

Warner Bros. Won't Say Gay in China

It is beyond ironic that, at the very same time Disney is using all its might to oppose Florida's Education Bill (falsely named the "Don't Say Gay Bill"), Warner Bros. has announced that it will not say gay in China. Specifically, the Hollywood giant has stated that it will be deleting a six-second gay dialogue in *Fantastic Beasts 3: The Secrets of Dumbledore* lest it offend the Chinese viewing audience.

It would seem, then, that for Hollywood the mantra is, "In the USA, we must say gay, no matter who we alienate and offend. But when it comes to China, where our financial losses will be much steeper, we mustn't say gay at all, especially in a children's movie, lest we offend."

To quote Warner directly, "As a studio, we're committed to safeguarding the integrity of every film we release, and that extends to circumstances that necessitate making nuanced cuts in order to respond sensitively to a variety of in-market factors. Our hope is to release our features worldwide as released by their creators but historically we have faced small edits made in local markets."

"In the case of 'Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore,' a six-second cut was requested and Warner Bros. accepted those changes to comply with local requirements but the spirit of the film remains intact. We want audiences everywhere in the world to see and enjoy this film, and it's important to us that Chinese audiences have the opportunity to experience it as well, even with these minor edits."

Put another way, "The Chinese government gave us no choice, demanding we remove that dialogue if we wanted the movie to run. Of course, we immediately complied."

To add again to the irony, 11 months ago it was reported on the Giant Freakin Robot website that “The DC Extended Universe continues to expand, working its way away from the core Justice Leaguers who were the staple when they started. Over the next many years we are going to see kinds of new characters work their way into the Warner Bros. mix in a number of different ways. And apparently, it won’t just (be) adding new characters willy-nilly to the group. According to insider Daniel Richtman, there is a plan to make sure at least 10 LGBT characters are part of the group as they expand the roster. It’s a bold undertaking by the studio in that they have major plans to really bring a whole new look to their current franchise.”

About that same time last year, *The Hollywood Reporter* announced that “Diversity and representation remain key drivers of the DC universe moving forward. Warners is developing a Latino Blue Beetle movie with Angel Manuel Soto attached to direct, and HBO Max is casting for a gay Green Lantern character for an upcoming series.”

But what else should we expect? This has been in the cards for a long time now, and so, soon enough, the superhero universe will be filled with gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and queer role models for our kids. Why should this surprise us in the least? (See my article “Batman’s Robin Is Bi – But Nobody Has an Agenda.”)

When it comes to the *Fantastic Beasts 3* movie, it would be fair to ask why it is important to introduce the subject of homosexuality into the movie at all, especially in such a passing way. After all, what does this have to do with the storyline of the movie? (For a related question, see my article “Why Did Disney’s ‘Jungle Cruise’ Have to Go Gay?”)

The answer would seem to be twofold. First, this is what Hollywood does. Second, this is not merely any six-second dialogue between unimportant characters. This is about the

beloved sorcerer Dumbledore himself.

As explained by Yahoo News, "Author J.K. Rowling revealed at a 2007 fan event for 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows' that Dumbledore identifies as gay. The character's sexual orientation was not referenced in previous 'Fantastic Beast' installments but has been revealed for the first time in the newest film."

So, at last, for the world to see on the big screen, *this* secret of Dumbledore will be revealed.

The only real surprise is that it took Warner Bros. this long to tip its hand.

The fact that this powerful and influential company chose "to respond sensitively" to China while ignoring the concerns of many Americans is no surprise at all. {eoa}

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