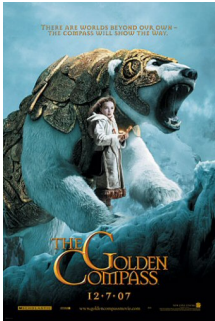


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By: Monica Gaza, Entertainment News Editor



The movie is set to be a box office flop

"The Golden Compass" Boycotted Due to Anti-God Themes

The "atheists versus Catholics" match is about to begin - the box office will decide who wins

I was half-expecting a stunt like this, and honestly, I'm surprised it happened so late. I mean, it's the end of October already and the movie is set to be launched in December, so I think the Christian groups who began dubbing the upcoming movie "atheist" should have made their move sooner. Now all the noise they're making will only serve as more free publicity for the New Line production - which may after all prove to be a good thing, as many critics see the movie as a sure box office flop. So what is the fuss all about? Well, the film is based on the first volume of a trilogy of books written by British best-selling author Philip Pullman (who is a known atheist) and deals with a little girl called Lyra who lives in a world in which the Church is an all-powerful, evil and domineering force. Christian groups are boycotting and staging a campaign against "The Golden Compass" - but they seem to forget that the book (just like the movie) is pure fiction. I'm having some flashbacks to when "The Da Vinci Code" was first published - but I honestly thought some people would be a lot smarter than to take a children's book for pure fact. I guess I was wrong... The fact is, there's a twist to this plot. The people who wrote the screenplay for "The Golden Compass" were afraid the movie will spark controversy, and so they tried to take out all potentially offending aspects. However, Christian and Catholic groups are more concerned with the books and feel that with the movie will send children running to read the rest of the books. "These books denigrate Christianity, thrash the Catholic Church and sell the virtues of atheism," said Bill Donohue, president and CEO of the Catholic League. How many times do I have to repeat it? It's a book, people, it's pure fiction. The head of the Freedom From Religion Foundation said, "What this book is about is casting off Church authority. I think it's very, very positive. There should be something for freethinking children. It's a very good yarn". Pullman himself (who has been involved in the whole process of bringing the book to life by means of the movie) has noted that "this must be the only film attacked in the same week for being too religious and for being anti-religious - and by people who haven't seen it. I have very friendly and happy relations with the filmmakers, and I'm very happy with what they are doing". Well, you can watch the trailer for the movie below. In case you decide to see it, it comes out on December 7th. Enjoy!