

# 'Christmas' is flawed

By STEVE CARR  
Staff Writer

Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence appears to be a pretentious and poorly made film. Its faults are so obvious, in fact, that some of the more intriguing aspects of the film seem deliberately obscured.

Nagisa Oshama directed this somewhat unique collaboration between Japanese and English production crews — supposedly the first of its kind. Oshama is the veteran Japanese avant-gardist who was responsible for *In the Realm of the Senses*, a film that shocked the world with its legendary finale, a graphic castration scene.

Merry Christmas is probably not going to create as much controversy as *In the Realm of the Senses*. The film is a conservative story of brave British POW's getting bopped around by bamboo cane-toting Japanese officers. The plot has been used up a couple of times in different wars and settings. Take on its literal meaning, the film offers nothing new and is really poor.

This complaint aside, the film does have some very intriguing aspects that tend not to be apparent enough. The violence one of the characters remembers from his prep school days seems almost as horrific as the violence in the prison camp. A young Japanese officer has a fascination with a young, rebellious British prisoner that borders on homosexuality. There are also some interesting comparisons between the Japanese and Western cultures. The Japanese cannot understand why their prisoners want to live in captivity rather than to commit suicide.

## Review

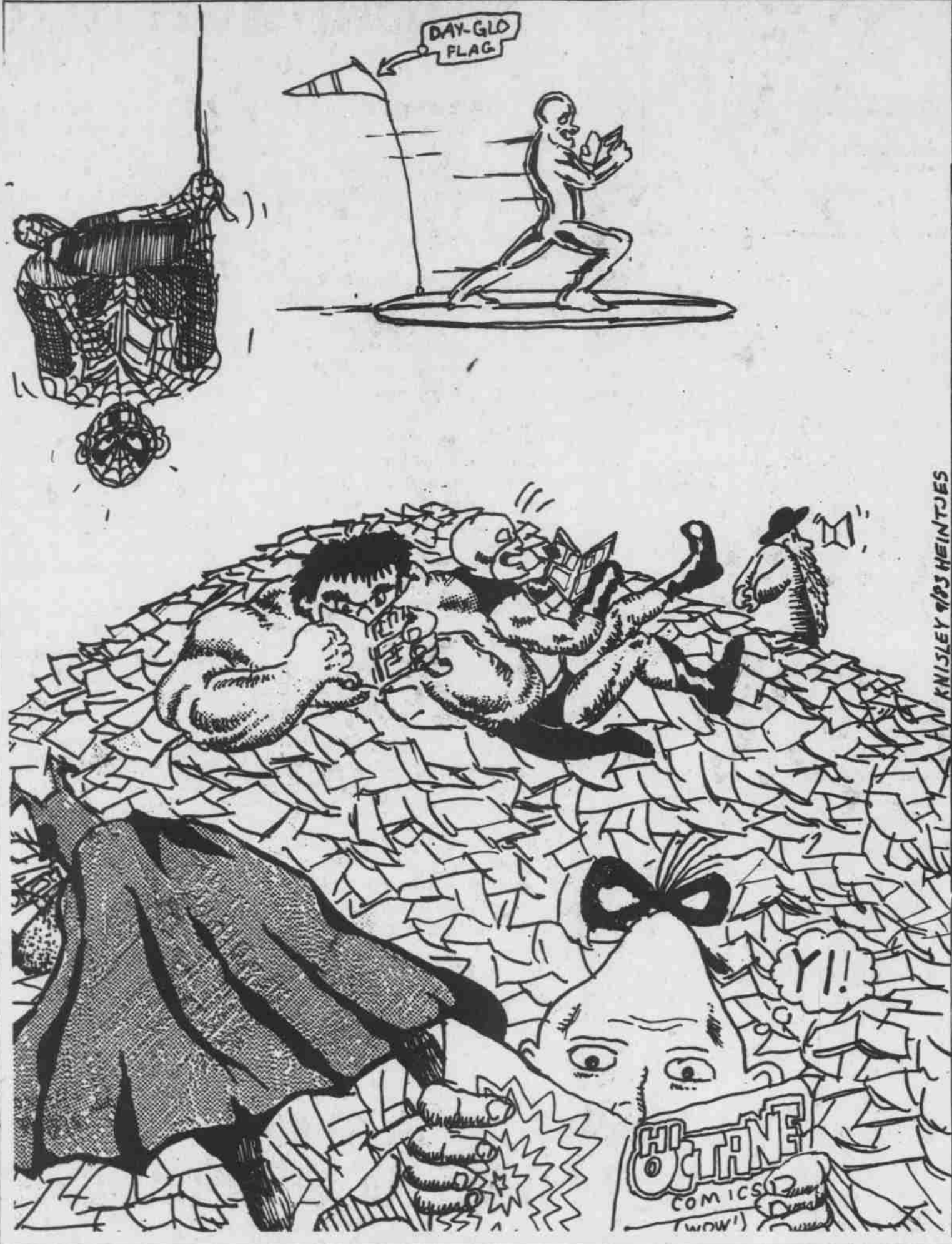
The movie is extremely violent, and yet there is something unreal in its graphic quality. Very rarely does the stick actually touch the body. The officer moves the stick, there is a loud smack, and the prisoner writhes in pain. At one point when one officer hits another, his hand misses the other actor's face by at least a foot. Is there an ambiguous meaning behind this obvious phoniness, or is it just shoddy craftsmanship?

