

Gay Lawyer Warns Parents: 'Beauty and the Beast' Will Rob Kids' Innocence

A gay lawyer warned that Disney's push for LGBT-inclusion could rob children's innocence.

"Prime-time network television is geared for an adult audience; one that understands the world we live in. Adults have long lost their innocence. Whether it be sex, drugs or violence, many of us have had our eyes open to the hardships of the world. We lost our innocence when we grew out of adolescence, but do we really want our kids to lose theirs in adolescence?" Joseph R. Murray writes in an opinion piece for the *Orlando Sentinel*.

His comments may surprise his fellow LGBT community members, many of whom are praising Disney's move to include more gay characters, as in the cartoon *Star Vs. The Forces of Evil*, which featured multiple same-sex couples kissing at a boy band concert.

Disney's new movie, *Beauty and the Beast*, will feature the first openly gay character, LeFou, who "is somebody who on one day, wants to be Gaston, and on another day, wants to kiss Gaston."

"Why do we have to expose our kids to such mature themes? Do they not have plenty of time to grow up? Or maybe the point is to make them grow up too soon, and that is where I part ways with my community," Murray writes.

Murray says he enjoys mature content on television because he is an adult. He argues a traditionally family-friendly company such as Disney has gone too far pushing an agenda, especially when children are involved.

"The vision for Walt's world was clear: Entertain children. Disney characters were about hope, optimism and, above all else, making sure children were able to enjoy their innocence for as long as the outside world would permit. And Disney understood that part of its mission was to provide a buffer for as long as possible," Murray writes.

"Somewhere along the line, Disney went off course. No longer did it see itself as a defender of children's innocence. Instead, it saw itself as a conduit to social change. Walt Disney became [gay activist and politician] Harvey Milk."

Conservative Christians, including Franklin Graham, have called for a boycott of the movie. Some theaters refuse to even show the film due to LeFou's sexuality. {eo}