

'Star 80' portrays Playmate's murder

By IVY HILLIARD
Staff Writer

A pretty young girl working at a Dairy Queen in a small Canadian town is swept off her feet by a fast-talking older man with slicked-back hair and an abundance of ambition. So begins the ill-fated relationship of *Playboy* Playmate of the Year Dorothy Stratten and her husband, Paul Snider, in the Bob Fosse film *Star 80*.

Review

Based on a true story, *Star 80* chronicles the life of Stratten, who was shot and killed in 1980 by her estranged husband when she was just beginning to gain some measure of fame as an actress.

While the main subject of the film would initially seem to be Stratten herself, played by Mariel Hemingway, it turns out to be the husband, strikingly played by Eric Roberts.

Those who know Snider describe him as everything from a go-getter to a pimp. His obsession with Dorothy and her career, coupled with his intense feelings of inadequacy, changes him from a pushy yet supportive and eager-to-please husband into a jealous, desperate man.

Roberts, in only his third film, is eerily realistic and creates vivid images of Snider.

Mariel Hemingway is surprisingly right in the Stratten role. Despite gaining some notoriety for having breast implants to fit the part physically, Hemingway lends a fresh-faced innocence to Stratten that makes it easy to understand why her relationship with Snider got so out of hand.

Cliff Robertson co-stars as Hugh Hefner, who made Dorothy his protegee. Robertson fills the silk pajamas of this almost mythical figure convincingly.

Carroll Baker makes her first appearance in a Hollywood film in 16 years as Dorothy's mother. Baker rose to stardom in the '50s with films like *Giant* and *Baby Doll* before retiring from the public eye.

Roger Rees, the Tony Award-winning lead actor of Broadway's *Nicholas Nickleby*, rounds out the cast of *Star 80* as director Aram Nicholas (a part loosely based on real-life director Peter Bogdanovich), who falls in love with Dorothy while making a movie with her and encourages her to leave her husband.

As a whole, the movie itself is visually impressive due to the creative talents of

cinematographer Sven Nykvist, who won an Oscar for his work on Ingmar Bergman's *Cries and Whispers* in 1974 and who has collaborated on more than 20 Bergman films.

Director Fosse, best known for his musical films *Cabaret* and *All That Jazz*, brings his own particular style and point of view to *Star 80*.

Fosse uses a compelling combination of flashbacks and flash-forwards of the Snider/Stratten relationship intercut with interviews of people associated with the couple and their observations on what led to the murder-suicide. A voice-over of Dorothy in interviews talking about her life and Snider's trade over the unfairness of his life also punctuate the action before it builds to its foregone conclusion.

This method may sound like an awkward way to tell a story, but it proves itself in drawing the audience in beyond the simple scandal and nudity in the film to the real tragedy of the situation.

Star 80 is, without question, a disturbing film about an unpleasant subject, because Snider is simply pursuing the American dream of becoming famous, and this becomes an American tragedy.



Paul (Eric Roberts) desperately tries to hang on to Dorothy Stratten's (Mariel Hemingway) rising star in Bob Fosse's 'Star 80,' which is presently showing in the area.

'Reckless' a bland, uninteresting film

By ED BRACKETT
Staff Writer

Reckless is artless. It tries to be something it isn't, namely, an affecting love story. You know, the classic Boy Meets Girl, Boy Loses Girl, Boy Gets Girl Back routine.

In *Reckless* the Boy, Johnny Rourke, played by newcomer Aidan Quinn, is a real scuz from the wrong side of the tracks (nudge, nudge) while the Girl, Tracey Prescott, played by Daryl Hannah, is Miss Clean-cut U.S.A. from the right side of the tracks (wink, wink).

Review

But, alas, the conflict between the backgrounds of the two teen-aged lovers just isn't developed. Not at all. In fact, Johnny and Tracey never discuss, or even wonder about, their differences, which is what the whole story hinges on.

Their differences, to be sure, are considerable. For example, Johnny's home is a dinky, drab hell-hole; Tracey's, on the other hand, is a mini-Biltmore House. Johnny's father hurls obscenities and digs sleazy prostitutes; Tracey's father hurls cognacs and digs crabgrass from his lawn.

