

## Two Reviewers Agree: "The Astronaut's Wife" Is Really Awful

By Nicole Burkholder  
Capital Times Staff Writer

An astronaut gets lost in space, becomes an alien, and tries to take over the world by impregnating his wife with little alien twins.

Okay, so I probably should have avoided this movie by plot alone. The fact that critics were not given a special screening prior to the premier should have been warning number two.

On the contrary, I persisted that this should be the movie of choice for Dan and me. Okay, so I had a weak moment.

It was disastrous! I must say though, that I was strangely entertained. In fact, I walked out of the theater as if I had just seen the best movie ever made. Unfortunately, I was entertained for all the wrong reasons.

*The Astronaut's Wife* directed by Rand Ravich was intended as a sort of sci-fi thriller that would maybe make you look at your own husband or significant other and wonder if maybe they were aliens too.

The case was not so for me. In fact, I think the movie would have worked much better if it had been a comedy.

For instance, when Spencer Armacost, the alien/astronaut played by Johnny Depp, sneaks up on his prey, he essentially just pops

up out of nowhere. It has that sort of Michael Myers "boo!" effect to it that made me break into hysterics rather than leap into Dan's arms.

This was not Depp's only faux pas. I was more amused by his incredible Elvis impersonation as the Florida based Armacost.

Some actors would maybe interview real astronauts to play such a role. Depp must have curled up on his couch the night before the shoot with a big bowl of popcorn and settled in for a marathon of *Girls, Girls, Girls* and *Jailhouse Rock*. Come on Johnny, you had better episodes of *21 Jump Street* than this!

As I giggled and chuckled throughout the movie, I must say that I was most annoyed with the pathetic, unoriginal plot.

The basic gist of the movie almost exactly replicates *The Devil's Advocate* right down to the maiden in distress, Charlize Theron, who I must add is lacking seriously in the convincing performance department.

Just replace Satan with aliens, mix with water and voila! You have just written and directed *The Astronaut's Wife*.

The innocent couple originates in Florida and relocates to New York City so the husband can acquire a high paying job. The wife just can't

adjust to wretched city life, catches on to suspicions about her husband and then basically flips out.

Yes, there are some differences in the two movies, but most of them are not worth mentioning.

Overall, I have to say that I recommend the movie with a smirk. It isn't quite worthy of B-movie status, only because it is very apparent that the makers of this movie were very serious about their message, whatever that may be.

It made me feel good considering that my Nature of Media video looks Oscar-worthy compared to *The Astronaut's Wife*. Don't go looking for a good scare or to be intellectually stimulated, you won't find it. Do go if you want a good laugh.

### MOVIE REVIEW

*The Astronaut's Wife*  
Starring Johnny Depp and  
Charlize Theron

Nicole's Grade: D+  
Dan's Grade: D

By Daniel McClure  
Capital Times Staff Writer

During the viewing of a bad movie I usually have to make a decision. Do I sit back and look for

good points (set design, cinematography) that are redeemable, or do I become a comedian and ridicule it *Mystery Science Theater* style?

The problem with ridiculing the movie is that it signifies you have given up any sort of hope on finding anything redeemable about the motion picture. I think I was about fifteen minutes into *The Astronaut's Wife* when I lost that hope.

Nicole thinks the movie is somewhat entertaining in that aspect. The only reason I heckled it was so I wouldn't fall asleep or become ill. I don't know if I can forgive her for talking me into seeing this one.

The acting was horrible. Johnny Depp looked like he took a class in the Andrew McCarthy (*Less Than Zero*, *Pretty in Pink*) school of acting where all you need to do is stare into the distance to convey deep emotional feeling.

Unfortunately, this is what I expect out of Andrew McCarthy, not post-Donnie Brasco Johnny Depp.

Charlize Theron, well, lets just say she was chosen for her looks in this one. After the first hour I began to feel sorry for the other actors and actresses because they had the look that said, "Please help me! Get me out of this movie!"

The plot was where the movie truly fails. If this is all we have to fear from outer space, I don't think

we have much to lose sleep over.

The alien(s) want to come to earth to do something, I guess take it over somehow, we are never told. It seemed all the aliens really wanted to do is torment astronauts and go around having sex with their wives.

Somewhere in the movie we are told that these aliens are going to build this fighter plane and then do Lord knows what. Of course we'll never know because the budget could not afford this.

The budget couldn't even show the inside of a space shuttle or the alien race that is doing this. So in the end we are given a "surprise" ending that failed to surprise my jaded mind.

Walking out of the theatre I gave it one last chance. I thought really hard in my mind to maybe find a metaphor for the isolation one feels in New York City or the for the isolation a wife could feel from her husband during her pregnancy.

Unfortunately all I found was a boring hack job ripping off not only the *Devil's Advocate* and *Rosemary's Baby*, but also *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*.

I drove extremely careful that night. If I died in an accident that would have meant one thing: *The Astronaut's Wife* would have been the last movie I saw in my life and I would have felt very, very cheated.

## 1980's New Wave Music with a 90's Punk Twist

By Brad Moist  
Capital Times Staff Writer

Few compilations can offer what *Before You Were Punk 2: Another Punk Rock Tribute to 80's New Wave* can. Not only does it let you relive the wonderful new wave sounds of the 1980s, but it allows you listen to today's great independent punk acts.

The first *Before You Were Punk* has sold over 50,000 copies, and with the recent release of this new installment, sales can only go higher for both compilations.

Vagrant Records brings together bands such as NOFX, MxPx, The Hippos, Bouncing Souls and Lagwagon to deliver a punching 12 tracks that cover a wide range of 80s new wave.

Perhaps the most frightening, but incredible, track is the Bouncing Souls cover of "Don't You Forget About Me" by Simple Minds. This new version sounds so similar it will bring back memories of The Breakfast Club. Unlike some cover songs, this one stays true to the new wave roots.



But don't worry. If you're looking for punk rock, you can find it on All's version of "Rebel Yell," originally done by Billy Idol.

Other standouts include the Suicide Machines doing "What I Like

About You," though this version is defiantly better than the Romantics as it kicks through you speakers as the first track. Delivering the whole feel for what this album is all about.

The album also gives you the Gotohells covering "Just What I Needed" by the Cars. This track echoes the original but moves at a quicker pace for those that need some skate music.

If you're looking for an album to play at a party, but that won't embarrass you as a true 80s fanatic, then this is your album. It allows you to relive your 60-ounce hairspray can days but let your friends know that you are into today's pop punk.

If you are a true punk fan, and can appreciate bands covering the songs they grew up listening to, along

with us, then this is your album. Besides, you need to play something over in Meade Heights that can give a party some "umph" besides Korn and Orgy. Relive the 80s. They weren't that bad musically; it was just the hair.

### MUSIC REVIEW

*Before You Were Punk 2:  
Another Punk Rock Tribute  
to 80's New Wave*

Various Artists

## ATTENTION!

Have you recently gotten engaged, married, promoted or published? The Capital Times will be featuring a new column of society news for the 1999-2000 school year.

Please e-mail Kristy Pipher at kap202@psu.edu with any news of engagements, weddings, promotions, announcements, published works, special birthdays, anniversaries, etc. You can also drop any society news in the Capital Times mailbox outside the Student Activities Office.