

'Farmer' opts for violence, gore

The opening scenes of "The Farmer" (R) suggest a movie of some promise. A World War II hero, winner of the Silver Star, is returning to his farm in the South. There is a racial incident above the homebound train, and he gels tossed off for defending a black soldier's right to be served at the "white" bar He finally arrives home to find his farm rundown and the mortgage debt built up.

For a while, a looks as if the movie will explore some important social issues: The plight of the returning veteran, the problems of the small-acreage farmer, the Ingering racial tensions. But between the initial conception of this movie nd the final production, someone must have lost faith, because "The Farmer" abandons every promising line of development to opt for that box office staple, bloody violence.

The veteran and farmer (Gary Conway), in an effort to raise money to save his farm, gels involved with gansters. For \$50,000 he agrees to be the instrument for revenge planned by a gambler (Michael Dante) binded by the mob.

Midway through his five-person killing spree, when the gambler's griffiered (Angel Tomokias) brings im the payoff noney, the farmer says, "The money's not important." Hard to believe, don't you think?

EVENTUALLY (though not soon enough) he gets the grish'

money, the farmer says. "The money's not important." Hard to believe, don't you think?

EVENTUALLY (though not soon enough) he gets the grisly job done, gets the enoney and gets the girl—the one who had been the gambler's girlfriend. The mode own-ennelly deposed of the gambler.

One threat is felf. The mob's hit man, following orders he received hefore everyone was killed off. is now after the girl. He trains the sight of his high-power rifle on her and the farmer, both he yaser sheme both because of a connectence. At the end, the farmer is back on his land, mortgage presumably paid off and his citified, brassy girlfriend is wearing a nuffled organy apron and gleefully tending the chickens like Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm.

Responsability for this shoddy movie with its confused values and annoving pretensions rests with Gary Conway. He was both producer and star.

The acting requirements were minimal. Conway's role called for physical desterity, not emotional range. Similarly, the others in the cast were stereotypes—slick or sleavy, creaceball or weasel, whatever was needed.

There is a lave seene in "The Farmer" that is beautifully hotographed in a succession of slow disorders and super-creations on the plus side of this movie's ledger. It's somewhat puzzing that the setting for "The Farmer" is post-World War II, not post-Viet Nam. Within the context of its story, the excessive violence and the image of the returning vet as a hardened cynic, disdainful of his own heroics, seem more atturned to the 70s than the 40s. Another puzzle is the title of this movie. The important fact about the leading character is not that he is a farmer, but that he is a failer.

LIMPSES

NEW RELEASES

THE CASSANDRA CROSSING (R). A ridiculous melodrama about a plague-ridden train, a shake bridge and a staunch colonel who has to make "tough decisions." Big names in this big turkey. colonel who has to make "tough decisions." Big names in this big turkey.

FREAKY FRIDAY (G). Disney movie about a mother and

this big turkes. In the rough executions by fainters in this big turkes. The property of the p

ing the Evolt of his three country at day and dentand some heavy ransom.

YOYAGE OF THE DAMNED (PG). Moving story of a histor-ic incident about a ship filled with Jews expelled from Hit-ler's Germany who are denied haven in free countries.

BACK AGAIN
THE BAD NEWS BEARS (PG). Tatum O'Neal and a motley team of exchange four-letter words with snockered base-ball coach Walter Mathau Delivers a karale chop to some cherished myths about children and athletic com

MOVING RATING GUIDE
G General audiences admitted.
PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.
Restricted. Adult must accompany Person under 18.1
X No one under 18 admitted.

Sign points to Old West trail

Montana. Nebraska. North Dakota and South Dakota share a heritage of the buffalo, a once near-extinct animal that freely roamed militons of acres in this area. Today a buffalohead sign points the way for travelers seeking adventure in these states, known collectively as the Old West Trail.

known collectively as the Old West Trail. The Old West Trail. organized in 1956 to promote tourism in these begin-ning-of-the-West states, is actually an automotive tour along interstate high-ways and major state roads in this re-

on. The buffall head symbol was chosen to mark the Old West Trail because the buffall was longer to the buffall bas outlived its adversaries, and again roams these four states—on private ranches, in national and state parks and on bison ranges and game refuges.

The buffalo head signs lead trav-elers to approved attractions, mark City and Area Circle Tours and keep the visitor headed toward prime vacation fun wherever he roams on the trail. The symbol is a dependable guide to quality attractions and facilities throughout the four-state area.

THE OLD WEST Trail is a trail for THE OLD WEST Trail is a trail for modern travelers, although it porallels the pioneer trails of yesteday: The Oregon Trail. Bozeman, Overland, and Lewis and Clark Trails. Today's travelers drive and ride in automobiles or recreation vehicles, while the people who trekked these routes in the 18th and 19th centuries walked or rode in covered wagons. Pathfinders Lewis and Clark were among the first to traverse these states on the Old West Trail. Following them were mountain men, prospec-

states on the Old West Trail. Follow-ing them were mountain men. prospec-tors. cattlemen. sodbusters. track-layers and city builders. Today the

pioneering traveler will find himself following in the path of Lewis and Clark, as well as traveling segments of these other famous trails. In the traveler's search for vacations and adventure on the Old West Trail, the buffalo head symbol leads him to his toric sites, museums, cemeteries and saloons. State and national parks, monuments, national memorials and natural attractions are marked, too.

A Clty Creft Dour in North Platte.

Neb., for example, will take the visitor to Fort Cody Trading Post, fluffering the Visitor through the Visitor to Fort Cody Trading Post, fluffering the Visitor to Fort Cody Trading Post, fluffering the Visitor to Fort Cody Trading Post, fluffering the Visitor through the Visito

Special shows on cruises

This spring Holland America Cruises will feature a wide variety of entertainers who will perform on five 7-day "Special Entertain-ment" cruises on board the s.s. Rot-terdam departing from New York for Nassau and Bernuda. There is no increase in rates which range from \$400 to \$810. The "entertainment themes" and rucest artists are:

The "entertainment themes and guest artists are:

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- DANCE TO NOSTALGIA (May 7-14) . . . with the sophisticated sounds of the Peter Duchin Orchestra, Cab Calloway and Cecelia, the Incomparable Hidegarde, the song stylings of Teddi King, and three professional dance teams. Ray and Dick Beatherton are Masters of Ceremony. Ray and Dick Heatherton are Mas-ters of Ceremony.

• A SALUTE TO MUSIC (May 14-21... with the Ray Bloch Or-

chestra, Edie Adams and Pete Candoli, Enzo Stuarti, song stylists June Olivor and The Carlyles, and the International championship barbershop quartet The Four

barbershop quartet The Four Statesmen.

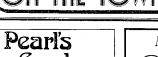
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