

## Katrina's Patsy: Who Are You, Mr. Brown?

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**PEJ News** - C. L. Cook - The guillotine blade is risen and heads will roll. Though the melons most suited to fill those baskets will be spared, it may provide solice that those that do be vile co-conspirators with the authors of Katrina, the crime that dwarfed 9/11 and eclipsed for now the toxic legacy of that other criminal quagmire, Iraq. Michael Brown, current head of FEMA and odds on favourite for first tete in the bucket, is tonight revealed by TIME On-line as having "discrepancies" in his resume.

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[update: Sept. 10, 12:00 p.m. - *Mr. Brown is now in the eye of the sh\*t storm. He's been [relieved of responsibilities&nbsp;](#)overseeing the [next phase](#) of the Bush administration's management of the disaster.-lex]*

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C. L. Cook**

PEJ News

September 8, 2005

Brown's appointment to succeed his Federal Emergency Management Agency boss and Bush crony, Joe Allbaugh in 2003 seemed a no-brainer to most casual observers. The Number Two at the agency would make an easy appointment, and passed over the beltway with a yawn. So, who's paying attention to minor details like qualifications, work record, and all those annoying details the unconnected hoi polloi are forced to endure to secure a job?

But "Brownie," as "Dubya" would have, ain't little people. In fact, he thinks Brown is doing great work! And, as he picked the guy in the first place, Bush knows he's qualified.

[TIME's Daren Fonda and Rita Healy](#) looked a little deeper into the bona fides of the lawyer and former Horse Show circuit luminary and came up with some things Brown would likely prefer left in the paddock. It turns out, of the several versions of his resume and official bio information, the one that landed him the deputy chief gig at FEMA, his staircase to the top CV was a little more manure than hay. Not that his conflation amounted to much anyway.

Touting Brown as formerly "overseeing the emergency services division" for the bedroom community of Edmond, Oklahoma, while a student at Central State Universit, his Assistant City Manager job is a position described as more resembling an "internship" than leadership role, according to the city's current PR head, Claudia Deakins.

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But, to his credit, his former boss, city manager Bill Dashner claims Brown was a good worker who was punctual and, "always had on a suit and a starched, white shirt." Dashner further praises his administrative assistant as a "loyal" aide who wrote speeches for him.

Basically a communications guy who had a way with words and could type. Fair enough. Hardly damning stuff. But, "Mike" has accused TIME's story, through one of FEMA's legion of public affairs officers, Nicol Andrews, of inaccuracy. She says, he says, "a large portion is very inaccurate."

### **But, there's more.**

Lawyer Brown lists among his accomplishments, at FindLaw.com, a professional web listing site, what TIME reports a curious entry: "Outstanding Political Science Professor, Central State University." While Central State lists him as a former student, there's no record of his professorial "achievements." In fact, U. of Central Oklahoma, the former Central State, lists Brown as having studied there, and may perhaps, according to Charles Johnson of the University Relations office, have served as an "adjunct professor," something less than a professor. As for Mike's self-proclaimed scholastic position, former poli-sci professor at Central, Carl Reheman says Brown was never a member of the faculty.

Brown claims the FindLaw listing is wrong, and that he never claimed to be on Central's faculty, but was instead an adjunct professor at Oklahoma City School of Law and his "Outstanding" citation was earned as a "senior" at Central.

### **Mistakes happen.**

But, according to FindLaw, mistakes seem to be the hallmark of Mr. Brown's incredible career, culminating at the apex of Big Cheese of the colossal government agency. They also list him as a director of the Oklahoma Christian Home. Administrators however have no recollection of him in the twenty-plus year association he claims to have had with them.

Jumping to Brown's defense, Andrews says Brown "never claimed to be the director of the home" (something neither TIME, nor FindLaw asserted) but, she reiterates his claim as having served on the board directors, or governors of the nursing home.

Its a claim at least one long-time employee refutes, saying Brown "was never director here, was never on the board of directors, was never executive director. Adding, "He was never here in any capacity. I never heard his name mentioned here."

Even Brown's much quoted connection with the International Arabian Horse Association now seems murky. The FindLaw profile citing that relationship was deleted today. There has been a media debate as to whether he had resigned his position with the horse breeders under pressure, or been fired outright. Now, he seems to have become something of a spectre there too.

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At best, government response to the disaster in Louisiana represents a catastrophic systems breakdown rivalling 9/11. There's plenty of blame to spread around here, and it seems unlikely none will be forced to walk the plank for the failures this time, as none were then.

And the sharks are already circling for Mr. Brown.

**Chris Cook** host [Gorilla Radio](#), broad/webcast from the University of Victoria, Canada. He also serves as a contributing editor at PEJ News. You can check out the [GR Blog here](#).