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## Maidenhood

William L. Blizek

University of Nebraska at Omaha, wblizek@unomaha.edu

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## Maidenhood

### Abstract

This is a film review of *Maidenhood* (2022) directed by Xóchitl Enríquez Mendoza.

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### Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the *Continuum Companion to Religion and Film* (2009).



**Maidenhood (“La Balahna”) (2022), dir. Xóchitl Enríquez Mendoza**

La Balahna is a wedding night ritual practiced in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec region of Oaxaca, Mexico. The bride and groom engage in sexual activity on their wedding night to demonstrate the purity (virginity) of the bride and to demonstrate her value as a woman. If the wife bleeds after sexual intercourse, it shows that she has not been deflowered. But La Balahna is more than a ritual. It is also a test and just like all tests it can be passed or failed.