

Film Review: 'I Do' Tackles Weighty Issues with Tender Insight

Submitted by [mattmovieman](#) [1] on May 31, 2013 - 6:07am

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CHICAGO – Nothing bugs a critic more than obstacles strategically placed in the path of otherwise happy characters. Without the conspiratorial manipulations of the plot, these people would have no problem leading perfectly content lives. Instead of emerging organically from the characters themselves, the conflict swoops in like a speeding car fresh off the highway.



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

That's more or less what happens in the opening moments of Glenn Gaylord's "I Do," as a suave, good-natured Brit, Peter (Grant Bowler), is hit by a car upon leaving a New York restaurant with his pregnant wife, Mya (Alicia Witt), and brother, Jack (David W. Ross). Since Jack's primary character flaw is that he's too nice, he spends the next seven years raising his adorable niece, Tara (Jessica Tyler Brown), with Mya, while putting his personal life entirely on hold. Jack may have come off as a maddeningly idealized saint if he hadn't been played with such self-effacing sensitivity by Ross, who also wrote the screenplay.



[Read Matt Fagerholm's full review of "I Do" in our reviews section.](#) [12]

As misfortune continued to befall the long-suffering protagonist, my pulse began to quicken until I sensed the film's underlying agenda. This isn't a story so much as it is an archetypal illustration of the injustices waged by the Defense of Marriage Act, which bars same sex couples from the federal benefits granted to heterosexuals. Though this law doesn't play a crucial role until the film's third act, the entire story depends on its annihilation of human rights. If the law didn't exist, there wouldn't be much of a story here to tell, but since it actually does exist in real life, it's easier to accept. As a timely portrait of the difficulty in living a functional life as a homosexual in America, Gaylord's film is quite touching. It's a very straightforward piece of work, but there is a certain power in its simplicity. Only bigots with a heart of stone would be able to resist rooting for a character like Jack, a gay man who has specialized in putting everyone else's needs ahead of his own.

'I Do' stars David W. Ross, Jamie-Lynn Sigler, Maurice Compte, Alicia Witt, Jessica Tyler Brown, Patricia Belcher and Grant Bowler. It was written by David W. Ross and directed by Glenn Gaylord. It screens Friday, May 31st at the Gene Siskel Film Center. It is not rated.



[Continue reading for Matt Fagerholm's full "I Do" review.](#) [12]



David W. Ross and Jamie-Lynn Sigler star in Glenn Gaylord's *I Do*.

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