

Document Citation

Title	To die for
Author(s)	Jonathan Rosenbaum
Source	<i>Reader (Chicago, Ill.)</i>
Date	
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	To die for, Van Sant, Gus, 1995

To Die For
Capsule by Jonathan Rosenbaum
From the Chicago Reader

If, like me, you find things to admire in all of Gus Van Sant's films, you may be especially gratified by what he's done with a satirical anti-TV script by Buck Henry—suggested by a real-life crime and adapted from a Joyce Maynard novel—and a spot-on performance by Nicole Kidman that may be the best of its kind since Tuesday Weld's wicked sexual turn in *Lord Love a Duck*. Charting the ruthlessness of an ambitious bimbo telecaster in Little Hope, New Hampshire, this staccato black comedy sustains its brilliant exposition and narration until the plot turns to premeditated murder, complete with hapless and semicoherent teenage accomplices. The movie loses much of its pitch and many of its laughs at this juncture, and there's an uncomfortable tendency to equate the falsity and venality of TV too exclusively with Kidman's character, thereby bypassing golden opportunities offered by Wayne Knight (as a station boss) and an uncredited George Segal to make the target less gender specific. But most of this is good nasty fun, with a fine secondary cast that includes Matt Dillon, Joaquin Phoenix, Alison Folland, Casey Affleck, Ileana Douglas, and Dan Hedaya; also look for striking cameos by David Cronenberg and screenwriter Henry.