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THE BATTALION **DINION**5 Conventional minds think alike leligious gathering attempts to condemn Disney Company, affiliates

Southern Baptists are again in the spotlight as the self-appointed ral barometer of America. he recent Southern Baptist vention, the organizan's 12,000 delegates voted. whelmingly for a boycott he Disney Company and "gay-friendly" environnt the Baptists feel the pany promotes.

The Southern Baptists seem to be pping over a few pages in the good pel they claim to champion. Unthe Baptists have revised it, the enever promoted hatred, discrimion or bigotry. The very fact that a up claiming to be Christian can be nst being "friendly" to any group dicrous.

tis hypocrisy such as this that is ing Americans away from religion. ching hate and advocating intolnce and ignorance is only going to ke people seek other spiritual out-David M. Smith of the Human hts Campaign said it well: "Unlike Southern Baptist Convention, tpeople of faith recognize that y can disagree over whether or not osexuality is right and still agree discriminating against gay people

The Baptists are the nation's largest estant denomination, numbering und 15.7 million members. The gates hope this action, though binding, will influence enough owers in its 40,613 affiliated rches so that the Disney Company lfeel the pinch.

The boycott asks members to refrain n frequenting or watching anything atis affiliated with Disney. One memsummed up the sentiment of the vention, "We love Jesus more than love entertainment.'

If only it were as black and white as hat. The Disney Company is a huge onglomerate. Not only does it produce cartoon classics that made it famous, but it has holdings across the spectrum fentertainment and multimedia. here are the 530 outlets of the Disney ore. In addition to its own Disney nnel, the company owns stock in hercable networks: A&E, Lifetime 80 percent of ESPN.

Ihey also own the ABC network, inding its programs "Ellen" and "Home ovement." Of course there are also ne parks, colleges, sports teams, papers, Touchstone Pictures, Mirax, Hollywood Pictures and Caravan tures. And don't forget everyone's fate, "Live with Regis and Kathie Lee." The point is, Disney is everywhere.

The Southern Baptists are going to be hard-pressed to completely avoid everything which represents Disney. Even the evening news on ABC affiliates falls into the off-limits zone.

Some might wonder why the Southern Baptists would go to all this trouble, and why in this day of trash TV and sexlaced films, would one of America's largest producers of

family fare be boycotted. The Convention has had grievances with Disney for a while.

In fact, there was a partial boycott last year with the release of the animated film The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Baptists said Disney was growing increasingly anti-Christian and immoral, and this was just a taste of the future if Disney did not clean up its act. The irony here is so thick, one can taste it; The Hunchback of Notre Dame was one of the most religious and moral films released last year.

Southern Baptists are angry at what they have decided is a "gay-friendly" environment at Disney. They are angry with Disney-sponsored "Gay Days" at the Walt Disney World and Disneyland theme parks.

Delegates also are upset with the content of films such as Pulp Fiction and Kids produced by Disney subsidiaries. One of the biggest beefs is that Disney offers health benefits to samesex partners for its employees. The Baptists cite this as proof that Disney is "anti-family" and anti-Christian.

Sorry for the rude awakening, but this is what's known as economics, and Disney is not the only company with the practice. In fact, accounting from KPMG Peat Marwick said 13 percent of all United States employers are quietly extending benefits to gay partners. In Hollywood, it is considered critical to attract mid-level executives.

So if this Disney boycott is a hint of things to come, the Baptists are going to find themselves between a rock and a hard place. Some of the other companies with gay benefits include IBM, Apple Computer, Microsoft, Bank of America and even the San Francisco 49ers. Even MCA, Inc., owner of Warner Brothers, has jumped on the bandwagon. So what's next, are the Baptists going to be looking for homosexual undertones in the Roadrunner and Coyote cartoons?

Gays and lesbians currently comprise between two and 10 percent of the work force, according to a recent Associated Press report. For the most part, these workers are highly skilled and educated. Many Disney animators fall into this category, and they are an asset Disney cannot afford to lose.

Disney, for its part, is holding strong. The company is riding the coattails of a couple of very successful years (even with the Hunchback boycott); even EuroDisney is finally in the black.

