

Is Hollywood Out of Step With Middle America?

Domestic ticket sales for movies continued to plummet in 2011 from their highs in the early 2000s, when *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Passion of the Christ* and ***Spider-Man*** ruled the box office, according to figures released recently by Hollywood.

Media scholar Dr. Ted Baehr, founder and chairman of the **Christian Film & Television Commission**, thinks many in Hollywood have lost touch with Middle America.

“They don’t know how to market to the average American who is a **churchgoing Christian** who believes in God, country and family,” says Baehr.

For instance, Baehr notes that industry figures show that Hollywood is making more and more R-rated movies, even though such movies are making less and less money.

According to The Numbers, a box office website, Hollywood released 205 R-rated movies in 2011 but only 184 in 2009, and 193 in 2010. Yet, the average R-rated movie in 2011 made only \$10.8 million in 2011, compared to \$12.6 million in 2010, and \$14.9 million in 2009.

In comparison, G-rated movies averaged \$34.6 million in 2011 when 18 G movies were released, \$56.6 million in 2010 when nine G movies were released, and \$19.9 million in 2009 when 15 G movies were released.

“That means G-rated movies can make up to three or five times as much money as R-rated movies,” Baehr says. “They also far outperform R-rated movies on DVD and Blu-ray. PG movies also do much better on average.”

Baehr will release more statistics on what movies did the best

at the box office and on home video at the 20th Annual Faith & Values Awards Gala and Report to the Entertainment Industry, to be held Feb. 10 at the Universal Hilton Hotel in the heart of Hollywood.

“Year in and year out, our statistics show that moviegoers prefer family-friendly movies with positive Christian, wholesome, patriotic, conservative, and traditional moral values,” Baehr says.

“Middle America wants to see, rent and buy entertaining movies with Christian, **biblical values** that they can show to their whole family. They want to see **good triumph over evil**, justice to prevail, truth to defeat falsehood and **purity to conquer lust**. They reject movies with explicit, graphic sex and violence.”