



# MICKELODEON

As seen on TV

## Fast moving depression

**If you're reading this then congratulations: you've survived the most miserable day of the year. Plastered across the nation's media on January 23, 'Doctor' Cliff Arnall announced that his formula of weather, debt and work prospects showed it probably wasn't worth getting out of bed.**

Well, he got one thing right: I certainly was depressed on the 23rd, having seen the name of the university used to publicise such rubbish. With his PR puff piece written up in 33 newspapers last month, the idea that Cardiff University works on such driv- el has certainly spread far and wide.

So who is Cliff Arnall? He's not part of the well-respected School of Psychology, but is instead a part-time tutor in the Centre for Lifelong Learning. He teaches such important ten-credit modules as 'Health Psychology' ('Do people die of a broken heart?') and the improbably named 'Amazing Psychology of Sleeping and Dreaming'.

**He's lumbering the School of Psychology with the impression that they are a bunch of con-artists**

As a self-confessed 'media slut', it probably won't be long before we hear from Cliff again. Last year he also worked out when the happiest day of the year is (that study funded by ice-cream makers Walls, and including an anecdote in the press release about eating, um, ice cream) as well as when the best time is to make New Year's resolutions (May 18. No, really.)

The formula for most depressing day of the year was actually released last year through PR company Porter Novelli; (presumably *The Lancet* was busy). Back then it was research for Sky Travel, and surprisingly enough, the conclusion was that people could relieve their problems by booking a holiday.

Mr Arnall is only partially to blame; the newspapers who merrily picked up this PR pap are just as much to blame. On a slow news day in January, it's perfectly easy for a newspaper to pick the story up and use the press release without bothering to question it.

He has told me that he has never referred to himself as a doctor (as he isn't one), but this was something that the newspapers have all independently decided to use. He also claims that his links to Cardiff University have been made by the newspapers themselves.



**HOLIDAYS: Cliff's solution to all of life's problems**

However, out of 129 mentions of Cliff Arnall in the press since the beginning of last year, 94 mention he is part of Cardiff University, whilst 85 of those claim he is a doctor. It's difficult to believe that so many newspapers can be bothered to do that much research.

He denies that his work was ever intended to be considered as academic research, and that it is instead about 'helping people talk about their feel-

ings and get the most out of life'. Well, as long as he isn't just using Cardiff's name to line his own pockets, then I guess that's okay.

Even taking into account the role of the media, Mr Arnall still has a case to answer. I doubt that he would be considered as someone that Porter Novelli could use to promote their cause, if they could not make a link with the University explicit. It's implausible that this wasn't part of the plan all

along.

The upshot of his 'work' repeatedly turning up in the media is that he is lumbering the School of Psychology (which he isn't in, but the press rarely specify that) with a view that they are really a bunch of con-artists more concerned with making money than serious academic study, instead of being one of the most respected departments in the country.

"Doctor" Cliff can make money however he likes, but he gets his work published because he can use the name of the University. How good your degree is considered by employers is entirely dependent on how well the institution is viewed. A 2:1 in Law from Oxford is considered a damn sight better than a First in it at the Worcester College of Technology.

Do you want to be considered a student who went to a respectable university with an excellent research record, or one whose name is used by staff on the payroll of whichever company has the biggest chequebook? Regardless of who let the story loose this year, everyone in the University is dragged down by this crap.

Still, considering it's only a few short months until the happiest day of the year, we should probably brace ourselves for more cod science from the Good Doctor.

### TEN NEW MODULE SUGGESTIONS FOR CARDIFF

- Amazing Psychology of Sleeping and Dreaming
- Naked Synthetic Chemistry
- Magical Trigonometry and Calculus
- Now That's What I Call Endocrine and Paracrine Signalling
- Oddly Arousing European Security Issues
- Erotic Architecture since 1940
- 4 in 1 Latin Historical Texts – now with rinse action
- Kant's Most Bodacious Ethics
- Cannon and Ball's Internet Computing
- Kirsty's Home Introduction to Political Thought

### BROWN DAY

**ONE MORE story to revisit from January: Gordon Brown's idea of a British Day. Which is all well and good, as long as someone susses out what being British means.**

But has anyone noticed that next year is the 200th anniversary of the UK? Our future Prime Minister either has some incredible foresight (although it's hard to imagine a proud Scot putting British Day on the date that England forced his homeland into a Union), or everyone is missing a darned huge anniversary.

Now all we need is some kind of celebration of Britain. Maybe in a dome-shaped building...

## DROP DEAD, GORGEOUS



**GALLOWAY: 'Shall I be the twat?'**

**THERE IS nothing worse than jumping onto a bandwagon after it has gone by. Fortunately, the mocking of George Galloway has now been and gone such a long time now, that I feel that things have come full loop. I am, for all intensive purposes, a pioneer.**

I probably wouldn't care so much, but me and Gorgeous have history. I was supposed to be interviewing him in November, but he cancelled, without telling me. Not that I'm bitter, of course. He's been far too busy with destroying his career to worry about such trifling things.

But there are still people who insist

## EVILS ON WHEELS



**LIKE ANY student columnist worth their ranty salt, there are vast tracts of the population that I take an instant dislike to. The letter P alone throws up Plaid Cymru, planning students and People and Planet. Silence, the lot of you, before I gut you like a fish.**

But whilst working this January I found that there was someone I wasn't allowed to dislike. They were a disingenuous, incompetent gurgling waste of space. They were also in a wheelchair.

I feel that I should make readers aware of my experience with disabled issues. I worked for two years with two heavily disabled brothers in wheelchairs. I am well versed in Crip Theory.

Of course, in an ideal world I wouldn't have to do this; but I think it's the one thing that keeps my problem from turning into a particularly bad episode of *Curb Your Enthusiasm*.

So, given that no-one else seems to consider him a blinking waste of space, what's a boy to do? Don't talk to him, and I have a problem because he in a chair; talk to him, and he's going to make it onto my 'gut like a fish' list.

I'm fully expecting that something awful will happen by next week and I'll end up in a chair for being the only person who failed to see their upsides. But life is full of such crippling ironies.

that 'yeah, I don't like him, but I agree with his politics'. So how is the supposedly discredited politician still winning so much support?

Plain and simple: he is nothing to do with the anti-war movement; he's a one-man anti-American politician. From North Korea to Cuba, Venezuela to Iraq, there's barely a corrupt regime that he hasn't voiced support for, so long as it is against the USA.

Given how much blind anti-Americanism seems to be blurred out at this university on a daily basis, it's probably only a matter of time until he pays another visit here anyway.