

## Film Review: Gunplay & Violence Fuel Heroics in ‘American Assassin’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 15, 2017 - 6:24pm

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CHICAGO – There was another mass shooting (eight dead) in Texas this week, but it was underreported because it didn't involve “undesirables” and just seemed like another week in America. This blithe attitude towards guns, gunplay and violence continues in the movies, this week with the overindulgent release “American Assassin.”



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

Based on the popular best seller by Vince Flynn, “American Assassin” is a boilerplate America-Saves-the-World story, made more palatable as a pretty decent action film and the presence of Michael Keaton (as the tough-but-benign special ops trainer). It was directed by Michael Cuesta, a veteran of TV’s “Homeland,” but adapted by four writers, a sign of story killing. It is naive in its geopolitics, preferring to filter it through a bent-on-revenge ex-CIA American than to make a statement about enemies. But there is still enough “undesirables” to fill the coffins. As the body count increases, it’s a bad year to be a government or oligarch henchman.

Mitch Rapp (Dylan O’Brien) has a bone to pick, as his girlfriend is murdered by terrorists just as they were to be engaged. Highly skilled and trained in weaponry and hand-to-hand combat, he seeks revenge by going into a hot zone as a civilian. He is rescued by the CIA, and noticed by Deputy Director Kennedy (Sanaa Lathan).

She is head of a Special Operations force called Orion, a covert assassination team headed by Stan Hurley (Michael Keaton). She brings in the raw material of Mitch Rapp, and Hurley formulates him to a fine honed assassin. Their first assignment involves a series of random targets, which leads to a joint mission with Turkish agent Annika (Shiva Negar) and a confrontation with the mysterious “Ghost” (Taylor Kitsch).

*“American Assassin” opens everywhere on September 15th. Featuring Michael Keaton, Dylan O’Brien, Sanaa Lathan, Shiva Negar and Taylor Kitsch. Screenplay adapted by Stephen Schiff, Michael Finch, Edward Zwick and Marshall Herskovitz, based on a novel by Vince Flynn. Directed by Michael Cuesta. Rated “R”*



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Michael Keaton Surveys the Target in ‘American Assassin’

*Photo credit: Lionsgate*



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