

Remaking 'Mary Poppins' With F-Words...Why Not?

With today's "anything goes" mentality, what's wrong with using profanity and expletives for emphasis in a movie? Even PG-13 movies for families like *Transformers: Dark of the Moon* and mischievous television cartoons are spicing things up with f-bombs.

Let me ask you something, "Are you paying attention to the frequency of f-word foul mouthery in the media today?" What was once prohibited in television and film is now promoted in ways unthinkable just a short time ago.

When I was growing up, Hollywood upheld a code of ethics for what they produced, entitled the "Hays Code." These moral guidelines were agreed upon by the major motion picture studios in order to honor marriage, family and common decency.

The standards concerning language banned certain words and phrases that were deemed to be offensive and degrading to sexuality and society.

The 60s sexual revolution brought about the end of this production code as our culture became more "enlightened" and "liberated." Comedian George Carlin celebrated this freedom by highlighting seven forbidden words in his routine and basically lampooning those that would oppose their usage.

Good taste and avoidance of that which would offend the sensibilities of most people, went out the window. The further we drifted from our Judeo-Christian foundations, the more we celebrated what was previously considered profane and unseemly.

"Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually

immoral”(Heb 13:4). Nope, we don’t believe that anymore!

“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name”(Ex 20:7). Nonsense, that commandment has no more relevance! So the floodgates were flung open... and where do we find ourselves today?

Here’s the deal: F-words and other profanities and even blasphemy are no longer taboo. As standards and restraints disappear, we are experiencing the tragic reality of Romans 3:13-14 describing a collapsing culture where unbelievers’ mouths are “full of cursing” and “their throats are an open grave.”

Surveying the Scene

Besides the featuring of f-bombs on T-shirts and increasing usage in pop culture publications, singers, celebrities and sports stars are more than willing to show their “coolness” factor with an f-this or f-that or pairing f with “mother” to be even more hip. Madonna slings an f-word at David Letterman while baseball star David Ortiz proclaims it to a packed stadium, kids and all, after the Boston bombing.

Every night, John Stewart has the crowd hootin’ and hollerin’ as he laces his comedic newscast with “f- him ... f-her ... f-them ... f-everyone!” *Saturday Night Live* peppers many of its humorous parodies with f-isms to ignite the laughter. The fact that these two shows bleep out the actual word doesn’t change the obvious “read my lips” trash talking.

The main culprit is the film industry where movies become Netflix streaming videos or Redbox takeaways and then content enters the cultural stream producing a corrosive effect on whatever morality still exists today.

At the recent Golden Globes awards extravaganza, one Hollywood actress brazenly declared, “Simply put—there’s no floor on how

low we're willing to go!"

Besides the graphic sex, explicit nudity, gratuitous violence and blatant celebration of the LGBTQ lifestyle, look at the language in today's films gaining all the accolades.

- *Dallas Buyers Club* received a major award as it featured over 100 f-words and 12 more tied to "mother." God's name was taken in vain 20 times.
- *American Hustle* garnered a Best Actress Award alongside of its 110 f-words and abusive use of God's holy name 20 times.
- *August: Osage County* was nominated with Oscar winner Meryl Streep portraying a woman fighting mouth cancer (poetic judgment?) and joining in the chorus with over 30 f-bombs and God's name taken in vain 30 times.
- The big prize for acting went to Leonardo DiCaprio in *Wolf of Wall Street*. Are you ready for this one? The movie featured over 700 profanities. There were 520 f-words; 40 abuses of God's name plus 25 of the Lord Jesus; and a new record for f-words in a flick: 2.8 per minute!
- There was a time not long ago when Clark Gable uttered the word "Damn" in *Gone With the Wind* and people were aghast. Today actors and actresses spew out profanities and vulgarities a mile a minute and crowds stand to applaud and hand them their statuette award.

Personally, I am grateful for a ministry like Plugged In that serves all of us as a resource and gives us an overview of a film in terms of violence, profanities, nudity, sexual scenes and overall content from a biblical worldview. I wholeheartedly endorse this website and encourage everyone to avail themselves of this ministry *before* attending a movie. By so doing, we can all better honor God in our entertainment choices as well as avoid embarrassing situations where we sink in our seats thinking, "What am I doing here?"

A Fresh Reminder Amid the Frequency of the F-Bombs

Peter told us these words, "So I will always remind you of these things even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory..." (2 Pet 1:12-13):

But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned" (Matt. 12:36-7).

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God." (Eph. 4:29).

The origin of the F-word is widely disputed. Some accounts say it stems from soldiers in other eras who contracted venereal disease and medical doctors stamped their documents with the abbreviation: "Fornicating Under Carnal Knowledge" (Recall the Van Halen album For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge?). Others say it refers to prostitutes and immoral men in colonial times who engaged in illicit sexual activity and were put in stocks with that abbreviation above their head.

Regardless of its origin, let's purpose in our hearts to live as an alternate society that steers clear of unholy associations and represents Him by living in happy holiness. While we pray earnestly for a spiritual awakening, may we "become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life..." (Phil 2:15-16).

***Larry Tomczak** is a best-selling author and cultural commentator with more than 41 years of trusted ministry experience. His passion is to bring perspective, analysis and insight from a biblical worldview (see 'Is Gay OK? 10 Things*

Everyone Needs to know' now on YouTube). He loves awakening people to today's cultural realities and responses needed for a restored, influential church. Please visit .