

POLITICS EXPLAINS “O’NEALS”

2nd SEASON

Anyone who thinks that money alone drives Hollywood doesn’t understand the role that ideology plays. For instance, we’ve known for years that “G” and “PG” movies fare better at the box office than “R” rated films, yet the sages in Tinseltown continue to offer the trash that often marks the latter. That’s because they can: they make enough cash from family-oriented films to subsidize their underperforming “R” rated flicks.

Similarly, when it comes to TV programs, the Hollywood crowd will go the extra mile for shows that advance its ideological agenda, even if it means taking a hit in revenue. Bringing back “The Real O’Neals” for a second season, which started on October 11, is a case in point.

Nielson ratings for the 2015-2016 season reveal that ABC chose to cancel four shows that drew a larger audience than “The Real O’Neals.” Here is the proof (TV shows were ranked from 1-196):

Show	Ranking
“Castle”	44
“Blood & Oil”	78
“The Muppets”	90
“The Family”	104
“The Real O’Neals” ranked 106.	

Of the four shows that had better ratings than “The Real O’Neals,” three of them were cancelled after one season; “Castle” lasted eight seasons. So why was “The Real O’Neals,” with its offensive anti-Catholic fare, renewed but the others were not?

It is hard to resist the conclusion that Disney/ABC made a

calculated ideological decision not to give in to pressure from the Catholic League, the Media Research Center, and others. These organizations objected to the show largely because it was loosely based on the life of co-producer, Dan Savage: He is a raging anti-Catholic bigot.

It does not speak well for Disney/ABC to allow its politics—the politics of bigotry—to color its decision making. Let's see how its predilections affect the upcoming scripts.