



# *Come See the Paradise*

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HCOM 322

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*1) Discuss the theme of emasculation in the movie (in other words, what happens to the male members in the Kawamura's family).*



- ❖ Mr. Kawamura's was a recognized businessman in the Little Tokyo community and everyone respected him. As the movie progresses, he is losing power. First, the FBI arrests him causing the loss of his business and everything that he owned in the United States. When he is finally released, the government takes him to the camp and spreads rumors that he sold the Asian people out. Because of that, he lost the respect of his community.
- ❖ Harry the second oldest son did everything he could to become the stereotypical American citizen. Despite his efforts, the U.S. sent him to the internment camp. Harry later joins the army and goes to fight in the war. He is killed in action.
- ❖ Charlie is the older brother. He refused to sign the loyalty oath and joined a group of Japanese men called the No-No boys that were against the American government. He was then sent to Japan even though he did not speak the language.

## *2) What are the foundations for Jack and Lily's relationship and distractions?*

- ❖ The foundations for Jack and Lily's marriage is that initial attraction between the couple. Their everlasting desire to be with one another overcame the obstacles that were in their way.
- ❖ After their marriage and the birth of their daughter, Jack is sent to the army and Lily is sent to the camps. This makes it difficult for them to see each other. Moreover, after Jack visits Lily, he is sent to jail and later is reunited with Lily and their daughter.
- ❖ The distraction for Jack and Lily's relationship is the fact that they are not allowed to marry each other in California because of their ethnicity. In addition, not having Lily's parents' approval is also a distraction and problem since she is going against what her parents wish.

### *3) What have Jack and Lily learned from each other?*

- ❖ When Jack was talking about helping the people that worked with him, Lily did not want him to get political in his workplace. She wanted him to take care of his family and not to get in trouble. In one occasion, Jack told Lily, “ you and your Japanese crap”. During the course of the movies, Lily changed. She learned to speak up for herself and her family. She became more political.
- ❖ Jack was political and he cared about humans rights. If an injustice took place on his presence, he did not think twice to speak up for others. By the end of the movie, he stressed the importance of family. He became a member of the Kawamura family and learned to love all its members.





## *Alan Parker*

Alan Parker is a writer, director and producer. He was born in Islington, London in 1944. He began his career in advertising as a copywriter and directing commercials. In the late 60's, he was one of a small group of British directors who revolutionized world advertising. In 1980, he received the D&AD Gold President's Award. Later in 1989, Parker wrote and directed *Come See the Paradise* which is a family's story set against the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

# *Works by Alan Parker*

*-The life of David Gale (2003)*

*- Angela's Ashes (1999)*

*- Evita (1996)*

*-The Road of Wellville (1994)*

*-The Commitments (1991)*

*- Come See the Paradise (1990)*

*- Mississippi Burning (1988)*



*-Angel's Heart (1987)*

*- Birdy (1984)*

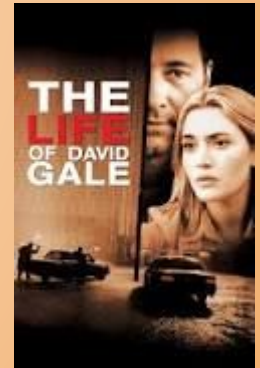
*- Pink Floyd the Wall (1982)*

*- Shoot the Moon (1982)*

*- Fame (1980)*

*- Midnight Express (1978)*

*- Bugsy Malone (1976)*



## *Central themes of the movie*

- ❖ Romance- Between, Jack and Lily. The love between the family. The relationship between Mr. and Ms. Kawamura.
- ❖ Forced family disintegration- due to the Asian Exclusion Act, the Kawamura family was forced to disintegrate little by little. First, the government arrested Mr. Kawamura leaving the family without the protection and support of the head of household. After they were taken to the camps, the older brothers needed to decide whether they were truly Americans or not. This caused the distance of two members of the family. One of the older brothers refused to enlist in the military causing his repatriation to Japan. After that, the family never saw or hear from him again. The second older brother decided that he wanted to enlist in the Army. He was killed during combat and the Kawamura family lost another one of his members. The Asian Exclusion Act did not only cause family disintegration in pure Asian families. It also caused the separation of a biracial family. This is the case of Lily's family. She married an Irish-American and they had a daughter. Because of this act and the fact that Mini looked Asian, she had to be separated from her father.
- ❖ Life for the Japanese-Americans before and during WWII
- ❖ Culture assimilation- Lily and her siblings, were taught American mannerisms and cultural values since birth. Ms. and Mr. Kawamura were forced to learn the ways of the white-Americans to fit in.