The acting in *Merry Christmas* is not the film's strong point. Tom Conti becomes annoying as he continually mumbles idealistic aphorisms at the most awkward moments. David Bowie fares better as a tough young British officer determined to rebel against Japanese authority. Bowie is an impressive actor, but he had more flare as an alien in Nicholas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell to Earth*.

Oshama's direction runs hot and cold. Some of the visuals in *Merry Christmas* are quite striking. There are some intelligent and thought-provoking messages, but Oshama is either too subtle or too sloppy to make the audience feel confident it is not pumping its own interpretations into the film.

# The amazing adventures of the Carolina Comics club

By CHARLES E. GIBB  
Staff Writer



Spider Man: "Snider, ol' Buddy long time no see."

Detective Snider: "What the—?! YOU! Don't you ever knock?"

Spider Man: "Fraid not — that's one of my rare failings! But enough about me, let's talk shop! I've been looking for a less-than-reputable gent named Lefty Donovan. I haven't been able to find him, but I have discovered that most encounters with him have been from this precinct."

Detective Snider: "...No way, I happen to know that the D.A. turned you down last month! It could mean my badge — If I were to let you see this file—"

Spider Man: "That file, huh?"

Detective Snider: "Right. So I don't want anyone to catch you looking through that file!"

Spider Man: "Yeah, I think so."

Detective Snider: "Good, Excuse me. I think I have something in my eye."

Spider Man: "Good ol' Snider. I knew I could count on him. Let's see ... Arnold Lefty Donovan — Height 5'11"

The Amazing Adventures of Spiderman, Volume 1, No. 245, October, 1983 Copyright 1983 Marvel Comics Group

Comics are not just for kids. In fact, there is a group on campus that is devoted entirely to the subject of comics, and they are quite serious about them. These people have banded together as the Carolina Comic Book Club.

The club is the brainchild of Tom Heintjes, 21, a journalism and French major, who serves as president. The club

was formed out of Heintjes' frustration at being unable to discuss comics with people who could relate to them as he could.

"A true comic book fan loves nothing better than to talk about comics," he said.

CCBC, which meets every three or four weeks, provides a forum for promoting discussion and exchanging opinions, Heintjes said. "The club is designed to give everyone a chance to speak his mind on whatever he wants to talk about."

There were several newcomers at the first meeting of the CCBC earlier this month, among them Mike Moon of Graham. Moon had been reading comic books for years, but said his interest really peaked in 1981, when he was at Governor's School East. There, a friend began discussing comics with him and he's been a comic book fan ever since. He also enjoys *Dr. Who* and the "Star Blazers" animated cartoon.

Moon has also created a comic strip of his own. He designed the strip "Pizza Wars" for a Winston-Salem pizza chain.

The CCBC is filled with people who have broken in or are breaking into the comics industry. Mark Upchurch has written a book titled *The Art of Steve Ditko*. (Steve Ditko is well-known in comic book circles for his work with Charlton Comics, *Spiderman*, and *Doctor Strange*) Adam Burchess, of Durham, has had almost 20 letters printed in the last 1 1/2 years in various comics.

Heintjes is also an artist and writer. Last year, he created and drew "Captain Thrasher" for *The Phoenix*. This year, he is the creative force behind "Shloime."

"Most comic book fans don't just talk about their comics. Many collect them with a passion. Comic books make up the fourth-largest area of collecting, behind stamps, coins, and antiques as collectibles, Heintjes said.

"The average kids reads comics for enjoyment, and he eventually outgrows them," he said. "We just didn't do that."

"Comic book fandom is for everyone, both young and old alike. Anyone can enjoy a comic book."

# Gere is burnout doctor in 'Beyond the limit'

By IVY HILLIARD  
Staff Writer

Director John MacKenzie's latest film, *Beyond the Limit*, should reinforce his reputation as a director with the gift of mingling tragedy and farce with an eye for the macabre.

