



## A few Vantage Points too many

Pete Travis' many-eyed approach to his film is promising but poorly executed

### filmreview

#### Vantage Point

Now Playing

Directed by Pete Travis

Starring Dennis Quaid, Matthew Fox, Forrest Whitaker, William Hurt, and Sigourney Weaver

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Arts & Entertainment Writer

In Pete Travis' directorial debut, the US president gets shot at a fictional terrorist summit in Spain. Following the two bullets to his chest is a series of explosions, leaving the arena looking like a war torn country and opening what should be a blood-pumping political romp with a bang.

Travis adopts a "stop-rewind-replay" approach to the film: we're shown the assassination sequence from different people's perspectives, which lets us examine that same scene five times from the viewpoints of the people whose lives have become entwined as a result of the assassination attempt. The film adopts the *Rashomon*-style of believing that the truth will be revealed through the conflicting reports of others.

It sounds like a promising

premise, and once you add in the obligatory car chase—which seems spliced in from the *Bourne* series—you have all the makings of an intense political thriller.

**By the third "rewind," the audience I was in collectively groaned, as what could have been a fresh perspective was instead more redundancy.**

The problem is that when you're designing a film that chooses style over substance, it ought to be visually dazzling, provocative, and original; *Vantage Point* is rather shallow and mundane. By the third "rewind," the audience I was in collectively groaned, as what could have been a fresh perspective was instead more redundancy.

Sigourney Weaver was initially a big draw as the controlled, calculating television producer covering the summit. Her vantage point is a layered and dynamic perspective, but the intrigue is gone with the introduction of Dennis

Quaid as a tired and unsympathetic Secret Service agent.

He's on his first day back after taking a bullet for the president in a prior assassination attempt, and while that irony's rather amusing, it's not the laugh-out-loud spectacle that double-agent Kent Taylor (Matthew Fox)'s eastern European accent is.

Even the naïve sincerity of tourist Forrest Whitaker seems misplaced in this attempted blockbuster. The gems of this film's acting lie with the Spanish-speaking actors, particularly Eduardo Noriega, who offers a glimpse of sincerity and earnestness otherwise missing from the film. But although their emotion is palpable, we never know why any of them are motivated to kill the president.

Given the lack of international approval for George W Bush, perhaps writer Barry Levy felt the desire to assassinate the president is ubiquitous. But creating a back story for the terrorist would have provided a necessary complexity. The film rather acts as a placebo for the present-day regime by providing us with a president that is reasoned, noble, controlled, and a cogent communicator.

Oh, how the world may have been different if William Hurt was president.

Spend any amount of time on the Internet, and you're sure to come across any one of the stereotypical subcultures that propagate within the web's forums. Chances are, you might even be a part of one of these groups.

But if you've got no idea how the Internet works and have always wanted to try your hand at a flame war through the safety of simulation, ForumWarz is for you.

ForumWarz is a browser-based Role Playing Game that lets you play as one of three colourful character classes. As a Cam Whore, you can utilize your sex appeal and some creative camera angles to get your way online. As an Emo Kid, you can band together with fellow Simple Plan

fans and pollute the Web with your awful poetry and attention-seeking suicide threats. Or you can take the path of the Troll and fill the Internet with as much douchebaggery and inane bullshit as the game's fictional bulletin boards can hold until they crack under the stress of your mighty "pwnage."

With an in-game instant messaging system that mimics traditional adventure games' click-through conversations and an assortment of community-created forums that paint a hilarious parody of the Internet's real subcultures, ForumWarz is a complex, vulgar, and certainly not-safe-for-work sendup of the Web's gritty underbelly.

### siteunseen



www.forumwarz.com

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## UNDER(DOG) CONSTRUCTION

yeah, yeah,  
we're working on it