

Features

Terror challenges romantic plot's credibility in 'Betrayed'

By Henry Herx

New York (NC) — "Betrayed" (United Artists) is an intriguing attempt to explore some contemporary political issues through the melodramatic form of a romantic thriller. Though the thrills and the romance are only intermittently involving, the story's political dimensions help take up the slack.

The movie opens with a hard-edged sequence depicting the assassination of a Chicago talk-show host by a home-grown terrorist organization of superpatriots. Their victim is left spray-painted with the initials "ZOG," an acronym standing for Zionist Occupation Government, the name the terrorists use to refer to those they believe are behind a supposed plot to destroy America.

This opening thrusts viewers into a fictional world that thinly veils such troubling actualities as the murder several years ago of a radio host by an American neo-Nazi group. It is the shadowy world of hate groups — white supremacists, anti-Semites and secret fascist cults. The fictional narrative that follows, however, fails to create a credible human dimension for this netherworld.

The central character is Katie (Debra Winger), a federal undercover agent trying to link the Chicago assassination with leading suspect Gary (Tom Berenger), a Nebraska farmer. Taking a job on his farm as a combine operator, Katie insinuates herself into Gary's company after hours and, quite unexpectedly, falls in love with him.

The little farming community of which she becomes a part seems on the surface to be the stereotypical middle-American community — wholesome, church-going and family orient-



Debra Winger and Tom Berenger are on the lookout in a scene from the the romantic thriller "Betrayed." The U.S. Catholic Conference says the film is "an intriguing attempt to explore some contemporary political issues."

ed. But she soon discovers that underneath this innocent surface lies a breeding ground of racist hatred and conspiracy.

Further complicating matters is the jealousy of Katie's boss (John Heard), a former lover who now coldly jeopardizes her life by insisting she stay in this dangerous community until she finds the evidence to convict Gary of murder.

A harrowing scene in which Gary tries to force Katie to kill a defenseless black man, destroys the psychological credibility for her con-

tinuing sympathy for this warped, dangerous killer. Such scenes as this do, however, convince the audience of Katie's vulnerability as an undercover agent whose life is on the line.

As he did in his 1982 movie "Missing," director Constantin Costa-Gavras imparts a credibly realistic veneer to the proceedings and elicits solid performances from a very capable cast. The result is flawed, however, by the implausibility of the romance that is at the heart of Joe Eszterhas' script.

The violence perpetrated by any kind of ex-

tremist hate group is a matter of public concern and deserves screen treatment. Though the movie depicts such violence and the thinking behind it, it clearly shows violence to be morally evil as well as politically bankrupt.

Any movie that features racist rationalizations for violence is potentially dangerous. Though Costa-Gavras carefully emphasizes the irrationality behind such extremist movements, the subject is entirely inappropriate for the young and impressionable.

Because of some intense graphic violence, implied illicit sex, racial slurs and rough language, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted.

Freddy the Slasher is back to upset the dreams of more teenagers in yet another inept sequel, "A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master" (New Line Cinema).

In this dreadfully made horror exploitation series, Freddy (Robert Englund), a child murderer who was burned to death by outraged parents, returns for revenge by taking life through the dreams of his young victims.

Directed by Renny Harlin, the plot consists merely of a series of gruesome, gory deaths depleting the population of the local high school. The film also incorporates some classy special effects, but none of them is very imaginative.

Because of graphic violence and gore for no other purpose than shock effect, some nudity and rough language, the USCC classification is O — morally offensive. The MPAA rating is R — restricted.

Do image makers use false ideas to remake the minds of the young?

By Michael Warren
NC News Service

Sometimes people decide in their own minds what young people are like. Then these people — including film directors, television producers and writers, song writers and ad makers — feed that image back to young people, expecting them to accept it as their own.

What do others expect you to be like? And what truths about young people do they miss when they falsely imagine what the young are like?

1) Do they imagine that you are apathetic, caring only about yourself, about fashion and your own appearance?

If so, they forget your passion and compassion, your ability to understand others' feelings. They forget your valuable anger born of a passionate sense of injustice.

