until the source and cause of the disease is isolated and removed.

FOOTNOTES

1. Office of Human Relations Programs, University of Maryland, College Park, & the Association of American College and Universities. (1998). [Diversity blueprint: A planning manual for colleges and universities](#). Washington, DC: Association of American College and Universities.
2. Hernandez, Arelis. 2010. [A Crack in the Foundation?](#) *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* (February 4, 2010). Fairfax, VA: Cox, Matthews, and Associates, Inc.
3. Cf. Bauman (1998), p. iii.
4. See: http://saveourdeafschools.org/death_of_deafness.pdf, per the related mention of the article series in the commentary linked by the "propagandists masquerading as historians" hyperlink.
5. Paul Kelly showed consciousness of guilt on the issue by having one of the (faux-)auditors working under him at Gallaudet co-write an article on the topic in the summer of 2006, when, as part of a grotesque display of blatant MBI, he attempted to turn the tables on the faculty (and students) by using the faculty's own anti-MBI rhetoric

as a weapon against them. The article ([page 5](#)) also includes a thinly veiled reference to the faculty supposedly being a tyrannical majority (Warigon, 2006, p. 5). In this we see Paul Kelly flying his anti-Academy, anti-intellectual credentials high, as part of the everything-a-mere-shade-of-gray-there-is-no-truth-or-justice-in-the-world-I-just-want-to-get-my-piece-of-the-pie nature of his character and personal philosophy. Later, that same (faux-)auditor violated District of Columbia employment law in 2007 at Gallaudet when [he released an employee's personnel and medical history records to the public](#). He was then, as a part of an apparent double cross, [fired by Paul Kelly on June 6, 2007](#) for doing so.

6. In fact, it is possible, or even probable, that the co-founder of Gallaudet, Amos Kendall, [used slaves](#) to build the mansion on what later became Gallaudet property, and, though Kendall probably didn't own slaves while living there and presumably did little or no farming on the property, it might be accurate to say in some sense that Gallaudet (the school that later added a collegiate department that later changed its name to Gallaudet) was at one point in time part of, or adjoined to, *an actual plantation*. Slavery was, in fact, practiced in the District of Columbia up until April 1862, when the boarding school that is part of the first years of the history of Gallaudet was almost five years old. The author of [a scholarly book about Kendall](#), when contacted, mentioned that wealthy residents of the District of Columbia at the time commonly used slaves, and Kendall, though he grew up in the North, was part of this social milieu.

7. In his [retirement speech](#), given on September 1, 2005, Jordan stated (emphasis in the original): "Paul Kelly helped me *before* I was president. Paul tutored me on financial issues and budget issues, and without his help and guidance during that application process, I know that I would never have become a finalist for the position. Then after that, during my presidency, he's been a wonderful friend and supporter. Thank you, Paul Kelly for all you've done for me. Thank you."

REFERENCES

Bauman, Humphrey-Dirksen Lippmann. 1998. *American Sign Language as a medium for poetry: A comparative poetics of sign, speech and writing in twentieth-century American poetry*. PhD dissertation, State University of New York at Binghamton.

Warigon, Slemo D. and Betsy Bowers. 2006. Impact of Management by Intimidation on Human Capital: Is It Destroying Your Organization? *College & University Auditor*. Vol. 50. No. 2 (Summer 2006), pp. 5-10.

See also:

tinyurl (dot) com/carldupree-buffandblue

[Prior [edits](#); added link: Sept. 18 and Sept. 28, 2015]