



A tribute to corporate raiders? Only the braintrust behind this knows for sure

Edward Hunt's
The Brain

The *Brain* reunites the team of Edward Hunt, director, and Barry Pearson, writer. In 1977 the two produced a virtually unknown tax-shelter film, *Plague*, starring Daniel Pilon, Kate Reid and Céline Lomez, that was eventually released on the Texas drive-in circuit in 1979.

Hunt had previously written, produced and directed *Starship Invasion* with Robert Vaughn in 1976, and Pearson had written the screenplay for Peter Pearson's *Paperback Hero* in 1972. You would have thought that these two gentlemen of modest but promising talent would have learnt a thing or two about filmmaking over the years and perhaps gone on to do better things. However, time seems to be working in reverse with the theatrical release of *The Brain*. A more inept, amateurish piece of celluloid excrement cannot not be imagined even in the darkest days of tax-shelter filmmaking.

The film was produced by Tony Kramreither, the man responsible for such Canadian cinematic gems as *Mondo Nude* (1978), *Humungous* (1981) and *Thrillkill* (1983). However, recently Kramreither has been moving away from his more lurid films and getting behind quality projects like Leon Marr's *Dancing In The Dark* and the underrated *Concrete Angels*. *The Brain* represents a major step backwards to the bad old days. In fact, all involved in this laughable piece of junk, including special effects co-ordinator Mark Williams (*The Fly*, *Aliens*), should be thoroughly embarrassed that this film has actually seen the

light of day on the theatrical circuit. *The Brain* is headed directly for the bottom of the bin in the sleaziest section of your local video-cassette outlet reserved especially for this sort of pre-pubescent schlock/horror flick.

The Brain, which borrows liberally from David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* and *Invasion Of The Body Snatchers*, without a whit of justice done to either of these far superior films, concerns the doings of an evil, alien psychiatrist (David Gale) who controls the minds of those who watch his TV show by means of a living brain. The brain, which at first looks like an oversized piece of turd with a tail, is hooked-up to all sorts of electrodes and TV monitors from which it relays commands to its master.

Not content with merely controlling human minds with hallucinations, the brain unexplainedly develops a carnivorous appetite for the mad doctor's female assistant. "That's food for thought!", exclaims the wide-eyed psychiatrist as the unfortunate assistant disappears inside the squirming lump of turd. After a satisfying burp the creature develops the funniest set of fangs and bulging eyes imaginable.

Into this ludicrous state of affairs comes our all-American hero (the suburbs of Toronto and Mississauga are thinly disguised to be somewhere in New York, although the art director forgot or couldn't afford to lose the Toronto transit stops and other assorted bits of Canadiana), played by Tom Breznahan with a perpetual smirk. Of course he is cute and contemptuous of authority. He resists the psychiatrist's attempts at brainwashing and subsequently he is chased all over the lab and town by the mad doctor's remaining assistant, a certain overweight, lunatic-looking Nurse Varna, played unintentionally for laughs by George Buza. Every once-in-a-while the rapidly growing brain will appear out of nowhere to menace our hero and wreak havoc on the good folks of Meadowvale.

Our macho high school hero is helped by his virginal girlfriend, the pretty but incompetent Cyndy Preston, until she too comes under the brain's power. Once again he is chased all over the place by Nurse Varna. Again he escapes and sneaks back into the TV studio, intent on destroying the brain. By now the organ has become the size of a Mack truck, eating everybody in its path, including, thank goodness, Nurse Varna. However, our hero, with his ex-virginal girlfriend at his side, comes face-to-face with the worst case of bad breath this side of King Kong. With an unbelievable sleight-of-hand, he blows up the saliva-drooling monster and happily all the good people of Meadowvale are released from its spell. Canada, oops, I mean America, is once again saved from alien domination.

In the middle of one of the endless boring chases, our hero's best friend and girlfriend, who are looking for him in the TV studio, stop,

and she wails "We have to find him!" "What do you mean we have to?", asks the best friend. "I don't know", is her idiotic response. It seems sad that the makers of *The Brain* also apparently don't know what they are doing. I can only hope they got paid well for their efforts and that the talent wasted here will get on with the better films they all are capable of making.

