

Adoption community makes itself heard

Heidi Schlumpf | Jun. 9, 2009 NCR Today



Pro-life groups often purport to support adoption as well as oppose abortion, but you rarely

find them on the streets with protest signs when adoption is under attack. Traditional pro-life groups (including the UCCB's [Pro-Life Activities Office](#) [1], which doesn't even include adoption as one of their issues) have been noticeably silent, for example, about the extremely negative portrayal of adoption and adoptees in the new horror movie, "[Orphan](#) [2]," scheduled for release July 24 by Dark Castle Entertainment, Warner Bros. and Leonardo DiCaprio's Appian Way.

The adoption community, on the other hand, took action as soon as the trailer -- featuring the tag line "It must be hard to love an adopted child as much as your own" -- came out. Messages made the rounds on various adoption listserves, a [Facebook page](#) [3] (3,000+ members strong) was created and calls were made to Warner Bros.

The movie is about a family who adopts an older girl who is "not what she appears to be." A hook to the film ultimately removes the orphan stigma, but the trailer sends an extremely negative adoption message, feeding on the people's fears that older adoptees are dangerously troubled. Although the movie is rated R, these backward messages in the popular culture can be extremely painful and damaging to adopted children and teenagers. It's hard to imagine that any other group could be vilified in such a way -- even if it is in a silly slasher film.

Within days Scott Rowe, senior vice president of corporate communication at Warner Bros., contacted the Facebook moderators with the news that they are changing the marketing materials for the movie and removing the offending tagline. (The new one is: "There's something wrong with Esther.") He also mentioned that Warner Bros. gets death threats for things as trivial as changing the release date of the new Harry Potter film. "Yet the adoption community, who are protecting their children and who have every right to be angry, has been nothing but respectful," he said.

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[1] <http://www.nccbuscc.org/prolife/>

[2] <http://orphan-movie.warnerbros.com/>

[3]

<https://www.facebook.com/s.php?init=q&q=Orphan+movie&ref=ts&sid=545922878fdd734d567f690ac9>