

FILM REVIEWS

George Bloomfield's Nothing Personal

p.c. Purple Heart Production Film Corp. (1979) exec.p. Jay Bernstein, Norman Hirschfeld p. David M. Perlmutter co.p. David Main, Alan Hamel or.screenplay Robert Kaufman d. George Bloomfield d.o.p. Laszlo George, Arthur Ibbetson art.d. Mary Kerr ed. George Appleby p.man. Joyce Kozy King loc.man. John Bell a.d. R. Martin Walters prop.design Joyce Liggett set dec. Mark Freeborn, Anthony Greco fashion co-ord. (Ms. Somers) China Machado cost.design Lynda Kemp sd.mix Chris Large mus. Peter Mann gaf. David Usher key grip Michael Kohne make-up (Mr. Sutherland) Walter Schneiderman, (Ms. Somers) Eric Allwright make-up artist Carol Davidson hair Leila Seppanen stills Shin Sugino l.p. Donald Sutherland, Suzanne Somers, Lawrence Dane, Roscoe Lee Brown, Dabney Coleman, Catherine O'Hara, Maury Chakin, Hugh Webster, Sean McCann, Gary Reineke, Chief Dan George, Jane Mallet, John Dehner, David Steinberg, Craig Russell, Sean Sullivan, Michael Wincott, Charles Irvine, Heath Lamberts, Joe Flaherty, Sandy Webster, Leslie Carlson, Derek McGrath, Larry Reynolds, Ben Gordon, Eugene Levy, Gabe Cohen, Bonnie Brooks, Robert Benson, Ken Lemaire, Sam Moses, Pat Collins, Tony Rasato, Robert Christie pub. Stephenson, Ramsay, O'Donnell Ltd. col. 35mm running time 97 min. dist. Ambassador

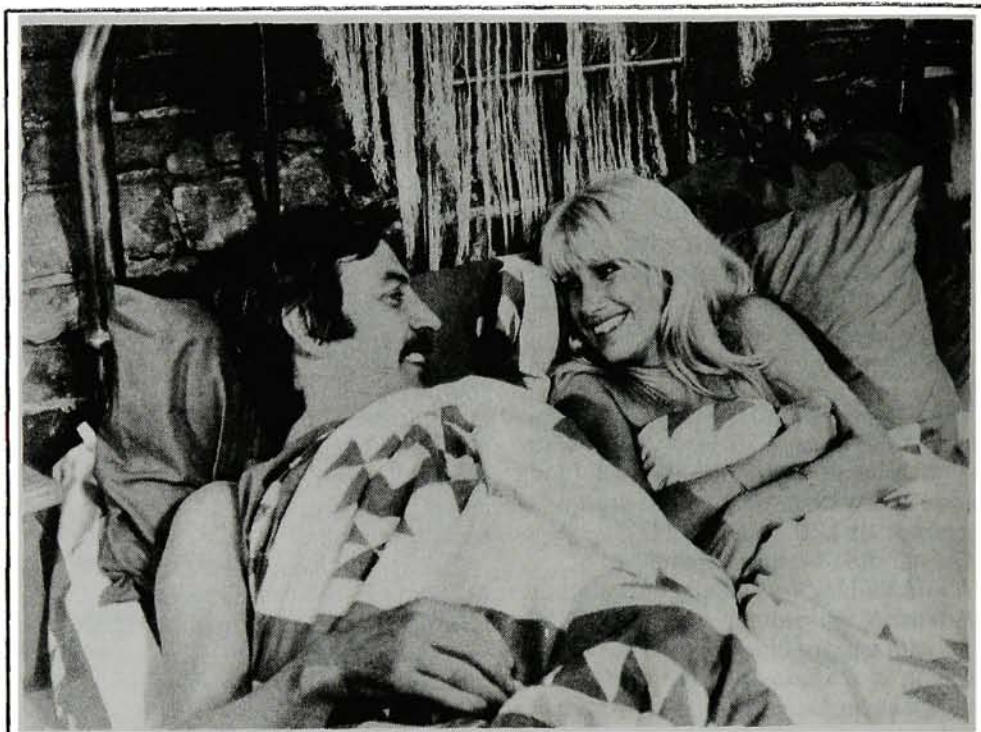


photo: Shin Sugino

Donald Sutherland and Suzanne Somers may be sacked up together, but it's really *Nothing Personal!*

and slaughterers of baby seals as foils and targets of humour is terribly simple. It also constitutes shameless pandering to audience prejudices.

The film is riddled with implausible scenes: there is a twice-repeated gag about an overflowing bathtub: it makes sense only if you don't know how a plug works. Sutherland (a law professor remember) uses an airport-porter-cum-law-student and the yellow pages as sources in his search for a lawyer. Naturally, the first one in the book, A. Adams, turns out to be Somers.

The romance that blossoms between the two leading players is virtually instantaneous. Their relationship, far from being the classic Tracy-Hepburn mould, is characterized by coarse, obvious humour, and conversations in which the two talk at the same time and about different subjects.

No time is given for anything to develop: the first fifteen minutes or so are barely understandable. Two car chases, one of which leads up to the film's 'climax,' are unfunny and unexciting. *Nothing Personal* is constructed like a TV sitcom; its principal concern is speed, not coherence.

Donald Sutherland, one of the most charmingly intelligent screen actors around, comes off looking dumb, and was put to far better use in the recent *A Man, A Woman, and A Bank* — a similar but superior picture. Somers is adequate in a role that is clearly designed to counteract the 'dumb blonde' image she has acquired from television.

The film's most interesting aspects relate to its Canadian-ness. Much of *Nothing Personal* was shot in Toronto, but it is set in the U.S. An entertaining time can be had trying to pick out the Toronto locations to see how they match up with the American ones.

There are a great number of Canadian actors, but they appear almost subliminally. Such *Second City* stalwarts as Catherine O'Hara, Ben Gordon, Joe Flaherty, and Eugene Levy, who could easily carry such a picture on their own, are on screen for less time than the credits.

'Nothing personal' is a phrase that usually precedes an insult, as in 'Nothing personal, but I think you're an idiot.' It's an appropriate title for this movie.

Gerry Flahive