

Let's be honest: Beauty and the Beast's 'gay agenda'

Commentary by Drew Zahn

I heard the buzz surrounding Disney's "gay" scenes in the new, live-action "Beauty and the Beast" film ... and I wondered, does the film really merit the reaction?

After all, in my five years as [a film critic for WND.com](#), I saw in the comments sections of my reviews just how quickly many Christians shout, "Gay agenda!" and bash all things Disney, convinced Mickey Mouse is secretly a nefarious Pied Piper, seducing America's children to destruction.

So I went to see the film for myself.

And let's be honest: If your child has no idea that homosexuality or transgenderism even exists, the wide-eyed innocent will likely never notice the "gay" character or at most, think him "funny."

But to the more seasoned and observant, you can't *not* see how incredibly "gay" is comedian Josh Gad's performance of the character LeFou. Gad plays to the stereotype with a character effeminate and effusive, whose sideways glances and double entendres are incessant. It's not just one scene. It's many. LeFou is every bit a caricature of the "gay man" as Gaston is a caricature of the cocksure, masculine braggart.

And when a henchman at the end of the film smiles in relief and gratitude at being magically reclothed in a dress and makeup, little children will likely laugh at the joke of a boy being dressed as a girl, while the adults in the room will easily see the nod to transgenderism (or at least cross-dressing).

Contrary to rumors, there are no same-sex kisses or love scenes, and outside of a man dancing with LeFou (another joke to the innocents, obvious to the discerning), LeFou's homosexual affections are unrequited.

The summary is simple: There's a "gay" character in a Disney movie. An obviously "gay" character. The implications, however, are a little more tricky.

Some will bemoan the "loss of innocence," grieved that once squeaky-clean Disney is now bringing adult sexual concepts into children's fare that parents ought to be able to trust.

But if you're among those feeling this pain, I would suggest – in as friendly a way as possible – you're about 30 years too late. Your "trust" would be misplaced. Disney hasn't been "squeaky clean" in decades, and discerning parents need to understand: Just because it's animated doesn't mean it's fit for children. Or, to put in another way: These aren't children's movies; these are Disney movies.

Others will go further, blasting Disney for attempting to "indoctrinate" America's children in a "gay agenda."

But that summary unfairly reduces the filmmakers to nothing more than homosexual activists, and it misses the bigger picture. For this isn't a "gay" film, but it *is*, from a worldview perspective, an inherently "progressive" film.

Left-Coast narratives and values permeate "Beauty and the Beast." It's a female "empowerment" story of a woman yearning to be liberated of her "provincial" life, where rural people are backward, uneducated rubes, and city folk are inherently more enlightened. (To its credit, however, the movie does portray the church as place of both education and compassion.)

And "Beauty and the Beast" was made to be a statement about one of the chief Left-Coast values, *diversity*. For example, the prince's courtiers and the townspeople are racially

diverse, with no distinction of social class, despite the film's setting in roughly 18th century France (where such diversity was rare at most).

It would only make sense, therefore, to filmmakers of "progressive" worldview to also include homosexual and transgender characters in their diversity fairy tale movie. This isn't some radical, pro-homosexual activism; it's just a reflection of society as "progressives" see it (or want it to be – remember, this is a fairy tale).

So, yes, Christian conservative parents, you *do* have causes for caution with this movie and your kiddos: 1. It's Disney, 2. It does contain a "gay" character, and 3. It's infused with progressive values. All the more reason that, yes, it would be wise to disciple your children as they navigate movie culture, instead of merely surrendering them to it.

But this leaves the question: Are boycotts and protests and condemning Facebook posts warranted?

Again, a tricky question.

I once preached a sermon called "Pagans Act Like Pagans," explaining that Christians really don't gain anything by being shocked and aghast when unbelievers get drunk and fornicate. That's what people without Christ just typically do. Why do we expect them to do anything different?

Unbelievers won't conform to the laws of our moral Authority when they don't believe in Him ... and the same is true for Disney. I don't think Christians need to treat it like a massive "scandal" when Disney acts like Disney.

But we can send a message that moviemakers will hear, loud and clear, not on our Facebook or blog posts, but by choosing to spend our entertainment dollars on movies that reflect, rather than undermine, our values.

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