

Film Review: 'The Purge: Anarchy' Can't Decide What it Wants to Be

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 17, 2014 - 8:30pm

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CHICAGO – “The Purge: Anarchy” is a cake-and-eat-it film. On one hand there is a monotonous display of firepower, courtesy of a suspension of laws for one night a year, but it also wants to temper this lawlessness with indictments of government, the rich and the law itself.



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

The writer and director James DeMonaco definitely has a point of view in the film – the sequel to the successful first film, “The Purge” – but it is so scattered and tenuous, and the gun battles so numerous and ferocious, that any editorializing gets lost in the spent shells. The film is boosted by a fine cast, led by Frank Grillo, and they do add a bit more to the running, hiding and shooting aspect of the story. There are reasons for the motivations of Grillo’s character, which are so contrary to the philosophy of The Purge that it is laughable, even though it’s tragic. DeMonaco seemed afraid to completely go after wealth and the government, which are obviously behind the promotion of the Purge law, and that waters down the overall narrative until it just becomes about the guns...again.

In the new America, one night a year is set aside for “The Purge,” a 12 hour period when anyone can take to the streets and do what they want with abandon – all laws, including murder, are suspended for one day. A good number of the citizens participate, but a number of them simply want to hide until it’s over, like the couple Shane and Liz (Zach Gilford and Kiele Sanchez). Unfortunately, their car breaks down outside the city.

Shane and Liz are on the run, but eventually they hook up with an armed-to-the-teeth vigilante named Leo (Frank Grillo), and together they form a gang of their own along with a mother and daughter (Carmen Ejogo and Zoe Soul), who had been forced out of their apartment by the Purging marauders. Along the way, there is an auction by rich folks to get in on the kill, and reminders of the New Founding Fathers of America.

“The Purge: Anarchy” opens everywhere on July 18th. Featuring Zach Gilford, Frank Grillo, Carmen Ejogo, Kiele Sanchez, Zoe Soul and Justina Machado. Written and directed by James DeMonaco. Rated “R”



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Leo (Frank Grillo) Takes it to the Streets in ‘The Purge: Anarchy’

Photo credit: Universal Pictures



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