

# The Color of Money has feel, too

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By Kathy Amen

*The Color of Money*. Directed by Martin Scorsese; written by Richard Price; produced by Irving Axelrod and Barbara DeFina for Touchstone. Starring Paul Newman, Tom Cruise and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio. Rated R (language and nudity, but very little of either).

Don't miss this movie and put yourself behind the eight-ball come Oscar time. *The Color of Money* is sure to be nominated in a slew of categories, and deservedly so.

Its story is entertaining, interesting and full of surprises on several levels. At its simplest, it's a kind of a "Karate Kid" of the pool halls. Digging deeper, though, you'll find a morality play about innocence, experience, corruption and redemption. And a case study of the meeting of middle age and careles youth, among other things.

*The Color of Money* finds Fast Eddie of *The Hustler* (Newman, starring again as he did in the 1961 movie) making a good living wholesaling liquor and bankrolling young pool players. He's particularly interested in Vincent (Cruise), whose pool-playing skills are awesome, but whose hustling is second-rate.

Eddie convinces Vincent and his girlfriend Carmen (Mastrantonio) that there's lots more money to be made from pool if you know how to handle the people in the hall. An expert on "human moves," Eddie tries to curb Vincent's innocent

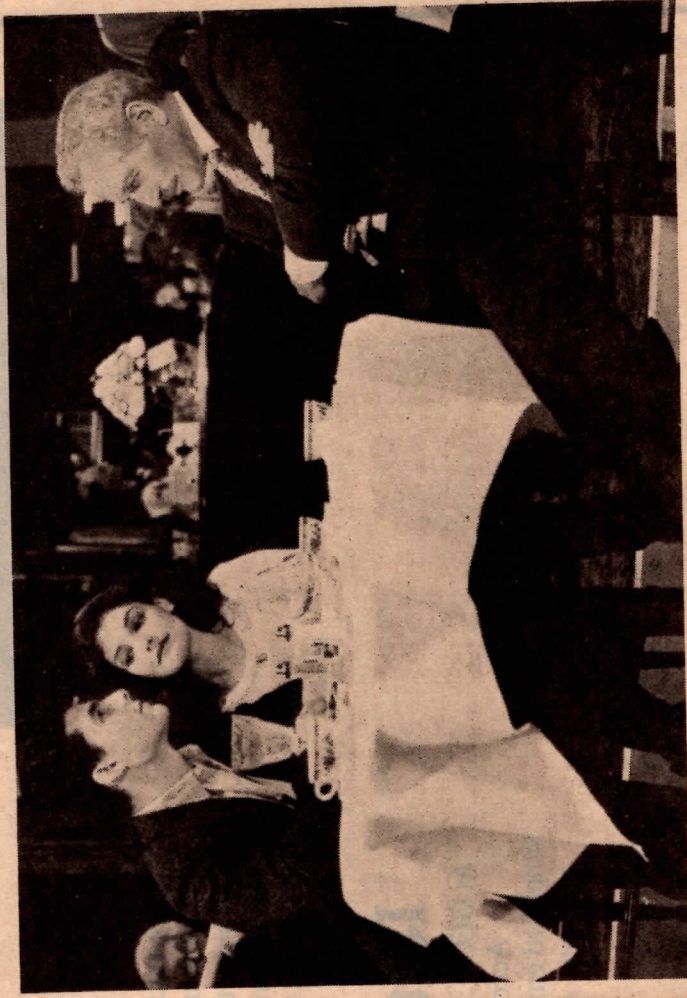
of the class, grasping the essence of hustling long before Vincent does.

Technically, the movie is very stylish -- maybe to a fault. Viewers who get tired of unusual camera angles and dizzying panning shots may lose patience with *The Color of Money*. Most of the razzle-dazzle serves the story's purposes well, but perhaps it should have been toned down somewhat.

Nonetheless, look for *The Color of*

*Money* to win some technical kudos, particularly in production design. All the movie's interiors are perfect, from the red leather upholstery in Eddie's Cadillac, to the seedy pool halls he revisits, to the plush opulence of the Atlantic City casinos. They don't just look right, they feel right.

And so does virtually every frame of *The Color of Money*. It may just cash in at the Oscar derby.



"Fast Eddie" Felson (Paul Newman, right) takes young hot-shot Vincent Lauria (Tom Cruise) under his wing in the Martin Scorsese Picture *The Color of Money*. Above, Lauria listens, along with girlfriend Carmen (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio), to a money-making proposition offered by Felson. (Courtesy photo by Ron Phillips)