They also forget that Jesus envisioned human life in a completely different way.

2) Do the image makers perceive you as knowing nothing? Do they believe young people are incompetent?

When people view youths in such terms they are quite unwilling to let you have a voice. They forget the enormous talent young people possess and their capacity for understanding what is going on.

They forget that young people have an original way of looking at the world, seeing human possibility with fresh eyes.

They forget that young people are watching them, judging the systems they have

Coming of Age

created and looking for better ways of running the world.

They also forget that some young people accept the vision of Jesus: "Love your enemies and do good to them" (Luke 6:35).

3) I believe that others imagine you as having no political power. You are "only kids." But they forget that you are connected with those you know and like and love, with those who share your own vision.

They forget that you are capable of reading the newspaper and of evaluating the world situation. They forget you have the power to make judgments about their policies and to bond with others in public action. They forget that someday soon you will sit in public judgment on the world they have handed on to you.

4) Do people view you as having no voice? They forget that you write your own songs and make up your own jokes ridiculing the stupidity you see. They forget that you can subvert their images with your creative graffiti, with your own counter images.

Jesus encourages us to speak in a voice

that offers contradictory wisdom: "Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.... From the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic" (Luke 6:28-29).

5) Do some people believe you're asleep? That gives them permission to carry out schemes they would never dare if they knew young people were watching. They forget that you are very awake, watching and planning how the world can be a better place for coming generations.

In one place in the Gospels, Jesus praises his Father for the new vision of human possibilities given to the young: "I offer you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because what you have hidden from the

Mooney yearbook wins award

The American Scholastic Press Association has notified the Cardinal Mooney yearbook staff that *Apogee '87* has received first place the association's annual competition. The *Apogee* earned 900 of 1,000 possible points awarded for content, design and theme.

Two other Mooney publications also

Arthritis self-help course scheduled for September

The Arthritis Foundation, Genesee Valley Chapter, is offering a six-week arthritis self-help course to assist people with arthritis in taking an active part in their health care.

The fee for the class will be \$20 for chapter

learned and the clever you have revealed to the merest children" (Luke 10:21).

Whose imagination will direct our lives?

Do Rambo and Magnum and Dirty Harry provide the images of who we could be? Do Madonna and Brooke Shields and other well-marketed women provide images we want to imitate?

Or should we follow other possibilities, much closer to the imagination of Jesus: Father Daniel Berrigan, SJ; Jean Donovan; Archbishop Oscar Romero?

We must decide.

Dr. Michael Warren is a religious educator at St. John's University in Jamaica, N.Y.

received recognition during the 1987-88 school year. *Myriad*, Mooney's literary magazine, earned third place in New York state at the Empire State Scholastic Press Conference. The school's newspaper, *Crest*, received 845 out of 900 possible points to earn an All-New-York-State rating at the same conference.

members and \$25 for non-members. Pre-registration is required.

Call the chapter office at (716)423-9490 for information.

HOUSE OF GUITARS
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We received 14 correct entries identifying Paul Anka as the person who wrote the theme song for the Johnny Carson "Tonight Show."

The winner was Anne Battenby of Palmyra

MUSIC TRIVIA

This week's question:
 Who formed & owned Apple Records?

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____
 School _____

Rules:
 Each week, the Courier-Journal, in conjunction with the House of Guitars will feature a Music Trivia contest. All you have to do to enter is answer the question, fill in your name and address and the school you attend (if applicable), cut out the coupon, and send it in to the Courier-Journal. If more than one correct entry is received, a drawing will be held and one winning entry will be drawn. If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave.
 All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.

The Courier-Journal
 Music Trivia
 1150 Buffalo Rd.
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Zambito's
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We received 5 correct entries identifying The Spectrum as the sports arena in which Rocky Balboa's fight was held in the movie "Rocky."

The winner was John Kennedy of Fairport

SPORTS TRIVIA

We would like to offer a warm thanks to Zambito's Sport Shop for sponsoring our sports trivia for the past several months. We are presently in search of a new sponsor and hope to reinstate our sports trivia as soon as possible.