

Event Horizon

"I want my P.H.D."

A disabled veteran rated 0% for schizophrenia discovers a super-fast Mars trajectory. He's a semester away from a Ph.D. when – boom! – the university discovers he's schizophrenic. He fights them two+ years, only to be expelled with extreme malice. His disability rating is by now 100% permanent and total. True story.

Who: My screenplay CELESTIAL MECHANICS covers the same material as a regular feature, with scenes spread out over several years. However. It amps up the drama to cover all the same material in a single interview, on my last day on campus. Lowers the production cost a lot, too.

What: The year is circa 2000. Six missions to Mars have failed. The University of Texas is ground central for the Mars drama. You'd think they would have at least wanted to investigate my dissertation research, a computer algorithm I created that found a "cheaper, faster, safer" Mars trajectory. More than that: a way to modify any existing Mars solution to save 10-20% on energy. In spaceflight energy is critical. Less energy means more payload, more time on station.

When: Everything was copacetic. I passed all the coursework for a Ph.D. with a 3.7 GPA. Passed my written qualifying exams. My advisor said all I needed to do was write up my Mars research and I'll get my doctorate in a few months. Then they found out I was rated 0% for schizophrenia by the V.A. I was expelled within weeks. No counseling. No probation. No anything.

Why: What otherwise is an interesting if off-key campus drama turns into a bona fide horror picture show when you learn about Mars Pathfinder 2.0, my research program. It's four Ph.D.'s rolled into one. You're not just shown that but in such a way as you actually understand how it works and why. Amazing science. If Jane and Joe Q. Citizen can understand the science – and all these world-class experts can't? There's no other possible explanation than outright – hatred?

How: Scary Movie Two: According to the national licensing authority that gives universities the right to award advanced degrees, the University of Texas did absolutely nothing wrong.

Yawn: Really? Rewind... Do you really want to go to college now – any college – knowing that the second you step foot on campus you abrogate all constitutional rights? All human rights?

Sad fact: If academics are so close-minded, how does science progress at all? Doh! It doesn't.

Subtext: The whole purpose of a graduate school education is to transform you into an egomaniac. It works. See for yourself. Again: do you want to become a self-serving egomaniac?

Diversity: I'm a 100% disabled veteran, and consulting engineer. I've published two textbooks on energy conservation with McGraw-Hill, age 66.

Contact: William "Bill" H. Clark. 56 Cross Creek Trail, Robbinsville NC 28771. <http://whclark.net>
bill@whclark.net (828) 735-0922