Paul Townend •

THE BRAIN exec. p. Don Haig p. Tony Kramreither d. Edward Hunt sc. Barry Pearson ed. David Nicholson d.o.p. Gilles Corbeil creature and makeup fx. Mark Williams mus. Paul Zaza co. p. lp. mgr. Ken Gord assoc. p. Phillip M. Good p. exec. (IVE) Victor "Jake" Davich p. exec. (SGE) Gary Drucker asst. to p. Teresa A. Wain art d. Byron Patchett stunts coord. Gary Brown sp. fx. Danny White, Craig Williams cast. Lucinda Sill, CDC 1st a.d. Robert Petovic 2nd a.d. Randi Richmond 1st. asst. ed. Robin Russell 2nd asst. ed. Rae Crombie, Cyndy Fret sd. ed. Karl Konny loc. mgr. Jeremy Gauthier, Tony Morrone, Mark Mowad gaffer J.P. Locherer best boy Alan Pill electricians Yuri Yakubiw, Dean Emerick key grip Bill Heintz 2nd grip John Boan-Mitchell best boy grip Richard Emerson grips Bruce Chadwick, Mark Mavrinac sd. rec. Jin Hong, Rae Crombie boom Doug Dixon cast. des. Eva Gord ward. Jocelyn Senior ward. asst. Sara Schult set dresser Nick White 1st. asst. cam. John Joffin 2nd asst. cam. Jane Davis cam. assts. Dvgr Plank, Josh Melamed, Ben Sharp, Gisele Turpin, Mark Willis key props Danny White props asst. Craig Williams Dial. ed. David Nicholson sp. fx. assts. Ray Greer, Cathy Mullanphy, Gabe Fallus, Rae Crombie, Kevin Danzey, Thomas M. Bellisario brain op. Chris Thiesenhausen, Phillip M. Good video cons. Bruce Parlette p. coord. Sandi Henri, Sandra Deziel 3rd. a.d. Carlos Caneca a.d. trainee Christine Doré office p.a. Tom Willey cont. Karen Paterson set des. Roderick Mayne asst. art d. Michael Borthwick 2nd. a.d. Andrea Stokes art dept. trainee Tamara Boan-Mitchell const. foreman Andrew Colpitts hd. carpenter Jim Parry carp. Chris Radley Walters, David Hoekstra painter Harry Patchett p.a. Thomas M. Bellisario craft Anne Fotheringham hair/makeup Odelya hair/makeup asst. Donna Keravica driver capt. Noella Nesdoly drivers Mark Currie, Andrew Sparkes, Andrew Ward, Andrew Vincent comp. animation Larry Chase stills photo Sophie Hogan extras cast. JW Casting Foley artist Reid J. Atherton Foley asst. Maureen Wetteland neg cutter Catherine Rankin video transfers Alndon Grp. Prods. re-rec. mix Mike Hoogenboom asst. mix Peter Kelly adr sd. rec. Rae Crombie Inserts crew: p. mgr. Rae Crombie gaffer Phillip M. Good key grip Mike Brown grip Harold Delisle p. asst. Mike Toke stunts Gary Brown, Ed Hellier, Steve Pernie, Cindy Goldhawk equipment Cdn

Motion Pic. Equipment Rentals l.p. Tom Breznahan, Cyndy Preston, David Gale, George Buza, Christine Kossack, Bret Pearson, Bernice Quiggan, Susannah Hoffman, Justine Campbell. Presented by Brightstar Films.

George Erschbamer's
Snake Eater

O.K. It plays like this. Vietnam vet "Soldier" is back home after serving in the crack search-and-destroy squad the "Snake Eaters." Back in civvies there's not much call on the streets of "big city U.S.A." for eating snakes or searching & destroying, so our boy lines up undercover work as a narc stinging dope dealer. Benefits include a sexy black pusher with a scar from neck to navel who likes to play strip poker without the poker. Anyway the boy plays by his own rules and when the junkies come by he nails their feet to the floor to make sure they don't split. His superiors at the P.D. don't like his approach and turf him from the force.

Meanwhile, down some desolate backwoods bayou, Soldier's family are vacationing on their houseboat when set upon by a group of snarling, sadistic hillbillies who've been festering in the Ozarks since *Deliverance*. Mom & Dad sink into the black cesspool in a burning blaze of glory while lithe, nubile Sis goes off to be a sex slave, locked up in a fetid shack. Soldier finds out that his folks are dead from a sheriff after he's laid out a couple of particularly nasty bikers at a roadside pit stop called "The Cage" where he landed after his chopper went out of control after he veered to avoid hitting a child chasing a ball. The man has a heart of gold.



Josie Bell and Lorenzo Lamas in *Snakeeater*