*Beyond the Limit* is foremost a movie about burnout cases — men who have lost belief in their work, their friends and worst of all, themselves.

Based on the novel *The Honorary Consul* by Graham Greene, the film stars Michael Caine and Richard Gere. Although the film's title was changed from that of the book shortly before its release, the screenplay by playwright Christopher Hampton is well-written and surprisingly faithful to the novel.

## Review

Gere plays Dr. Eduardo Plarr, an idealistic doctor searching for his English father in the political turmoil of northern Argentina. Plarr befriends the dissipated Honorary British Consul Charlie Fortnum, played by Michael Caine, and the local police chief, Col. Perez (Bob Hoskins), during his search. But it is Charlie's ex-prostitute wife, Clara (Elpidia Carrillo), who fascinates Plarr, and they begin an affair that leaves her pregnant.

Eventually Plarr is contacted by a group of old friends from Paraguay who ask him to use his friendship with Charlie to learn details of an American ambassador's visit. These amateur kidnapers capture Charlie by mistake and use him instead to demand the release of 10 political prisoners, including Plarr's father. This mishap, along with Plarr's involvement with Clara, leads the usually detached, rational man to make a series of mistakes with

tragic results.

Gere's performance as Plarr is disappointingly uneven, despite several effective scenes. In appearance he can pass as half Paraguayan, but his British accent changes in intensity from non-existent to over-exaggerated. He is simply unconvincing as a "passionless Englishman" who can't really care about anything and is jealous of those who can. But Gere does create a sympathy for his character's situation at the end of the film that transcends the rest of his performance.

Michael Caine is exception as the consul. His drunken good humor lifts the movie whenever he is on screen. The intensity of his love for Clara and his happiness over her pregnancy are pathetic, considering her affair. Caine's performance reveals that, regardless of his drinking problem, Charlie is the most honorable of all the characters.

Carrillo, who recently played the illegal alien befriended by Jack Nicholson in *The Border*, brings little to the role of Clara, but her explicit love scenes with Gere are sizzling, and she has a lovely madonna-like quality.

The major flaw with the movie is that it is, perhaps, too close to the novel. MacKenzie, a former TV director who received praise last year for *The Long Good Friday*, has a well-rounded technique, but the film moves too slowly and the film's potential is not fulfilled. Still, MacKenzie's flare for violence with artistry stands out, especially in the imagined sequences Plarr has of his father's torture.

Fans of Richard Gere might have different reasons for seeing *Beyond the Limit*, but it is definitely a worthwhile film, if only for Caine's performance and the faithful adaptation of Greene's novel.

# CAMPUS CALENDAR

Public service announcements must be turned into the box outside the DTH offices in the Carolina Union by 1 p.m. if they are to be run the next day. Only announcements from University recognized and campus organizations will be printed. All announcements must be limited to 25 words and can only run for two days. In the event that the Calendar does not run because of space limitations, groups should turn in announcements at least two days in advance to ensure they run at least once.

## TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

- There will be a mandatory captain's meeting for all College Bowl teams at 7:30 p.m. in the Union. Check room number at Union desk.
- Environmental Seminar: Dr. James Vaupel, Professor of Public Policy at Duke University, "The Role of Scientists in Policy Making for Environmental Risks," at noon, in 103 Beard Hall.
- Combined Forces — the progressive paper on campus — will meet at 7 p.m. in the Union. All interested in helping plan the second issue should attend.
- RHA and the University housing are sponsoring an Alcohol Forum at 7:30 p.m. in 100 Hamilton Hall. Speakers from Chapel Hill and Campus Police, Student Legal Service, Alcohol Law Enforcement, and UNC will be represented.
- The Association of International Students will meet at 5 p.m. in the Union. Refreshments will be served, and all interested persons are welcome.
- Phi Delta Phi Potluck dinner will be held at 8 p.m. in the Toy lounge of Dey Hall. Students and faculty interested in French culture are welcome.
- The Sociology Club will have a potluck dinner at 8:30 p.m. in Room 150 Hamilton Hall. Dr. John Kasarda will lecture on "The Future of Cities." Anyone interested is welcome. Please bring some type of food.
- Phi Eta Sigma will hold a meeting at 7 p.m. in Murphy 111. This is an important meeting, so all members are encouraged to attend.
- "Understanding Molecules on Surfaces — A Challenge To Modern Surface Science" by Dr. John T. Yates Jr. of the University of Pittsburgh at 8 p.m. in 207 Venable Hall.
- "Excitons and Phonons in Semiconductors" by Professor James P. Wolfe of the University of Illinois at 4 p.m. in 265 Phillips Hall.
- The Anglican Student Fellowship invites everyone to Holy Communion at 10 p.m. at The Chapel of The Cross. Fellowship to follow.
- Opportunities and Trends in the Job Market: A workshop by Career Planning and Placement Services at 3:30 p.m. in 210 Hanes Hall. All students encouraged to attend.
- The Binge-Purge Syndrome: How to Help Yourself or a Friend. A slide-tape presentation on bulimia and resources for help. Confidentiality maintained. Presented from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Union. Sponsored by the Counseling Center.
- The Society of Physics Students will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Physics Lounge (Phillips 277). Professor Hernandez will speak. Anyone interested in physics is welcome.
- UNC Men's Rugby: There will be a practice at 5:30 p.m. on Ehringhaus Field. New players are welcome, amateur or pro.
- UNC Wash House Harriers meet at 5 p.m. on Woolfen Gym steps. If you run alone, why not join this unique, fun group? Slow and fast runners are welcome. IM Office has more info.

