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| |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | John Wendt  MBA Director, Sports  and Entertainment Management  University of St. Thomas     |  | | --- | | **Read other reviews:**  [Internet Movie Database](http://www.us.imdb.com/title/tt0038787/)  [All Movie Guide](http://www.allmovie.com/cg/avg.dll?p=avg&sql=1:35736)  [Readers' comments](http://docs.google.com/user_feedback.htm) |       "Not at all, not the slightest. Miss Huberman is first, last, and always not a lady. She may be risking her life, but when it comes to being a lady, she doesn't hold a candle to your wife, sir, sitting in Washington playing bridge with three other ladies of great honor and virtue." | |  | | --- | | ***Notorious***  by John Wendt  "Every day the Justice Department is working tirelessly, taking this war to the hideouts and havens of our enemies, so that it never again touches the hearths and homes of America."(Attorney General Ashcroft [Testifies](http://www.lifeandliberty.gov/subs/speeches/a_ashcroft_060503.htm) Before Congress About the Patriot Act Prepared remarks before the House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary June 5, 2003)  Now switch to the doors at the entrance of the courtroom of the United States District Court, Southern District of Florida. From the doors you can see the back of a defendant and his counsel as they face the judge for sentencing  Judge: ".... any legal reason why sentence should not be pronounced?"  Defense Counsel: "No, your honor."  Defendant Huberman: "Yes. I have something to say. You can put me away. But you can't put away what's going to happen to you and to this whole country next time. Next time we are going to..."  Defense Counsel: (whispers to Huberman) "I wouldn't say any more. We'll leave that for the appeal."  Judge: "It is the judgment of this court that the defendant, John Huberman, having been found guilty of the crime of treason against the United States by the jury of this court for the southern district of Florida at Miami, be committed to the custody of the United States Attorney General for imprisonment in an institution of the penitentiary type for a period of twenty years. And the defendant may be forthwith remanded to the custody of the United States Marshall. Court is now adjourned."  This is the opening scene of Alfred Hitchcock's *Notorious*. Ingrid Bergman is Alicia Huberman, the daughter of a convicted Nazi spy. Alicia is a "woman of that sort" - notorious for her drinking, parties and her apparently "loose sexual nature." Soon after her father is convicted of treason, she meets a handsome man named Devlin (Cary Grant) at one of her parties in Miami. But then it turns out that Devlin is a "Federal cop." And Alicia knows that because association to her father that she is dangerous, "I hate low underhanded people like policemen, pussyfooting after you. Because I'm a marked woman, you know. I'm liable to blow up the Panama Canal any minute now. .."  However, Devlin and the feds want her to use her family connections to spy on a ring of neo-Nazis in Rio for the United States. She is reluctant. But, they know that she is a patriot. How do they know - because they have tapped her telephone.  Devlin: "My department authorized me to engage you to do some work for us, it's a job in Brazil."  Alicia: "Oh, go away. The whole thing bores me."  Devlin: "Some of the German gentry who were paying your father are working in Rio. Ever hear of the I. G. Farben Industries?"  Alicia: "I tell you, I'm not interested."  Devlin: "Farben has men in South America, planted there before the war. We're cooperating with the Brazilian government to smoke them out. My chief thinks that the daughter of a, uh..."  Alicia: "Of a traitor?"  Devlin: "Well, he thinks you might be valuable in the work. They might sort of trust you. And you could make up a little for your daddy's peculiarities."  Alicia: "Why should I?"  Devlin: "Patriotism."  Alicia: "That word gives me a pain. No, thank you, I don't go for patriotism, nor -- or patriots."  Devlin (leaving the room): "I'd like to dispute that with you."  Alicia: "Waving the flag with one hand and picking pockets with the other. That's your patriotism. Well, you can have it. She gets out of bed."  Devlin: "We've had your bungalow wired for three months."  Devlin: (reading aloud from the label on a phonograph record) "Conversation between John Huberman and daughter Alicia, six-thirty p.m., January the ninth, nineteen forty-six at Miami Beach, Florida. Devlin puts the record on the turntable."  Devlin: "Some of the evidence that wasn't used at the trial."  Alicia: "I don't want to hear that."  Devlin: "Relax, hardboard, and listen."  The record begins and you can hear Huberman's (her father's) voice: "...money in it, Alicia."  Alicia's Voice: "I told you before Christmas I wouldn't do it."  Huberman's Voice: "You don't use your judgment. You can have anything you want. The work is easy."  