

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1268 Are You Ready for Winnie The Pooh — the Killer Version?

America, capitalism, a wonderful experiment into the realm of possibility. This is a place where anyone can be anything, and can pursue opportunity. I'm Jerry Roberts and here's the question: Does this capitalism thing sometimes get too far out of whack? Let's talk about that, next on The Extra Point.

Here we are in the most remote corner of the U.S., where America's capitalistic tendencies begin. We again address the question to you: Does this capitalism thing sometimes get too far out of whack? Do we go too far?

Some people have raised that issue when scientists began conceiving sheep in a test tube. They've now successfully birthed sheep from an artificial womb. Only time will tell when they start trying to generate humans that way. Again, is it going too far?

We now have artificial intelligence knocking on the door, ready to enter almost every type of job and change our world in ways we can only imagine. Science rarely understands the words "no" and "stop," so it's anybody's guess where AI is headed.

Let's get away from the scientific stuff and into entertainment. There's a new movie out, and I don't know if it will come to Guam, but maybe it shouldn't. It's *Winnie The Pooh: Blood and Honey*. It opened this past Friday and has already grossed \$2.5 million in ticket sales.

That's not very much by Hollywood's standards. However, *Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey* is a financial hit because it cost less than \$100,000 to make, which means it's already grossed 25 times its production budget — a massive return for its backers.

You'd think that the producers would have to pay more than that for just the rights to use the Pooh brand, right? Nope, it cost nothing. How could that be?

The filmmakers struck gold because the 1926

storybook, titled *Winnie-the-Pooh*, which introduced the character, passed into the "public domain" in 2022, voiding its copyright, and ending Disney's exclusivity.

This means you can produce a Winnie the Pooh movie, or book, or anything else, and you don't have to ask permission or share the profits with anybody.

So, back to my original thought, that sometimes capitalism has people going off the deep end. *Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey* has turned the cuddly Winnie into a crazed, grizzly killer. That's why there's "blood" in the title.

Disney can do nothing. The original creators' family, if alive, also are powerless. The law is on the side of the producers. So, will it end with this freak flick? Nope.

Also set to fall out of copyright and into the public domain are:

Mickey Mouse (2024), Pluto (2025), and Donald Duck (2029). You might be tempted to be a bit gleeful over these Disney properties going public, given what kind of a company Disney has become. However, wait, there's more.

Superman will leap tall buildings and out of copyright in 2033, James Bond will go public in 2034, and a whole slew of Marvel comic heroes come out in the mid-2030s.

There is one part of copyright law that prevents wholesale abuse of these characters we know. It's that the copyright expires for the specific version of the character or work that was listed in the original documents.

The Mickey Mouse we know today has a big smile, big eyes, and white gloves. However, the Mickey Mouse from 1929, whose copyright expires in 2024, had smaller eyes and didn't wear white gloves.

(Con't.)

Disney will still hold the copyright for the white-gloved version of Mickey.

Similarly, the original Superman just jumped over buildings and the like, but wasn't seen flying. Thus, the jet-propelled Superman will be protected for a while longer.

The producers of the Winnie the Pooh movie say we won't have to wait long for their next offerings.

Peter Pan's Neverland Nightmare and *Bambi: The Reckoning* are in the works. The latter film, will feature Bambi as a vicious killing machine that lurks in the wilderness.

Maybe capitalism will win out here, if the market turns its back on transforming things we once knew as fun or lovable, into demonic savages. Maybe people will refuse to buy tickets.

If *Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey* is an example, I would say not to hold your breath.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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