Foster returns to screen in ambitious film

A Movie Review by Don Strausburger

In today's world of teen sex films, one seriously wonders if Hollywood can approach the emotional aspects of strange relationships and still attract the average spectator. In the case of **Hotel New Hampshire**, there is still potential.

The film, which is an adaptation of a John Irving novel of the same name, stars Jodie Foster as Frannie, the emotional leader of the family. The film also stars Rob Lowe as her brother, John; Beau Bridges as the eternally optomistic father; and Nastassia Kinski as Susie the Bear.

The highlights of the film show the sexual transition of the growing Frannie from innocence to experience. Throughout this progression she is the victim of a gang rape by her prep school's football team, is involved in a lesbian relationship with a girl in a bear suit, experiences an incestuous evening with her brother, and finally finds happiness with the man of her dreams resulting in a racially mixed marriage.

The family opens the film owning the original Hotel New
Hampshire, but decides to sell on the urging of a friend who has a hotel in Vienna that he would like them to manage. The trip to Vienna proves to be fatal for the unity of the family and begins a strange sequence of events involving political activists.

The family gets away from the activists and decide that it is time to return to the U.S.A. Finally, after many strange events, the family members find their respective forms of happiness.

However, one tends to wonder whether the pain endured is worth the relative simplicity of their happiness.

In looking at the technical aspects of Hotel New Hampshire, there are several notes worth making. First, the screeen adaptation of the book is outstanding. Unlike The World According to Garp, the last John Irving novel adapted for the screen, the film adheres to the book's events nearly to the letter.

The second noteworthy feature of the film is its cinematography. This film constantly features

outstanding scenery in both New England and in Europe. In addition, the techniques used on the indoor shots indicated fabulous perspectives in lighting.

Although there are all these things going well, don't let yourself be fooled into believing that there are no problems.

Among the relative few, the one that is most obvious is the great amount of material crammed into the two hours of the film. There is no chance to sit back and reflect on what has happened without fear of missing the next important event. For some people, though, this could be

beneficial because the viewer has no time to consider his own feelings about the film's bizarre occurrences until the film is over.

Hotel New Hampshireis clearly one of the most ambitious projects which will be seen this spring. It marks the return of Jodie Foster to the silver screen in her first major film since the John Hinkley incident. However, that should not be the only reason to see this film. The characters show exciting development and that there can still be excitement in movies without the incredible special effects of the movies like Star Wars.

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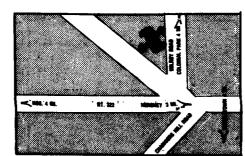
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