Disney asserts that its decision regarding the health plans is firmly grounded. Unlike some companies, Disney only offers cohabitating gay couples these privileges, not unmarried heterosexuals the reason being, gay couples cannot marry. The gay community views these types of systems as instilling family values among gay couples. The health benefits encourage couples to stay together, because they are taken care of in the future.

Some people worry that these gay partner plans will end up costing Americans more money. This is of course based upon stereotypical ideas that gays will become sick. The facts just don't support this argument. In fact, on point-of-service health plans, costs for cohabitating couples average about \$326 per month, while married couple costs run around \$339 per month.

Costs for HMOs are about equal for both categories. Besides, Uncle Sam considers gay partner coverage taxable income, so homosexual couples pay approximately \$700 per year for a \$2,000 health plan, according to recent reports.

People may wonder what all this bellyaching is about. It is about intolerance and closed-mindedness. The Southern Baptists said the recent "coming out" episode on ABC's "Ellen' was the straw that broke the camel's back, because the program "made homosexuality appealing" and was used to "recruit people to homosexuality."

First of all, that particular episode was one of the most watered-down, TV friendly treatments of homosexuality ever produced.

Number two, the episode literally made jokes about the idea of homosexuals "recruiting" poor unknowing heterosexuals into their "evil minions," so

the Baptists are probably relying on hearsay; they probably did not even see the program.

These comments sound glaringly like paranoia; only someone who was unsure of their own sexuality could ever possibly come up with such an outlandish statement.

The Baptists are going to do whatever their closed minds direct them to

do. As for the rest of America, hopefully logic will come into play. If you don't like a program or movie's content, don't watch. If you are offended by "Gay Days," take your family to Epcot another time.

GRAPHIC: Brad Graeber

As far as Disney films go, don't punish your children from seeing classic, familyoriented films simply because you cannot, see past your own hate and stupidity.



Baptists stand up for boycotting rights ^{II}Disney Company cloaks true motives behind family-oriented name

bviously, the Disney Company's agenda always has been to destroy the moral fiber of America, Consider Disney's film reases throughout the years. Snow White was a strumpet. This was a ung woman living with seven dirty ittle old men — a scandalous action, wen in the increasingly tolerant '90s. Recently, the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant denomination, passed

aresolution to boycott Disney This boycott has created consid-

rable criticism from the American public. The Baptists, however, are justified in taking action on their convictions despite the unopularity of their move.

The boycott resolution asks the 15.7 million nembers of the denomination to "refrain from patronizing the Disney Company and any of its elated entities," because Disney is "increasingly romoting immoral ideologies such as homoexuality, infidelity and adultery, which are biblially reprehensible and abhorrent to God and lis plan for the world that He love

Critics claim this move is a publicity stunt by he Southern Baptist Convention, and an atempt to persecute homosexuals. These critiisms, however, neglect the motivation behind he Baptist's extreme action.

Disney is the world's largest and best-known provider of family entertainment. Through their ntertainment and policies, however, many people feel Disney is promoting ideas which are nti-family and unbiblical. The Baptists have decided they cannot, in good conscience, support a ompany whose actions compromise their faith.

This issue is not a matter of the Baptists trying ^o attack any specific group, but an attempt to encourage denominational members to follow brough in their beliefs. The boycott resolution itself states, "This is not an attempt to bring the Disney Company down, but to bring Southern ^Baptists up to the moral standard of God."

This resolution aimed toward Disney, also asks Baptists to "refrain from patronizing any



company that promotes immoral ideologies and practices.

Although one may not agree with the Southern Baptist Convention's opinion on Disney's practices, the Baptists deserve respect for taking a public stand on their convictions. In a time when many people are unwilling to embrace any sense of right and wrong, it is admirable that somebody is willing to use moral judgment.

The Southern Baptist Convention does have good reason to find fault with the "Magic Kingdom of

Debauchery." Disney is not as family friendly as it proclaims itself.

Disney owns many other entertainment companies including ABC, ESPN, Hollywood Records and Touchstone Pictures. Through its other companies, Disney discretely releas es materials which the public would never accept under the Disney title.