Alicia's Voice: "I'll not listen, father."  Huberman's Voice: "This is not your country, is it?"  Alicia's Voice: "My mother was born here. We have American citizenship."  Huberman's Voice: "Where is your judgment? In your feelings, you are German. You've got to listen to me. You don't know what we stand for."  Alicia's Voice: "I know what you stand for. You and your murdering swine. I've hated you ever since I found out."  Huberman's Voice: "My daughter, don't talk to me like that."  Alicia's Voice: "Stay on your side of the table!"  Huberman's Voice: "Alicia, put your voice down."  Alicia's Voice: "I hate you all. And I love this country, do you understand that? I love it. I'll see you all hang before I raise a finger against it. Now, go on and get out of here. Or so help me, I'll turn you in. Don't ever come near me or speak to me again 'bout your rotten schemes."  But, this being Hollywood and also because it is Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman, they are more than just agents in the spy game fighting against traitors - they fall in love, something that Devlin never considered. And then comes the news of their (or rather Alicia's) specific assignment - using her feminine wiles and seductive charms on an old friend of her father's, Alexander Sebastian (Claude Rains), who was once in love with her, again a surprise to Devlin.  Devlin's boss says, "Sebastian's house is a cover-up for whatever this Farben group's up to here in Rio. We've got to get Miss Huberman inside that house and find out what's going on there." Devlin tells Alicia, "Find out what's going on inside his house, what the group around him is up to, and report to us."  At the American Embassy Devlin's bosses are pleased to know that their "theatrical plan is working." They now know that Sebastian's cohorts including Professor Wilhelm Otto Rensler ("one of Germany's scientific wizards" going under the name "Dr. Anderson") are "experimenting" in Sebastian's house in Rio. And they have found this out because of Alicia and her charms. They all know what sort of woman Alicia is.  Beardsley (one of Devlin's bosses), "She's had me worried for some time. A woman of that sort."  Devlin: (to Beardsley) "What sort is that, Mr. Beardsley?"  Beardsley: "Oh, I don't think any of us have any illusions about her character, have we Devlin?"  Devlin (bitterly ironic): "Not at all, not the slightest. Miss Huberman is first, last, and always not a lady. She may be risking her life, but when it comes to being a lady, she doesn't hold a candle to your wife, sir, sitting in Washington playing bridge with three other ladies of great honor and virtue."  Plans go awry when Sebastian asks Alicia to marry him. Prescott (Devlin's boss) asks, "Are you willing to go this far for us, Miss Huberman?" and she says, "Yes, if you wish." Barbosa, the local official even glees, "Gentlemen, it's the cream of the jest."  After Alicia and Sebastian return from their honeymoon, Alicia continues her work. At a coming home party she invites Devlin and the two of them discover the secret of Sebastian and his evil friends - special sand filled with uranium ore. (Did the CIA recently say that Iraq tried to purchase uranium from Africa? Which is the MacGuffin?)  Sebastian suddenly realizes that not only may Alicia be in love with Devlin, but worse, he is married to an American agent. If his cohorts find out, Sebastian himself will be doomed. What to do? His wicked mother, Madame Sebastian (Madame Leopoldine Konstantin) has the answer, "Let me arrange this one. Listen to me. No one must know what she is. There must be no suspicion of her, of you, or me. She must be allowed to move about freely. But she will be on a leash. She will learn nothing further to inform. She must go, but it must happen slowly. If she could become ill and remain ill for a time, until... " They begin to slowly poison her. Can Devlin save her in time?  Made in 1946 just after World War II, *Notorious* shows the interplay of patriotism and the spy game, love and duty. As in real life most Hitchcock heroes are not framed in black and white. Devlin is often seen as cold, while we can easily see Sebastian falling in love with Alicia, and we can also understand Sebastian's doom.  Some have said that *Notorious* was made only after long discussions between J. Edgar Hoover, Hitchcock and David O. Selznick, because of the delicate times and especially because it dealt with uranium and the atomic bomb.  *Notorious* should be seen because of its all-star cast, the writing of Ben Hecht, the scoring of Roy Webb, the gowns by Edith Head, the incredible cinematography by Ted Tetzlaff and the direction of Alfred Hitchcock. *Notorious* should be seen because it shows us Hitchcock's recognition of the conflicts of human nature.  Posted February 9, 2004 |   **Would you like to comment on this article? 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