

Short Review: “The Terminal Man” (1974) by Dr. John L. Flynn



The Terminal Man (1974). Warner Brothers, 107 min. Director, Producer and Screenwriter: Michael Hodges. Based on the novel by Michael Crichton. Starring: George Segal, Joan Hackett, Richard Dysart, Jill Clayburgh, James Sikking, Donald Moffat, Matt Clarke, and Michael Gwynne.

Based the best-selling novel by Crichton, the film follows the chilling story of a psychotic (Segal) who must be "calmed down" by a tiny computer implanted in his brain. When he discovers the pleasures that his computer uses to control his violent tendencies, he goes on a murderous spree simply to enjoy the pleasure of restraint. Like Crichton's "Westworld," technology is depicted as a kind of modern-day Frankenstein monster. No matter how noble or well-intentioned the mad doctor may be, his work inevitably produces a monster. Clayburgh and Hackett never looked sexier in a science fiction film. Donald Moffat, to his own credit, would play a robot four years later on the television series based on "Logan's Run."

Copyright 2010 by John L. Flynn, Ph.D.