

# Movie Review

**"The Color of Money"**  
 Directed by  
**Martin Scorsese**  
 Starring **Paul Newman**  
 and **Tom Cruise**  
 ★★½

Fast Eddie Felson was one of the hottest pool hustlers in the country.

But that was 25 years ago. According to Felson, it was over before it really began.

Now Eddie has met a kid, Vincent Lauria, who is a wiz on the pool table.

Eddie thinks that he can use Vince to hustle lots of money at the game, but the kid doesn't really care about money, he just wants to play the best game he can.

"The Color of Money," a new film from director Martin Scorsese, is the story of Eddie and Vince.

Scorsese has the uncanny ability to capture common characters and their lives on the streets on film. "Taxi Driver" was a gripping portrait of a Vietnam veteran who gets involved with a prostitution ring in an attempt to rescue a 16-year-old hooker. "Raging Bull" was a intense biographical look at a boxer and his fights in and out of the ring. "The King of Comedy" was a bizarre story of a comedian who gets his big break by kidnapping the host of a popular show and demanding a guest shot on the show. Last year's "After Hours" was a wonderfully dark comedy which was too confusing to try to explain here.

"The Color of Money" picks up the story of Fast Eddie, the subject of Robert Rossen's 1961 film, "The Hustler," which was based on a novel by Walter Tevis.

In "The Color of Mon-

ey," Paul Newman re-creates his role as Fast Eddie from "The Hustler," only now Eddie's older and has a comfortable job as a liquor salesman. He still hangs around the pool halls but he never picks up a pool cue.

Tom Cruise, star of "Taps," "Risky Business" and the extremely popular "Top Gun," portrays Vince.

Vince has a nice job at a toy store and enjoys playing pool and video games.

He is somewhat of a flake — he twirls his pool cue like he's performing kendo.

His girlfriend, Carmen (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio), is somewhat of a user. She uses Vince to get a better life for herself.

Fast Eddie sees what type of person Carmen is and uses her to convince Vince to go on the road to make money hustling pool.

Eddie, Vince and Carmen go to the pool halls of Chicago. Vince is good player but doesn't like to lose, one of the tricks a good hustler has to know.

Eddie is trying to groom Vince for a pool tournament in Atlantic City. Eddie knows that if Vince wins too many games before the tournament, the word will get out and Eddie won't be able to find many people willing to bet against his protege.

After a while, Eddie begins to question his own pool playing ability.

He wants to get back into the game himself but, once he suffers a humiliating defeat at the hands of another hustler, he realizes he has lost some of his fire.

Eddie sends Vince and Carmen out on their own

and starts working to improve his game. He wants to win the tournament himself but realizes he will have to play Vince. Eddie doesn't really care if he wins or loses. He just wants the chance to play up a pool cue.

"The Color of Money" is a great film with superb acting. Newman has distinguished himself for years in such great films as "The Sting," "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," "The Verdict," "Harry and Son" and the classic "Cool Hand Luke." He's one of the last of the great leading men and is able to bring great sophistication to any role he tackles.

Cruise is probably one of the best actors to come out of the '80s. He was wonderful as the over-anxious cadet in "Taps." In "Risky Business" he played a straight-laced kid who was able to successfully deal with everything when his life went crazy. He was the only thing worth watching in "All the Right Moves," "Losin' It" and "Legend." "Top Gun" pushed Cruise up to idol status as a cocky, arrogant navy pilot.

It took a lot of guts for Cruise take on the role of Vince, a good-looking, airheaded kid in "The Color of Money." If anyone had any doubts before, this film shows that he can act.

"The Color of Money" is like a slice of life that most people would not be able to experience if it weren't for actors like Cruise and Newman and directors like Scorsese. Some viewers may feel the ending of the film is a bit ambiguous, but life is often that way.

—Review by Karl  
 Pallmeyer



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