



National Council of Churches of Singapore

新加坡基督教會協會

தேசிய தின நாள் நன்றி நவில்தல்

14 March 2017

## The National Council of Churches Singapore

### THE GAY AGENDA IN DISNEY'S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders,

For years, Disney has always been associated with wholesome values. In recent years, Disney has increased racial and ethnic diversity in the characters in its stories as well as recasting its female characters by presenting them as protagonists.

However, Walt Disney's new live-action remake of *Beauty and the Beast* portrays the character, LeFou, as gay. Bill Condon, the director of the movie and an openly gay man, created this sub-plot. In an interview with a British gay magazine, *Attitude*, Condon offers this description of LeFou:

LeFou is somebody who on one day wants to be Gaston and on another day wants to kiss Gaston ... He's confused about what he wants. It's somebody who's just realizing that he has these feelings. And Josh [i.e., Josh Gad, who plays the character] makes something really subtle and delicious out of it. And that's what has its payoff at the end, which I don't want to give away.

In addition, Condon describes this plotline as 'a nice, exclusive gay moment in a Disney movie'.

The inclusion of the 'gay moment' to the story by way of the sub-plot is totally unnecessary and signals a marked departure from the original 1991 Disney classic. The only instance of same-sex relationship in Disney's children's entertainment is on small screen, in an episode of 'Good Luck Charlie' in which one of Charlie's friends had two mothers.

This is the first time that an explicitly gay character is introduced in a Disney big screen production.

Gay activists have applauded Disney for its courage. For example, Matt Cain, Chief Editor of the gay magazine *Attitude* describes the plotline as 'a watershed moment for Disney'. He adds that it's 'a step in the right direction and I applaud Disney for being brave enough to make it – and in doing so hopefully helping change attitudes and bring about real social progress'.

Some Christian leaders here are deeply concerned about the LGBT representation in this new Disney movie. They see this as an attempt to influence young children and socialise them at an early age into thinking that the homosexual lifestyle is normal.

NCCS would like to urge pastors and church leaders to alert members of their congregation about the homosexual content in Disney's re-make of *Beauty and the Beast*. We would like our parents to be aware of this strand in the movie and its possible influence on their children who watch it, however subtle.

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Studies have shown that watching LGBT characters in popular entertainment may not only result in greater acceptance of these groups but also the lifestyles they have adopted.

According to Edward Schiappa, a professor of comparative media studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "There is no doubt that kids seeing positively portrayed gay characters could have a significant effect that would contribute to such children's learning about the world and who is in it".

NCCS would therefore encourage pastors and church leaders to urge members of their congregations – especially parents – to exercise discretion in guiding young children concerning viewing this movie.

Parents are also encouraged to be attentive to the entertainment choices of their children and engage in meaningful conversations with them as they seek to make sense of the world in which they live (Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 6:5).

Above all, NCCS would like to encourage parents to help their children to be rooted in the teachings of the Bible and the Church and to develop a biblical worldview that would enable them to respond to our rapidly changing culture.

Sincerely in Christ

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rennis Ponniah" with "Singapore" written above it.

Rt Rev Rennis Ponniah  
President, NCCS

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ngoei Foong Nghian".

Rev Dr Ngoei Foong Nghian  
General Secretary, NCCS