

Pointless Point of No Return

American remake of La Femme Nikita fails to top the original

by Eric Kesselring
Collegian Staff

The new film, *Point of No Return*, is your basic action, hired killer, twisted plot, romance-thriller. You say you don't understand?

Bridget Fonda plays Maggie, a violent anti-social city type. After her gang of friends loses a firefight with the police, Maggie, in a drug withdrawn stupor, takes off her headphones and kills a cop. She is sentenced to death.

Maggie awakes after her execution to find that she has received a second chance of sorts. Either she can either become a government assassin or she can be killed for real. The smart girl that she is, Maggie chooses 'C'.

She tries to escape by holding her case worker at gunpoint. Her ingenuity earns her a bullet in the leg and a newfound respect for the government. Once Maggie sets her mind to it, she turns from psychotic rat to a well mannered lady/hitman. Her last test is to murder a VIP and escape out a bathroom



Bridget Fonda stars as Maggie, a convicted killer offered a chance to live if she joins a covert agency specializing in high-level assassinations in this remake of *La Femme Nikita*

window. Fate, of course, dictates that the window is bricked over. The resulting explosive gunfight leaves a really bad taste in Maggie's mouth when it comes to killing.

Her reentry into the world spills into California where she falls deeply in love with a rather dim starving artist. However, romance cannot delay the inevitable. It's fine to dislike killing, but when your job is as an assassin, something has got to give.

The main thing that gives is the quality of the movie. *Point Of No Return* is a remake of a French film, *La Femme Nikita*. I should have expected problems. *Point Of No Return* is a sorry remake because it lacks the character that literally bleeds from the original.

La Femme Nikita possesses a charm that eludes *Point Of No Return*. I admit, *Nikita* was by no means perfect. For one, a certain humor is added when the English is dubbed into a French film. In addition, the original film was jerky in places and lacked a conclusive ending.

The attempts to clean up the movie remove *Nikita's* gritty charm. Fonda's character is silly when compared to the primal charisma that Anne Parillaud brought to the role. Of course, *Point Of No Return* is a far slicker movie. The action and plot are much tighter.

The difference between the film is highlighted in a martial arts training scene. The instructor asks each girl to try to hit him. Maggie makes karate sounds until the guy turns away in disdain. Then she decks him. In the original, the moment the instructor says "hit me" he is slapped in the face. The remake is dramatic, but not as classy.

It's like drawing Mickey Mouse with five fingers: More accurate, but absurdly wrong. *Point Of No Return* sacrifices dialogue and character development to provide consistency. The simple problem is that actual events are unimportant compared to how they are executed. *La Femme Nikita* has an attitude problem, *Point Of No Return* simply has no attitude.

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Fire in the Sky

New alien flick fails to 'spark' much interest

by Jennifer Toubakaris
Collegian Staff

Did you ever notice that all books that come out with a movie based on their story are never quite as exciting or interesting? *Silence of the Lambs* was an excellent movie but the book was far better.

The same applies with the true story of the disappearance of Travis Walton, who claims he was captured by aliens. The book was intriguing and made the flying saucer bit almost believable, but *Fire In the Sky* totally shot all of the story's credibility.

Five men in the deep forests of Silgrass National Park are returning from a hard day's work of clearing trees when they spy a brilliant red light coming from a hill in the distance. Fright and curiosity overwhelm the five men. They can either continue on the road leading straight for the light or spend the night in the forest. Guess what, they decide to forge on and when they reach the sight, fear stops them in their tracks.

Travis Walton, played by D.B. Sweeny, *The Cutting Edge*, gets out of the truck and approaches the light. In a trance-like state he stares above at the huge spaceship bottom looks like a swirl of molten lava. Suddenly the red light turns to blue and Walton is pounded by this invisible force. His body is lifted and then disposed of, falling back to the ground.

His four friends, believing he is dead, take off and leave Walton's body there. Walton's best friend, Mike Rogers, played by Robert Patrick (*Terminator II*), feels guilty and returns for his buddy, only to find he has disappeared.

Hmm. . . what happens next? The four men are then accused of murdering Walton, yet the town has no evidence against them. Rogers tells the story about Walton being abducted by aliens (like anybody's going to believe him - and they don't). But on the fifth day after Walton's disappearance he returns, buck naked and starving.

It's too bad that the movie swung from one mediocre scene to the next. The acting

wasn't that bad; Sweeny was convincing as the confused and sweet boy who asked Rogers, "You came back? You left me there."

Patrick also played his part well as the tough, rugged mountain man who stands up for himself after being accused of his best friend's murder.

But to pull a movie off about aliens abducting a human and resist making the headlines of *The National Enquirer*, this movie needed more.

The special effects redeemed the movie a little. The inside of the spaceship resembled a bee hive with instead of honey, mushy beds for the human prey. The aliens look like miniature ET's, minus the tender expressive faces. But even so, all this could have been better.

An attempt was made and failed at this movie. Instead of making the audience believe that there may be other forms of life out there, *Fire In the Sky* gives us one more reason to laugh off these tales as being insane and give the *Enquirer* and *Star* magazines yet another ludicrous headline to publish.

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