Disney's Miramax Pictures, in particular, is guilty of producing movies which are unacceptable for family viewing. The critically acclaimed Pulp Fiction is a Miramax production filled with graphic and gratuitous violence. Priest is a film which features five dysfunctional Roman Catholic priests --- critics called the movie anti-Christian. Kids is a borderlinepornographic release which deals with the lives of adolescent teenagers living on the streets of New York. This film was so controversial that Disney had Miramax release it under a different movie studio name. The movie's opening scene depicts the deflowering of barely-pubescent looking girl. Exotica, another quality Miramax release, is the poignant story of strippers working in a nightclub.

If Disney solely exists to provide quality entertainment for children, then there is no justification for graphically portraying children having sex in a film like Kids. Obviously, Disney's first priority is not to create movies which bring parents and children together ---- it is to make money. A company who unscrupulously unloads children's cartoons and clear child

pornography on the public in the name of making a buck is not interested in benefiting America's families or its culture.

It is dual-faced for Disney, who has carefully crafted its family reputation, to hide its trashy adult entertainment under an assumed name. Disney cannot expect, however, to play to both sides of the entertainment spectrum forever — eventually, the public will realize Mickey Mouse is a porn-pusher.

Television and films have a profound effect on the American public. The movie, Jerry Maguire, for example, has changed the American vocabulary forever. Statistically speaking, the phrase "Show me the money" is uttered by somebody in the continental United States once every 15 seconds.

The entertainment industry must be tempered by public opinion. American's must communicate to the entertainment industry what they find unacceptable by not patronizing movies and shows which compromise their values. This censorship by public opinion is the form of censorship which must exist in the U.S. a nation which treasures its freedom of speech. This censorship is propagated by individuals who refuse to support and patronize the institutions and productions that are unwilling to support American's values

America is in a cultural war. It is a war whose victims are children. If this country's children watch too much sex and violence on television and in theaters, it is because parents have been negligent in not buying tickets and turning off televisions. What is worse, is the fact that America's premiere family entertainment company is providing the sex and violence.

A growing segment of society is concerned with the apparent moral decay evident in modern America, yet few people take action to address this decay. The Baptist boycott is a means by which individuals can take action on their convictions. Its success will depend upon whether other American convictions fall in line with those of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In the meantime, Mickey Mouse will have to spend Sunday mornings with the Methodists.



Air bag innovations require 'whole' view

In response to General Franklin's June 26 column and a June 30 mail call letter concerning air bag technology.

I had not read Franklin's column on air bags. After reading Peter Winter's letter on this column, I expected to find a heavily politicized argument for government control of our driving habits.

On my first read of the column, though, I could not see the liberal media bias that Winter found. The column was a wellwritten piece on the positive and negative aspects of air bags. In case I had missed the column's liberal ideals that had offended Winter, I used my web browser to search the column for key words that are signs of liberalism I must have overlooked.

First, I searched for "government," as in the big government all liberals love. It was not in the column. Next, I tried "regulate," which is how liberals create big government. It was not there, either. "Statute," which is a way to regulate, was not in the column. "Law," "rule" and "mandate" also could not be found. I searched for the word "sex" too, since that is something with which all liberals are obsessed it was not there.

Maybe Winter was wrong about Franklin's column being liberally biased. Winter also claimed that the liberals forced air bags upon us. After searching the web, I found this also to be false.

Most groups I found that support air bags had both conservative and liberal supporters. One such group is the Air Bag Safety Campaign, a non-profit, non-governmental organization that promotes maximizing air bag benefits while minimizing their risks.

The group's list of supporters con-" tains both conservative and liberal companies and organizations. (The list is online at www.nsc.org/partners/camcips.htm).

Issues, such as the ones concerning air bags, are more complex than an "Us versus Them" view. Examining a problem from one viewpoint, as Winter did in his letter, will hide any useful information.

Examining a problem from many viewpoints, as Franklin did in his column, will offer the best understanding of the problem. This usually leads to the best solution.

> Rob Ignatowski Class of '89

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