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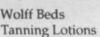
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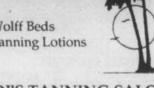
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Courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

Kiefer Sutherland and Nancy Travis obsess together in "The Vanishing."

"The Vanishing"



Not very often do directors remake their own films.

Roger Vadim ("And God Created Woman") did and was terribly unsuccessful.

There must be a reason for this reluctance. The reason probably is that their remakes often suck.

At least "The Vanishing"

(Edgewood 3, Plaza 4) sucks.
"The Vanishing" is the American feature-film debut of Dutch director George Sluizer. It is also a remake of his 1988 film, 'Spoorloos.

He should have left well enough

There are so many problems with this movie it's hard to get a handle on it.

Kiefer Sutherland is Jeff

Harriman, a young copywriter with a bright future and a beautiful girlfriend named Diane (Sandra Bul-

Everything is going swimmingly for him until she is abducted from a convenience store while they're on vacation at Mount St. Helen's.

Jeff spends the next three years searching for her, making no progress and seemingly abandoning his own life in the process.

But he does meet Rita (Nancy Travis), a waitress with a heart of gold who tries to help him forget

Tough job. At least it should have been for the movie to work.

Somehow though, while Jeff is completely obsessed with Diane's disappearance, he manages to fall in love with Rita.

Sorry, folks, it doesn't work. Their relationship makes it hard to care about his obsession with Diane's disappearance. The obsession makes it hard to care about their relationship. See the problem?

Then there's a problem with the bad guy, Barney (Jeff Bridges). The audience knows he's a loon from the moment he appears on screen. His voice is loony. His actions are loony. His dialogue is

As is almost all the dialogue. The script suffers from the same sagging that plagued screenwriter Todd Graff's last film, "Used People." He just can't make the story work: too many loopholes and too much implausibility

And in this case, too little like the original and too much American "suspense": the never-dead baddie, the over-the-top violence and the too-pat happy ending.

It sucks.

I hope "The Vanishing" will take a cue from its title and disap-

- Anne Steyer

Every minute of Gere-Foster film worth watching

"Sommersby"



"Sommersby" (Edgewood 3, Lin-coln) is a great love story that refuses to succumb to the obvious Hollywood cliches. It questions conventional ideas about love, marriage and identity.

"Sommersby" is a remake of the French classic "The Return of Martin Guerre." The original is based on factual events in 16th-century France, but screenwriter Nicholas Meyer ("Star Trek VI") Americanized and updated it.

Often times this doesn't work, but "Sommersby" is a glowing exception. Directed by Jon Amiel, it is a wonderful tale.

The acting is exceptional also. Jodie Foster is remarkable. There are moments when just the look in her eyes is enough to make you catch your breath. And Richard Gere is perfect.

Gere is (or is he?) Jack Sommersby, a rich plantation owner, drinker, gam-bler and wife beater, who comes home after the Civil War.

After six years, he looks and acts a little different. But who wouldn't after spending time in a Yankee prison? His wife Laurel (Foster) and his

son Robert (Brett Kelley) have tried to rebuild their home and their lives. But they reluctantly welcome Jack back, and he shows them a different husband, a different father and an altogether different man.

Away goes the beard, the drink and the cards. Instead comes a thoughtful and kind lover who sits and reads Homer by the fire, promises to sell land to those that work it and works the land himself.

Did time in prison change him, or is he a different man entirely?

These questions come to the forefront when Jack has to stand trial in Nashville, Tenn. He's accused of a murder committed before his return to Vine Hill.

The ending is too good to give away, but every moment is worth watching-even the anticipated ones.

Anne Steyer

Loaded Weapon 1' fires off round of hilarity



Fine, "Loaded Weapon 1" (East Park 3, Plaza 4) is admittedly short on plot, character development, and all that other complicated stuff that wins Oscars for movies.

It wasn't made for that. What it

was made for was laughs, and laughs it has in abundance.

Emilio Estevez joins his brother Charlie Sheen ("Hot Shots") in the ranks of big-screen hijinx as Jack Colt, cut from the same cloth as Mel Gibson's "Lethal Weapon" on-the-edge character Martin Riggs.

His straight-laced partner (again

a la the "Lethal Weapon" flicks) is Wes Luger (Samuel L. Jackson).

They are on the trail of the evil General Mortars (William Shatner) and his bizarre sidekick Mister Jigsaw

In the course of their chase the sight gags and one-liners are almost non-stop - and there's close to a

dozen hilarious cameos (including Whoopi Goldberg, Bruce Willis, and Charlie Sheen).

Check it out. You might even have to go a second time to catch all the subtle sight gags at the scene of the

- Gerry Beltz

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