You'll have to suspend disbelief to get through 'The Net'

How do you know a movie is in trouble? When it opens with a puffy Ken Howard talking into a cillular phone, muttering, "So this is really reality?" and the mommitting suicide because he's been diagnosed with AIDS.
That's how Irwin Winkler's
"The Net" starts out. We later learn that Howard, a congressman, didn't really have AIDS. His records were changed by the forces behind a nefarious scheme to control all government, private forces pening a molarious scheme to control all government, private

But what should be a caution-ary thriller about the threat to privacy is merely a silly little ex-eries. "The Net" (the shortened lingo among computer users for the laternt) almost makes it, but lacks edge and grit.

Even the movie's excursions in cyber-dynamics are fairly pedestrian. Far better computer suspense has been played out in "Sneakers" and "War Gamea."

Angela Bennett (Sandra Bul-

REVIEW

lock) is a slave to computers, an individual who can't seem to function in life without logging on. She never leaves her California bungalow, and even uses ber computer to order takeout food.

Finally, though, Angela, a high-ly regarded freelance systems an-alyst, decides to take a much-needed vacation—lugging her laptop along, of course.

Shortly before she leaves, a friend asks her to look at a weird prototype of a new intermet program, one that allows users access to super secret government files. But he's killed in a fresk plane crash before be can reach her, and from that moment on, Angela's life becomes a nightmare.

A lover she meets in Mexico tries to kill her, and when she returns to her hotel room, she mysteriously has checked out and all traces of her identity have been erased in the vast computer network that validates our lives. A new identity gives her a criminal past.

As it turns out, the Internet program Angela has on diskette is part of the operation to control

You will have to suspens much diabelled to get through "The Net." To begin with, would governments, businesses, banks, etc., so willingly turn over their sensitive data operations to a private and unknown outlit to protect?

And then there's Bullock, It's bard to envision her as a little homebody who would lock herself up with other computer gecks and not have a life.

As Angels, she makes some smart moves, but then counters them with complete dumbness.

Would someone trying to es-cape a killer really run out in the street in full view while he chases her in a car? The filmmakers

should have given Bullock a per-sonal trainer to teach her how to sprint. She looks the classic ster-ectype of a fragile woman trying to run without messing up her makeup.

Bullock has a winning persons ality — she's nice, she's sweet, she's bright and she's pretty — but she doesn't cut it as an action hero.

She's backed up by Jeremy Northam, a British stage actor, and the comic Dennis Miller, who seems totally miscast.

The Columbia Pictures reles Michael Perris and produced by Winkler and Rob Cowan. It has a running time of 1 hour 59 min-utes.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

OPENING FRIDAY, AUG. 4

"YSRTUOSITY"
A fruntsic thrifer set in Los Angoles about an ex-cop with a tortured past who hunts a murderous computer-gon existed personsity who has brought humself to the . Stars Dentel Washington, Kely Lynch, Russell Crowe, Stephen Spineta, Rated R.

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dren's book, "Babe, the Gatant Pig" blends state-of-the-art special effect with performances by animal actors. Stars Magdia Stubenski, James Cromwes, Jack Thompson, Sandy Gore, Rated G.

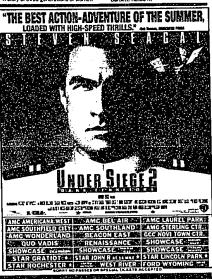
"RELEASWHACKED"

When a group of Qub Souts on their first camping figs installed an innocent escaped correct for an experienced guide, they help each other savine—and come to terms with their individual problems. Stars Daniel Stem. Rated PG-13.

in a Southern horse-raising family, and their relationships with the men in their lives. Stars Luka Roberts, Dennis Quald. Robert Duvat, Kyra Sedgwick and Gena Rowlands. Rated R.

OPENING FRIDAY AUG. 11

"DANGEROUS BRINDS"
A drama based on the real-life experiences of ex-Marine Louknine Johnson who left behind 10 years in the sondoe to become an inner city high school teacher. Stars Michelle Pletffer, George Dunde, Courling B. Vance and Robin Bartiett. Rated R.





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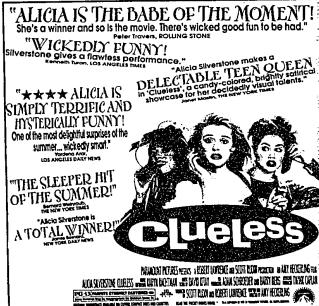
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