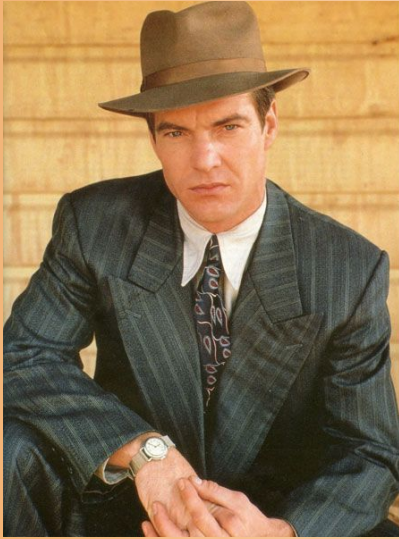
## *Character analysis*



- ❖ Lily Kawamura is a Japanese-American woman living in Los Angeles, California.
- ❖ Her father owns a movie theater in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, California.
- ❖ Lily meets Jack and falls in love with him.
- ❖ More family centered, but then changes to become more political.
- ❖ She had a strong will. When her father opposed her relationship with Jack, she made the decision to disobey her father and decided to move away from the family to be with Jack.



## *Character analysis*



- ❖ Jack is an Irish-American man.
- ❖ He is involved in politics and commits illegal actions in New York.
- ❖ He moves to Los Angeles and starts working as the projectionist in Mr. Kawamura's movie theater.
- ❖ Jack meets Lily, the daughter of Mr. Kawamura, and he falls in love with her.
- ❖ After being involved in politics he changes to become more family centered.
- ❖ Even though he had a better position in society, he does not hesitate to stand up for the less fortunate.

## *Styles, techniques and cinematography*



- ❖ The movie frames the topic of Japanese internment using a love story. This allows the creators of the movie to better display the racism from that time period by having a white character to compare the Japanese characters to.
- ❖ The director of the movie shows three factors that disintegrate Japanese families. The first factor was the discrimination against Japanese community, the second factor was the Cable Act which does not allow Japanese women to get married with foreign men, and the third factor was to keep loyalty to the United States and refuse to your Japanese origins.

# *Reflections about the movie*

## Angelica



- ❖ From the movie, I learned that the definition of being an American changes depending of the situation of a person. For example, Lily, her siblings, and her daughter Mini were American citizens, but it did not except them from the racial discrimination against the Japanese people. They were labeled as dangerous to national security because they phenotype. If Mini, looked like Jack instead of looking like her mother, she would not had to go through all the struggles of living in a Japanese camp. On the other hand, Jack did not have a say in weather her wife and daughter would go to the camp or not.

## *Reflections about the movie*

Patricia Carrillo

In the movie, *Come see the Paradise*, I learned that it is possible to overcome obstacles. Since the beginning, there was a language a culture barrier when Jack arrived to Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, CA. He started working at a Japanese theatre, where he learned how to copy words and phrases from the Japanese movies. As the father, Mr. Kawamura, did not accept Jack at first, Jack made it a goal to learn the culture well enough to be accepted in the family. As the movie progresses, we see the struggle with the Kawamura family, and the difficulties that they encounter. Despite the relocations and forced camp laor, the family was able to stay strong and keep a strong kinship with one another.



## *Reflections about the movie*

Ana Paola Ruiz

- What I get out of *Come See the Paradise* is one thing; there are no obstacles in life that can destroy love. Jack loved Lily and no matter what happened to him he always tried to find her. Also, the love the Kawamura children had towards their parents helped Mrs. Kawamura when their father was taken away. Furthermore, when he returned to the camp he did not reject Lily even though he didn't approve of her marrying Jack.

## *Reflections about the movie*

Roseanne

- I learned more about the discrimination against Asian Americans and all the injustices Japanese Americans suffered after the Pearl Harbor attack. I cannot believe that the government of the United States saw Japanese people as enemies and sent them to the internment camps. Also, the movie covered different topics such as love, families' disintegration, identity, racism, and inequality.

## *Reflections about the movie*

Sarah

- What I got out of this movie was that people are tenacious and will be able to endure many hardships as long as they stay together. The Kawamura family, and the Japanese Americans in the camps, were able to face the discrimination by relying on each other.

# *Bibliography*

1. Parker, Alan. *Sir Alan Parker CBE: Biography* . <http://alanparker.com/biography/>