“Am I a Prude for Refusing to Endorse the Movie “Ratatouille”?”

WARNING – this email contains a movie “spoiler”… My husband and I saw the G-rated Pixar movie *Ratatouille*. As a conservative Christian, I was troubled and saddened that an important element of the movie reveals that the garbage boy Linguini is the illegitimate son of the recently deceased chef Gusteau, who doesn’t even know he has a son. While the movie is otherwise entertaining and worthwhile, I cannot endorse such a film. My husband, who is as devout as me, didn’t think this was a big deal and that kids wouldn’t put it together and neither would most adults. Am I being too prudish? Or do you think I should stand firm in my convictions that wrong is wrong…even if everybody does it?

One last thing, is there a Christian-based movie rating site?

First, concerning your question about Christian movie reviewing sites:

www.pluggedinonline.com

www.movieguide.org

www.christianitytoday.com/movies/

christianity.about.com/od/christianmovies/Christian_Movies_and_Christian_Movie_Reviews.htm

Secondly: while I haven’t yet seen the movie (but plan to tomorrow!), I did read all the reviews at the above sites so I would have a better idea of what troubles you. I also discussed the movie with one of my Probe colleagues who took his family to see it. I fully appreciate your concern about illegitimate children, but is this part of the story lifted up

as something to emulate and freely accept? Or is it a plot device that can be addressed in discussion with others after the movie? It sounds like a teachable moment to me, much like the wrong and sinful elements of Bible stories that are presented without comment by the biblical writers and invite us to interact with them wisely.

From what I read in the reviews (and in my conversation with the one who did see it), there are other wrongs in the movie such as stealing, throwing knives, arrogance, etc., which you did not indicate your objection to. Would you say you cannot endorse any movie that has anything wrong in it? I respectfully suggest that this kind of movie provides audiences with the opportunity to develop discernment in how they process what's in it, and especially how they discuss it with their children and other viewers. Personally, I find it very helpful when someone with a developed Christian worldview sees a movie and tells me, "If you see this movie, look for _____ and _____ but watch out for _____."

Our philosophy here at Probe is that there is no such thing as sheer entertainment. All movies are made for a reason, with a viewpoint, and there is something the producers and directors want you to see or think, or a certain way in which they want you to respond. So Christians need to have their thinking caps on when seeing any movie, filtering everything through the lens of God's word and His values.

In that case, when a character is revealed to be illegitimate, our response would then be, "Oh, illegitimacy is so sad because sexual sin is sad and hurtful. God wants so much better for us, and that's why He calls us to purity. So the issue is not the presence of an illegitimate character, but whether or not our response to it is in alignment with what God has shown us in His word."

I would add that there are many movies that are so filled with moral filth and ungodliness that it's like trying to find

something to eat in a compost heap. We’re better off not going (or renting, or watching) them at all.

Thanks for writing.

Sue Bohlin

Addendum: I just returned from seeing the movie myself, and stand by everything I said. Excuse me, but I have an urge to go in the kitchen and cook up something *marvelous*! <grin>

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