



Culture War: Why We Need a Revival of Biblical Filmmaking

The adage that “a picture is worth a thousand words” is one of significant application in conservatives’ effort to turn the tide of the culture war through the judicious use of multimedia.

Part of the reason the Right fell by the wayside in culture is because they allowed the Left to gain a virtual monopoly on the institutions that shape culture, including the arts.

And among the popular arts, motion pictures remain one of the most influential mediums. Being visual art that can tell stories through images and enhance them with music and unique cinematography, films can explore themes in a way that is commercially digestible and thus capable of moving the masses on a level arguably superior to that of the written word.



Luis Miguel

Those who wish to influence on a mass scale may be tempted to deride our era as a post-literate age and wish that more people would crack open a book and read. While we would all like to get more people reading, the reality is that humans, by nature, have always been more drawn to what they can see and hear.

Let’s not forget that, while most of us today are familiar with the seminal literary works of Shakespeare because we’ve read his plays, those works were meant to be watched, not read.

Realizing the immense power of cinema, the Left astutely infiltrated the film industry. Now, Hollywood is virtually synonymous with liberalism.

But it wasn’t always this way. Conservatives and Republicans had a lot of clout in the studios through the 1960s. The infamous Hollywood Blacklist of artists associated with the Communist Party USA would be unthinkable today. It was implemented not by government coercion, but voluntarily by the studio heads themselves.

It was really in the 1970s that liberals completely took over Hollywood. This change was, in part, the result of a generational transfer of power. The filmmakers and executives from Hollywood’s “Golden Age” got old and stepped down. The generation who took over had been liberalized through the universities and the counterculture in music and literature. They brought their politics with them.

Nowadays, many mainstream movies are little more than vehicles for woke politics. Even content that isn’t explicitly political includes liberal messaging here and there: A joke at the expense of Christian “zealots” here; a positive portrayal of gay couples there; a positive reference to abortion here or there.



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on March 16, 2023

There is also the more subtle social engineering that is produced by the constant profanity, sexual content, and gory violence in movies nowadays. All of this serves to desensitize viewers and normalize the behaviors that the Left wants to promote.

Of course, liberals argue that they are simply portraying society “as it is.” But there is truth to the principle that art influences life as much as life influences art. Constant swearing and promiscuous casual sex were once both socially frowned upon and rare in film; the inclusion of these elements in mainstream entertainment helped normalize them.

Those who say you can’t make great art without these elements have probably never seen anything before 1980. Classics such as *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Citizen Kane*, *12 Angry Men*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Patton*, *The Seventh Seal*, and *2001: A Space Odyssey*, just to name a few, are proof that a film can be cerebral, tackle serious themes, and be captivatingly entertaining without profanity and excessive gore and sexual content.

Moreover, in the past, the studios proved that biblical or Christian-themed films could not only be smart and artistic — they could be immensely profitable and even critically acclaimed. Cecil B. DeMille’s 1956 epic *The Ten Commandments*, starring Charlton Heston and Yul Brynner, was the biggest box-office hit of that year. Biblical films or films with Christian themes have even won the Oscar for best picture — *Ben-Hur* (1959), *A Man for All Seasons* (1966), *Chariots of Fire* (1981).

As recently as 1998, the animated film *The Prince of Egypt* showed that films aimed at a general audience can look at Christianity from a non-derogatory perspective and still be commercially and artistically viable.

If the Right wants to move the culture back to a moral, biblical foundation, it isn’t enough to exclusively influence through news media and education — although these are a good start. The average person is not overtly political and gets many of his notions of the world through the entertainment he consumes. Thus, the conservative movement must branch into entertainment, including motion pictures.

The recent trend of superhero films and their box-office appeal demonstrates that there is a void to be filled. As many pop-culture students have pointed out, superheroes are comparable to ancient myths and legends that captivated and entertained ancient peoples, such as the stories of Hercules, Perseus, and Odysseus in ancient Greece.

For the ancient peoples, these stories were not only entertainment, but part of their religion. Extrapolating this pattern to our contemporary world, is it any wonder that in an era when faith and religiosity have gone down, interest in superhero media has gone up? For many, religious fervor has been replaced by media fandom. But the point is that there is a void that people are trying to fill.

The conservative movement must tap into this, creating content that embraces biblical and traditional values in a way that engages general audiences. There is such a wealth of source material to work from in the Bible and in the history of Christianity — enough to produce several blockbuster epics.

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