

Conference in Memory of Paul Miller - opening address by Barry Chiswick

Barry R. Chiswick, Washington, DC, November 8, 2014

I very much regret that I cannot join you in person at the conference honoring the life and research of Paul Miller.

I first learned of Paul when Bob Gregory asked me to serve as an outside reader (thousands of miles outside!) on his Ph.D. committee. Shortly thereafter Paul visited the University of Western Ontario, and I invited him to Chicago to give a research seminar. During his visit we discussed research ideas and that began a 30-year research collaboration that lasted for the rest of his life – and beyond, as I will complete some joint projects that were in progress at the time of his death.

From the beginning, Paul and I ‘clicked’ on our joint research. We were on the same wave length and we were never without interesting projects together. I learned a lot from Paul and always enjoyed interacting with him. Over the decades our means of communication progressed from international airmail, to the FAX machine, and then to email. The first thing I did in the morning was to go to my email to read the latest message or draft paper from Paul. It was truly a collaborative effort – we would be hard pressed to say who contributed more than the other on our research program. I viewed it as a wonderful relationship and I presume Paul felt the same.

Our relationship evolved over the decades as we became close friends as well as collaborators. I was delighted to see Paul develop from a graduate student into a mature senior scholar. I was also honored to witness Paul develop into a warm and loving family man. I was privileged to attend the family engagement party for Paul and Tram, to see Paul’s obvious delight at Erin and Andrew, not only at their births but also at every stage of their development into the young people that they are today. Paul was very much in love with Tram, Erin and Andrew.

I have many fond memories of doing things with Paul in Australia and in the United States. Paul was always a wonderful host. We broke the intensity of my research visits by going to a Shirley Bassey concert at the Leeuwin Estate Winery, by petting kangaroos on Pebble Beach, and by witnessing a barroom brawl between two Australian sailors. I tried to reciprocate during his sabbatical in Chicago, but Paul’s was a hard act to follow!

Watching Paul’s struggle with cancer was difficult for me and I was devastated when he lost the battle. I will always appreciate Tram’s arranging our last telephone contact shortly before the end. Paul showed much courage. I miss him and will always miss him. I still awake in the morning expecting an email from Paul. May he rest in peace. May his memory be for a blessing.