

Hollywood's Hunk Makes a Stop At Nottingham

(INCOMPLETE)

MAUREEN DOWD

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about it by asking about it?"

There is also bound to be much comment about the awkward addition to the Robin Hood myth of Morgan Freeman, an Oscar nominee for

**Kevin Costner is
proud of the fact
that his Robin
Hood is grittier
than Errol
Flynn's.**

best actor for "Driving Miss Daisy" in 1989. Mr. Freeman plays Azeem, a Moor rescued by Robin Hood during the Crusades in Jerusalem. Mr. Freeman's character follows Robin to Sherwood Forest, where he uses the skills of a higher civilization to teach the racist Merry Men some lessons in loyalty, gunpowder and delivering a breech baby.

Critics will no doubt draw parallels to Mr. Costner's treatment of the Sioux in "Dances With Wolves," a movie that glorified the Indians while presenting the white soldiers as cruel louts.

"I didn't write the piece," Mr. Costner says of the new movie. "But I wouldn't have done 'Robin Hood' unless it leaped forward in terms of genre. I saw the humor in it. And it seemed exotic that Robin Hood start in Jerusalem and how he behaved not as a boy but as a man, not as a rascal but as a person who's been through

spin you out of the movie." On the other hand, he notes, it is a fairy tale, asked if he wished he had chosen another word besides "neat."

The Warner Brothers press agents, realizing what a touchy subject the new "JFK" movie is, have warned against asking Mr. Costner too many questions about the Oliver Stone film. But the actor seems quite ready to rebut suggestions that he may be putting his prestige on the line with this saga. Mr. Garrison's theory holds that Lee Harvard Oswald was merely a C.L.A. fall guy for a plot to assassinate President Kennedy that involved the highest levels of the United States Government.

Mr. Costner says "incredibly honorable men" lent their credibility to the Warren Commission Report, which concludes that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone, a finding Mr. Costner regards as "unbelievable, like one bullet causing seven different wounds, like one man doing all that himself." "It's easy to poke fun at Garrison because he can be made to appear a Southern caricature, but he was asking some very, very important questions."

He says he admires Oliver Stone for being "bold" enough to make the movie. "You know, movies have to take leaps of faith. Just like Robin Hood can't beat up 50 guys, but he does. And just like in this movie, it shouldn't be thought of as a factual kind of thing. But it should be pretty thought provoking and fall into the guise of entertaining and some real things. For those who would paint Garrison as a complete kook, they're missing the point. There is within all of us an ambiguity that exists within all people. But that's not what we're discussing. We're discussing complete blockages of justice."

