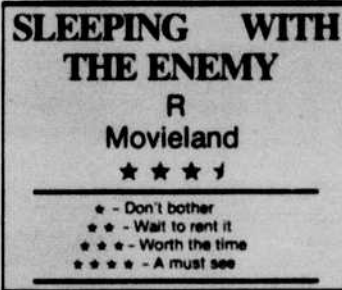


ENTERTAINMENT

Roberts shines in 'Sleeping with the Enemy'

Suspenseful film moves along at exactly the right pace



By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Associate Editor

A husband like Martin Burney (Patrick Bergin) is every woman's nightmare, especially when you're his wife Laura (Julia Roberts) in *Sleeping with the Enemy*.

The movie revolves around a simple plot of Laura planning her escape from Martin and trying to rebuild her own life. It starts with the couple and their beach house on Cape Cod where Martin is a highly successful investment banker and Laura stays home and plays the dutiful wife.

But as the film progresses, we see that life with the Bur-

neys isn't all it should be.

Martin is driven by a crazy paranoia that Laura is out to humiliate him and would do anything to hurt him. Nothing could be further from the truth, but this crazy paranoia turns Martin into an abusive lunatic who would terrify any woman.

Laura realizes that the only way she can save herself is to leave Martin. However, Laura — or director Joseph Ruben — is clever not to reveal any plan of escape, although a night sailing trip is seen as offering Laura the chance she needs.

While Martin and everyone else believes that Laura cannot swim, she secretly takes swimming classes at the local YWCA to prepare for her supposed drowning during a terrible storm on the sailing trip. Instead of drowning, Laura escapes and sets off on a Greyhound bus to find a new life.

Although no body is ever found, Martin assumed Laura drowned. The funeral is held and Martin packs Laura's things in storage. Meanwhile, Laura's bus ride takes her to

Cedar Falls, Iowa, where she sets out to find her new life as Sara Waters.

Everything goes as planned for Laura/Sara as she finds a house for rent in Cedar Falls and Martin goes on with his life. However, a call to Martin from a friend of Laura's casts a bit of suspicion on her death, and Martin frantically searches for any clue that could mean that Laura is still alive. He finds it when he sees Laura's wedding band floating in the toilet.

In Cedar Falls, Sara meets a new man, Ben (Kevin Anderson), who teaches drama at the local college. She also takes a full-time job at the college library where she can enjoy her love of books, something Martin would never let her do because he thought it might interfere with Laura's wifely duties.

Early in the movie Martin tells his wife that "you can't run away from your fears Laura," which is definitely the movie's theme as Martin goes in search of her.

With Academy Award nomi-



Courtesy photo

Patrick Bergin and Julia Roberts star in the suspenseful *Sleeping with the Enemy*, a tale of suspicion, obsession and escape.

nations for *Steel Magnolias* and *Pretty Woman*, Roberts has already established herself as a star, but this might be her best role yet.

Bergin also is terrific. Ruben definitely made the right move in selecting the little-known, Irish-born actor for the demanding role that not everyone could play. With a relative newcomer to Hollywood, Ruben doesn't allow the audience to go into the movie having any


misconceptions on whether Bergin will be able to pull off the role of Martin.

While some people might believe *Sleeping with the Enemy* is nothing more than a remake of *Fatal Attraction*, the movie is much more than that. It is a frightening tale that is much scarier than *Fatal Attraction*, and flows with a continuity and horror that keeps viewers on the edge of their seat throughout.



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