

BOYS LIKE “BOOK OF MORMON

We recently commented on the way critics received the new Broadway musical from Trey Parker and Matt Stone, “The Book of Mormon.”

When Parker and Stone die, the obit page should label them as talented yet cowardly artists. After all, as Terry Teachout said in the *Wall Street Journal*, it takes no guts to bash Mormons on Broadway. Real men would rip Muslims. But the creators of “South Park” have already proven they aren’t men. When asked about the show and its creators, Bill Donohue said, “They’re boys. And that is who this scatological exercise appeals to.”

The critics, of course, adore the musical. The New York *Daily News* and the *New York Post* are supposed to be competitors, but their play critics appear to have the same sense of humor: they both liked the part where “a giant middle finger to God” appears. The *Los Angeles Times* chuckled over a scene featuring genital mutilation of African women. AP loved the “running joke” about a man who has “maggots in his scrotum.” And Andrew Sullivan got a big kick out of the part where they twisted a Mormon teaching to read, “F**k You God in The C**t.”

Real men would admit that they love bashing Mormons. But the critics are also mere boys. Sullivan praised the musical for its “humaneness.” The *Los Angeles Times* boasted of its “good intentions.” AP called it a “pro-religion musical.” *Newsday* wrote that it “seems smitten” to “do good.”

The reaction of homosexual reviewers is always fun to read. Sullivan justified the Mormon bashing by saying we should judge “Mormonism by Mormons.” Ben Brantley of the *New York Times* was hot over the scene where there are a “few choice words for the God who let them [AIDS victims] wind up this way.” But if we were to judge homosexuals by what they do, we would know who caused them to wind up with AIDS. That would take real guts.

It is obvious why Parker and Stone decided to attack Mormons: this was payback for the role that Mormons played in supporting Proposition 8, the California ballot resolution that affirmed marriage as a union between a man and a woman. This was one of the few times Mormons got actively involved in a policy issue.

As Teachout observed, this production is made for “12-year-old boys who have yet to graduate from fart jokes to ‘Glee.’” It should do well.