

Beyond plausibility

By JOSEPH KISPAL-KOVACS

Beyond the Limit, based on the novel *The Honorary Consul* by Graham Greene, is an aptly titled movie—with regards to the limit an audience can endure when its intelligence is insulted.

The film chronicles the search by Dr. Edward Plarr (Richard Gere) for news of his missing father, and Plarr's romance with an attractive native girl. The story takes place in the decaying town of Corrientes in Northern Argentina.

The film begins when Dr. Plarr befriends pleasant old alcoholic Charles Fortnum (Michael Caine), the honorary British Consul in Corrientes.

Leon, an old friend of Plarr's from Paraguay, arrives on the scene. A member of a group of exiled revolutionaries, he manages to get Plarr embroiled in a plot to kidnap the American ambassador, in order to obtain the release of several political prisoners. But Leon mistakenly kidnaps Fortnum.

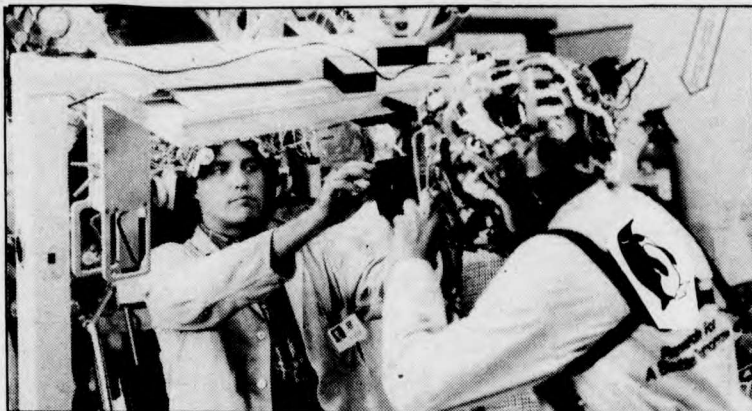
Gere, horribly miscast as the complex Dr. Plarr, rarely manages to rise above the role of stud. His

supposedly English accent often wavers into a Southern Californian dialect as it does for the rest of the cast.

The rest of the acting is also second rate. The high point in the film came when Plarr tells Leon, his revolutionary friend, that he is a "simple man." Leon answers, "There is no such thing as a simple man." Ironically all the characters in the film, except Caine's, are exceed-

ingly simple and two dimensional in their development.

In the final scene of the film, with Gere dying from a bullet wound, we see the final exchange between him and Hoskins. What should be a moving scene of anguish and betrayal only enticed laughter from the audience. Both implausible dialogue and acting make the scene an anticlimax and another low point in this already uneven film.



Last minute adjustments are made to invention in *Brainstorm*. Christopher Walken stars.

Movie sinks like Wood

By IAN M. CLARKE

Everyone who admired Natalie Wood was rooting for *Brainstorm*. It's the swan song for the doe-eyed beauty who died during the film's production two years ago.

Unfortunately, the movie is so unremittingly bad that nothing can be salvaged and construed as a tribute.

A machine capable of recording a person's thoughts, dreams, and emotions in 70mm Dolby is developed by two lab scientists, played by Christopher Walken and Louise Fletcher. Naturally, they wish to prevent the bad guys from the Defense Department from getting hold of the invention.

Louise Fletcher suffers a particularly graphic heart attack but manages to record her death on this machine. Christopher Walken sees what he must do: destroy his technological achievement so the

baddies can't get it, and as an extra bonus, experience a technicolor glimpse of the hereafter.

Natalie Wood plays Walken's estranged wife and co-worker, or, as they say, the love interest in the film. Cliff Robertson, looking uncomfortable in slim-jim tight clothing, plays top boss of the lab workers and vacillates between right and wrong just long enough to give his character at least a single dimension.

Walken still hasn't dropped the quasi-lunatic stone face he nurtured for *The Deer Hunter*. Instead of portraying the all-around good guy he's supposed to, he comes off like the kind of fanatic imbecile who would get sincerely involved in such ridiculous events. Wood and Robertson walk through their roles and do little short of glancing at their watches for quitting time.

Only Louise Fletcher exudes some believability for a part which clearly

undermines her talents.

Director Douglas Trumbull can't seem to decide where to point the camera and for how long to leave it there. Some scenes appear as though they were edited by a roto-tiller. The script is heavily to blame, being seriously inane to the point of embarrassment.

Not even the special effects, usually the last saving grace when all else has failed, can muster any originality. (Somebody's notion of the hereafter actually contains little angels with wings!)

During one scene in the film, the mind-machine is hooked up to a chimpanzee. It's too bad they didn't leave it there. The chimp's thoughts could only be more entertaining and coherent than the mish-mash of *Brainstorm*.

Apologies to the memory of Natalie Wood. She deserved a much more dignified exit.

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