Needless to say, their socio-economic upbringings are radically different. Heck, Johnny probably couldn't even spell "socio-economic."

Why, then, with all these differences, do Johnny and Tracey not bother to explore them? That is, why isn't each curious enough to find out where the other is coming from? The answer is that screenwriter Chris Columbus makes Johnny and Tracey just a couple of dumb kids who have no idea where they're coming from.

Well, even if the script isn't very good, there's always hope that good direction can save the movie, as it did in Paul Brickman's *Risky Business*. Enter first-time director James Foley; exit hope. You want endless, conventional facial close-ups? *Reckless* has 'em. You want uninspired shot/reverse shots? *Reckless* has plenty. This is not to say that Foley's direction is by any means sloppy — it's quite polished, actually — but rather that it lacks creativity.

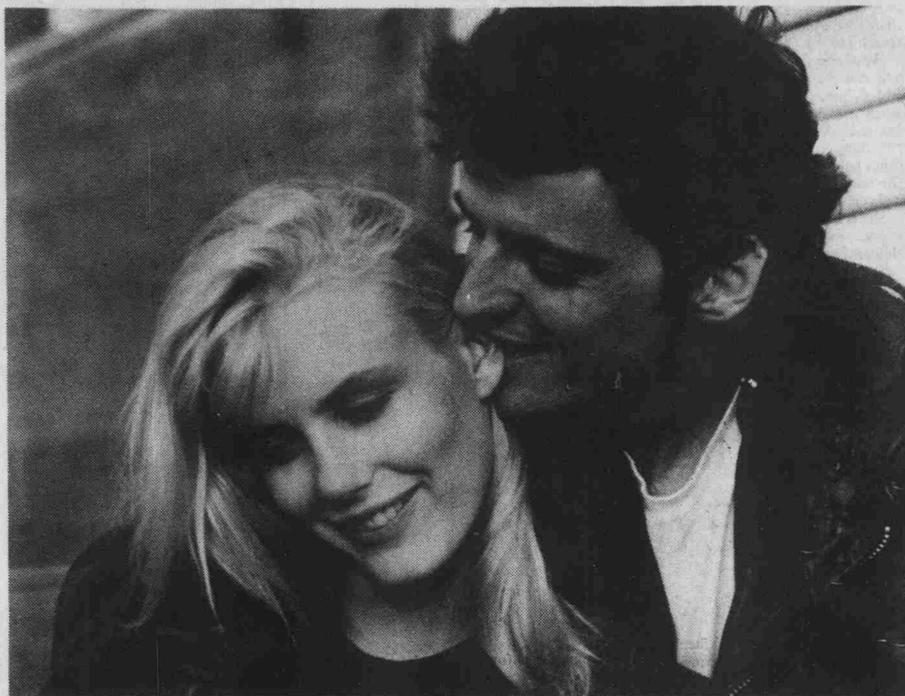
And Columbus' script calls for some creative, artistic direction, make no mistake about it. Johnny, is a sort of James Dean misfit with a lot to say about "what's goin' on." Such an expressionistic outlook demands equally expres-

sionistic direction. Foley, unfortunately, doesn't deliver.

But to give credit where credit is due, *Reckless* isn't all bad, especially when compared with all the cinematic trash that has come down the pike recently. And — surprise! *Reckless* doesn't qualify as a member of the "horny teenager" (a.k.a. *Porky's* genre — and we all know what a truly noble genre that is). The sex in *Reckless*, though unnecessarily frank at times, is treated with uncharacteristic tenderness.

The acting is fairly good also, but even that is marred by the lackluster script. Quinn does an OK job as Johnny, and Hannah, whose previous credits include *Blade Runner*, fares well as Tracey. But, thanks to Columbus, they have to spout such dopey lines as "Yer makin' me crazy!!!" and "Crazy? Crazy? Ya know what's crazy!?! Staying' here's crazy!!!" "Crazy" must be Columbus' favorite word.

Watching *Reckless* is like eating a taco without the filling: there's no meat there, nothing you can really sink your teeth into. And what's left is bland and uninteresting.



Aidan Quinn, as Johnny Rourke, and Daryl Hannah, as Tracey Prescott, play two teen-aged lovers in 'Reckless,' a love story dealing with the conflicts of different backgrounds.



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