



When chance is not blind chance

The Blind Side

Out on DVD in August is *The Blind Side*. This film is based on the true story of Michael Oher (played by Quinton Aaron) who now plays for the Baltimore Ravens as offensive left tackle. The movie won Sandra Bullock the Best Actress Oscar at the 2010 Academy Awards and was a major box-office financial success surprising some critics.

Michael's home background was one of chronic neglect, homelessness and lack of education, but he eventually ended up in a private Christian school because of his football potential. Here he met the Tuohy family and the mother who would play such an influential part in his life: Leigh Anne Tuohy (played by Sandra Bullock). Leigh Anne, her husband Sean and children Jae and Collins bring Michael into their family and provide the start to a life he could never have had otherwise. They enlist Miss Sue to provide special tuition (wonderful supporting role for Kathy Bates), and his grades reach the required level. There is mostly a good portrayal of the family as they come across as a normal family, and their strong evangelical Christian faith is not presented as weird or unusual. This is a key to the integrity of the film and was apparently something that made Sandra Bullock hesitant in taking on the role. Evangelical Christianity is not highly regarded in Hollywood, and yet as Bill Muehlenberg shows in his perceptive piece on this film and Hollywood, presents a dilemma for the companies which focus on huge

box office receipts. "But love of money tends to triumph over pushing radical leftist agendas, so family-friendly films still keep coming out of Hollywood."

<http://www.billmuehlenberg.com/2010/03/09/the-blind-side-and-hollywood%e2%80%99s-dilemma/>

In the same year, another film about a disadvantaged and abused child was released. *Precious* also won an Academy Award, this one for Best Supporting Actress for Mo'Nique who played the mother of *Precious*, and the contrast in mothering displayed could not have been more marked.

Coincidence versus God incidence.

The Note (2007) is a DVD release from Hallmark TV channel. The movie is based on the book by Christian author Angela Elwell Hunt. She adapted the screenplay of *The Nativity Story*, a movie I reviewed in an early edition of ACCatalyst.

Many of her books are written as modern day parables with a moral theme designed to have people think more about their own life and background.

In *The Note*, Newspaper columnist Peyton MacGruder, played by Genie Francis discovers a hastily scribbled note in the aftermath of a plane crash in the USA.

Genie achieved fame as Laura on *General Hospital* and even made it on the cover of *Newsweek* in 1981, with her on-screen husband for the most watched daytime drama event in TV history.

The note found by Peyton was

Jae Head as S.J., Quinton Aaron as Michael Oher and Sandra Bullock as Leigh Anne Tuohy

the last communication of a father to a child simply given the initial T. Peyton's column 'Heart Healer' is struggling for readers and it finds new life as she begins to track down who T was, while also revisiting some of her own past family experiences. Ted McGinley plays a journalist colleague with family issues of his own and together they are able to help each other see their need for forgiveness. Interestingly McGinley is better known as Jefferson in probably the most significant "anti-family" comedy, *Married with Children*, so this is a significant role reversal for him.

The connections and plot development in *The Note* may remind you of a Charles Dickens novel, but all of us know that there are events we cannot explain by worldly coincidence.

While not produced as a Christian film, this is a film which raises many good questions for discussion, especially about forgiveness, love, relationships and parenting. Hallmark publicized the film in 2007 with a website where people could post their final comment if they only had a minute. This film reminded me of the final words that people on the hi-jacked 9/11 airplanes left for their loved ones as voice messages when they could not speak to them in person. Who would you write a final note to? What would you say?

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Muehlenberg's Blindsight view

Hollywood has a big problem. It is constantly facing a major dilemma involving two well-established facts. Fact number one: The denizens of Hollywood are overwhelmingly secular leftists...

Fact number two: More often than not, the best money-making films are those with a pro-faith and pro-family message....

But if they want to get rich and stay rich, then they have to cater to the tastes of most Americans. They really are in a dilemma. But love of money tends to triumph over pushing radical leftist agendas, so family-friendly films still keep coming out of Hollywood. (See web link in Bentley Review)