

Film Review: Alternate American Dream Played Out in ‘Dope’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on June 19, 2015 - 12:35pm

- [African American](#) [2]
- [Chanel Iman](#) [3]
- [Dope](#) [4]
- [Forest Whitaker](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Kiersey Clemons](#) [7]
- [Los Angeles](#) [8]
- [Movie Review](#) [9]
- [Open Road Films \(II\)](#) [10]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [11]
- [Race](#) [12]
- [Rick Famuyiwa](#) [13]
- [Roger Guenveur Smith](#) [14]
- [Shameik Moore](#) [15]
- [Tony Revolori](#) [16]
- [Zoe Kravitz](#) [17]

CHICAGO – If you’re lucky enough, you’ll never know what it’s like to grow up in a poor American neighborhood. But what if the notions of such societies are flipped on its ear, and what if the message draws attention to our current perceptions of race? This is what the new film “Dope” conveys.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

I saw it as a fantasy of sorts, since the main character Malcolm seems to switch characteristics and points of view from scene to scene. He’s trying to solve a dilemma perpetuated by his adventures in the poor Los Angeles neighborhood of Inglewood, and inevitably offers a moral lesson through an application – naturally – to Harvard University. While the schizophrenic nature of Malcolm trips the story momentarily, it still can be interpreted as a through-the-looking-glass scenario – the streetwise version of the old 1980s film “Risky Business.”

Malcolm (Shameik Moore) is a self-described African-American high school geek, who loves 1990s hip-hop style and being a top student. He hangs around with two other fellow travelers, Diggy (Kiersey Clemons) and Jib (Tony Revolori, so memorable as the Lobby Boy in “The Grand Budapest Hotel”). They survive, barely, in their rough Inglewood neighborhood, but the tide turns quickly after a series of unintended consequences.

Malcolm takes the gang to a party thrown by Dom (A\$ap Rocky), who is also a drug dealer. When the party is raided, amid the gunfire and arrests Malcolm ends up “holding the bags” of pure Ecstasy. He must now come up with a plan to dump the drug, and visit all the players in the plan, including the whacked out Lily (Chanel Iman), his college sponsor Mr. Jacoby (Roger Guenveur-Smith) and a girl – who he desires to connect to – named Nakia (Zoë Kravitz).

“Dope” opens everywhere on June 19th. Featuring Shameik Moore, Chanel Iman, Tony Revolori, Kiersey Clemons, Zoe Kravitz, Roger Guenveur Smith and Forest Whitaker. Written and directed by Rick Famuyiwa. Rated “R”



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Jib (Tony Revolori), Diggy (Kiersey Clemons) and Malcolm (Shameik Moore) in ‘Dope’

Photo credit: Open Road Films (II)



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- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/chanel-iman>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dope>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/forest-whitaker>
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- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/zoe-kravitz>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/25617/alternate-american-dream-played-out-in-dope>