

I now pronounce you chuck and larry white patriarchy essay

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



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While pretending to challenge the ideology of white patriarchal capitalism, this film actually conforms to white patriarchal capitalism. The primary two characters, whom we are supposed to sympathize with, are white, very heterosexual, and lower to middle-class, the quintessential “normal” inhabitants of white patriarchal America. The behavior of characters in this film furthers the white patriarchal “thinking of lesbian and gay subordination as a separate axis of oppression that intersects with gender, race and class axes of oppression” (Calhoun, 2002). Chuck and Larry encounter a great deal of discrimination from a very patriarchal, macho culture – it is not helped by the fact that both men work as firefighters, a masculine profession that is often unfriendly towards gays. While Chuck and Larry eventually become more tolerant of gays over the course of the film, it is entirely possible that much of this tolerance is due to their relation to this unique experience – they may never have changed their negative opinions of homosexuals had they not performed this experiment.

The ultimate plot device of the film is to get financial and insurance benefits for Larry’s (Kevin James) kids – it is the ultimate reason why Chuck and Larry decide to get into a civil union together. This falls into the ideals of white patriarchal capitalism – these two are willing to do no matter what, even spread false rumors about themselves and expose themselves to discrimination, in order to get what is ostensibly a financial gain. It is also implied by characters in the film that “lesbians and gays are unfitted for marital and married life” (Calhoun, 2002). This is the overall challenge that Chuck and Larry have to overcome – they must convince everyone that, not only do they love each other, they are fit to parent children and be in a civil

union together.

The crude humor and silly, jokey way in which the film trivializes homosexual relationships helps to further marginalize minorities in this white, patriarchally adjusted film. The concept of two men getting married, whether homosexual or not, is treated with disgust and apprehension by even the title characters. In fact, all of the minorities presented in the film are seemingly distilled into one character that is thrown in arbitrarily to seem 'tolerant' – the character of Fred (Ving Rhames), who is both black and gay. The only other significant minority in the film is Rob Schneider's character, who portrays an especially egregious Asian stereotype.

In essence, all the non-straight non-white characters are treated with disgust, and the one major female character (Jessica Biel) is merely utilized as a romantic interest for Chuck (Adam Sandler). With this in mind, it is clear that the only characters presented with any clear depth in the film are the white, male characters of the film, presenting the world through their eyes. There are few actual gay characters in a movie that discusses the topic of homosexuality so heavily; it then becomes a heterosexual treatise on what they think homosexuality is like. This makes it ring false, and furthers the idea of 'normal' being a white male who is heterosexual and objectifies women as objects of lust (as evidenced by Chuck's continual lust after Jessica Biel's character).

Works Cited

Calhoun, Cheshire. " Introduction: Centering Sexual Orientation Politics." Anthology 25 (2002): 1. Print.

I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry (Widescreen Edition). Dir. Dennis Dugan.
Perf. Adam Sandler, Kevin James. Universal Pictures, 2007. DVD.