Alpha Chi Sigma will meet at 7 p.m. in 224 Venable. This is a called meeting for vote.

Orienteering/Resume-Writing Workshop — 1:45 p.m. in T-7 Carrol. Specific information regarding Career Planning and Placement Services. Attendance at an orientation meeting is mandatory to interview on campus. Designed for business majors.

Amnesty International group meets in the Union at 7:30 p.m. to share recent news and plan for November.

Student Night: At 7:30 p.m. at the Newman Center. Our speakers will be Barton Buchanan and Marcela Fuenzalida-Buchanan on "Religion as a Celebration of Life." All are welcome.

## COMING EVENTS

Department Seminar: "Surface Penning Ionization Electron Spectroscopy — A Very Local Probe Of The Molecular Orbitals Of Adsorbed Species," on Thursday in 308 Venable Hall at 11 a.m.

Wall Disney will hold a presentation of their Spring Internship Program on Thursday 7 to 9 p.m. in the Union. Interviews will be held Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Check for room. Contact Richard Chisbon 962-1222.

The Campus U Hanger Responsibility Committee, The Democratic Socialists of America, and Critical Perspectives present "Michael Harrington: The Great Society: Where do we go from here?" on Thursday at 3 p.m. in Gerard Hall.

Carolina Photography Club will meet Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Union. Will discuss Photo Contest.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes will meet Thursday at 8:30 p.m. in the Union. Track coaches Hubert West and Don Lockert will speak. Bring a friend and a smile.

IVCF-Mid Campus presents "John Accountant", a chapter meeting concerning dating and singleness on Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Union. Terry Manner will speak and Alex Mebane will provide music. Everyone is welcome.

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White House, 16 1/2 oz. Applesauce ..... 3/\$1.00	Kraft, 10 oz. Sharp or Extra Sharp Cracker Barrel Cheese .. \$1.59	"Cut Free", lb. Whole Sirloin Tips ..... \$1.59	
Fab, 49 oz. 25¢ Off Label Laundry Detergent ..... \$1.59	All Items, 32 oz. Dannon Yogurt ..... 99¢	Regular or Hot, 1 lb. Jamestown Sausage ..... 99¢	
Coffee Mate, 22 oz. Coffee Creamer ..... \$1.99		1 lb. pkg. Mr. Turkey Franks ..... Only 69¢	
Hefty, 10's, 2 Ply 30 gal. Trash Bags ..... 99¢	PRODUCE		
	Tasty, Quart Concord Grapes ..... 99¢	<p>Come taste these delicious franks on us. A demonstration booth will be set up at Fowler's from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday with free samples and coupons.</p> <p><b>ANNIVERSARY BONUS BUYS</b> BUY 1-GET 1 FREE</p> <p>Ronzoni Thin Spaghetti, 16 oz. Ronzoni Reg Spaghetti, 16 oz. Ronzoni Vermicelli, 16 oz. Munch Peanut Candy Bars 30¢ Size Sauers Black Pepper (Bonus Pack), 5 oz. Gibbles Cheese Puffys, 4 oz.</p> <p>BUY 2-GET 1 FREE Dove Soap, 4 1/4 oz. White or Pink Bath Size 4¢ Off Label</p>	
	FROZEN		
Sealtest, 1/2 gal. Ice Cream ..... \$1.89	Golden Ripe, lb. Bartlett Pears ..... 39¢		
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Banquet, 2 lb. Fried Chicken ..... \$2.59	Large Stalk Celery ..... 49¢		
Richs, 8 oz. Bavarian Cream Puffs ..... 99¢	WINE		
	Moreau Blanc, 5th ..... \$3.39		
	Chateau Haut Peyrague Graves 1981, 5th ..... \$3.79		
	Louis M. Martini Cabernet Sauvignon 1978, 5th ..... \$5.25		
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