

# "Educating Rita" makes grade on actors' talents

**A movie review  
by Don Strausburger**

When you put together the talents of Michael Caine and Julie Harris and give them a script worthy of their talents, what would you expect? In the case of **Educating Rita**, the spectators get nothing less than should be expected.

The film stars Michael Caine as Paul, the alcoholic professor, who is tutoring a young uneducated English woman, played by Julie Harris. The woman wants desperately to find herself through her education while gaining vast knowledge in the subject of literature. The professor, although unwilling, tutors the woman through the early segments of her education, watching her go from having no understanding of how to write a paper without just showing her emotions, to the point where she can write an essay which will not be jeered at by any other professor. When she gets to the point that *this can be done, she leaves the tutor to start school. She ad-*

vances quickly through her education, and her knowledge of literature grows equally fast.

In the meantime, the professor is unsuccessfully trying to fight off alcoholism, giving the film an interesting subtone. We begin to wonder if once intelligence is acquired, there is nothing left to gain.

The student, whose life is simple, goes through life without any problems other than her studies, while on the other hand, the professor drinks to the point that he is uncontrollable several times during the film.

In watching this film, I was continually impressed with the technical aspects of filmmaking it presented.

The most impressive of these aspects is the settings used. The professor's office is ideal for the character's personality, including a deep-shelved bookcase which allows him to hide bottles of alcohol behind books.

The student's home is the ideal display of simplicity but also shows how home can quickly turn from a place to hide to a place from which to hide. As she

becomes more intelligent, her simple hometown becomes too simple for her new life-style and she finds that she must get away.

Dialogue is also one of the strong features of this film. The student in the beginning is typically educated in her dialogue but advances to being quite well-spoken.

The professor does the exact opposite, being very well-spoken except when he is drunk, at which time his speech becomes very

hard to understand and his diction regresses to the point that he sounds worse than the student sounded at the beginning of the film.

**Educating Rita** is one of the best films of the fall season. It is witty and cleverly contrived in its development and deserves much praise in its plot development.


If you're in the mood to see a good movie, look into the film **Educating Rita**.

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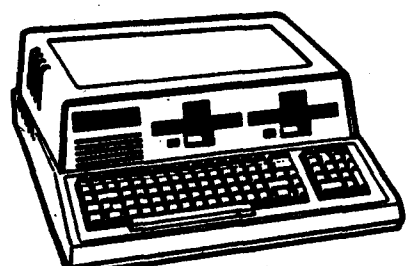
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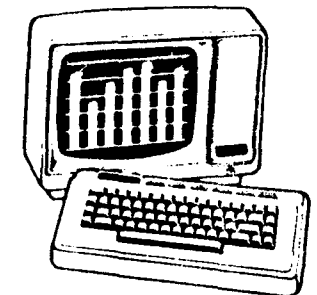
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Capitol Times, Thursday, Nov. 17, 1983