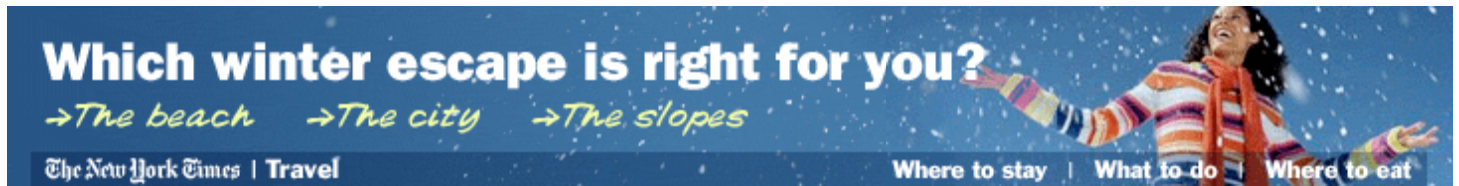


Go to a Section Search: 
[Movies Home](#) | [Current Releases](#) | [Showtimes & Tickets](#) | [Coming Soon](#) | [News](#) | [Reviews](#) | [DVD](#) | [Box Office](#)

Cut From the Oscars: Cartoon Characters' Sins

By [DAVID M. HALBFINGER](#)

Published: February 27, 2005

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 26 - ABC executives have forced [Robin Williams](#) to drop a comic song from the Oscars show that might well have proved one of the most political and racy numbers of the broadcast, despite the fact that the network and the show's host, [Chris Rock](#), have been promoting the night as anything but tame.

Mr. Williams, the presenter of the Academy Award for best animated feature, decided last week that his one minute on stage would be a prime time to lampoon the conservative critic James C. Dobson, whose group Focus on the Family last month criticized the cartoon character SpongeBob SquarePants for appearing in a video about tolerance that the group called "pro-homosexual."

For a bit of material, Mr. Williams predictably turned to Marc Shaiman, the composer, whose oeuvre includes Oscar-night medleys for [Billy Crystal](#) and songs for shows like "Hairspray" and movies like "South Park: Bigger Longer & Uncut".

Overnight, Mr. Shaiman and his partner, Scott Wittman, dashed off a mock exposé of the dark underbelly of cartoonland for Mr. Williams to deliver, over a gospel-music groove, as if he were a full-throated preacher inveighing against other newly-discovered sinners in the nation's midst:

"Pinocchio's had his nose done! Sleeping Beauty is popping pills! The Three Little Pigs ain't kosher! Betty Boop works Beverly Hills!"

The producer of the Oscars telecast, Gil Cates, urged Mr. Shaiman to make the bit "less political," Mr. Shaiman said, so he quickly removed any reference to Mr.

[Showtimes & Tickets](#)

Search by Movie Title:

And/Or by ZIP Code or City:

ARTICLE TOOLS [Printer-Friendly Format](#) [Most E-Mailed Articles](#)ARTICLE TOOLS **SIDWAYS**
SPONSORED BY **NOW PLAYING IN THEATERS**[▶ GO TO COMPLETE COVERAGE](#) **Most E-Mailed**

1. [Speculators Seeing Gold in a Boom in the Prices for Homes](#)
2. [Op-Ed Columnist: To Have and to Hold, for Richer for Poorer](#)
3. [Op-Ed Contributor: Don't Blame Wal-Mart](#)
4. [Op-Ed Columnist: Just Say No](#)
5. [Looking for Personality in Animals, of All People](#)

[Go to Complete List](#)

Advertisement

Dobson's protests - and turned Mr. Williams into a fabulous, lisping character dishing up the latest juicy gossip:

"Fred Flintstone is dyslexic, Jessica Rabbit is really a man, Olive Oyl is really anorexic, and Casper is in the Ku Klux Klan!"

Officials from ABC's broadcast standards and practices office were not pleased. On Thursday, they detailed their objections.

Some lines were opposed for "sexual tone," as the ABC officials, Susan Futterman and Olivia Cohen Cutler, put it to Mr. Williams, Mr. Shaiman and Mr. Cates. These lines included "Chip 'n Dale are both strippers," "Bugs Bunny's a sexaholic," and "Josie and the Pussycats dance on laps."

In the end, however, the sexual references would have been allowed, a network spokesman said. But they held the line on material that they believed might be seen as glorifying drug use or offending Native Americans or disabled people.

Among other lines, they included "The Road Runner's hooked on speed" and "Pocahontas is addicted to craps."

On Friday, faced with rewriting or killing as many as 11 lines out of a 36-line piece, Mr. Shaiman said, he and Mr. Wittman refused, and Mr. Williams had to look for new material.

Mr. Williams, interviewed at the Independent Spirit Awards on Saturday, said he was disappointed.

"For a while you get mad, then you get over it," he said. "They're afraid of saying Olive Oyl is anorexic. It tells you about the state of humor. It's strange to think: how afraid are you?"

He added: "We thought that they got the irony of it. I guess not."

Sharon Waxman contributed reporting for this article.

Special Offer: Home Delivery of The Times from \$2.90/week.

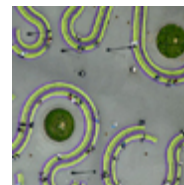


Photo: Park Benches, 2003
[Learn More.](#)

Business
nytimes.com/business

What's next for Harvey Weinstein and Disney?

Also in Business:

- ➔ [Product placements in the movies](#)
- ➔ [Why is Brian Williams smiling?](#)
- ➔ [Is the US a nation of germophobes?](#)

ADVERTISER LINKS

[what's this?](#)

NOBODY WANTS YOUR FILM

Steve Buscemi - Sam Rockwell Peter Dinklage - Peter Stormare
nobodywantsyourfilm.com

Sideways academy award

The Academy Awards: Will Sideways get an Oscar for Best Picture?
www.consumer-opinions.org

Turtlez Ltd

Creators of Mini Motty, & many more Desktop Characters and News Tickers
www.turtlez.com

OUR ADVERTISERS

30 free trades
at Ameritrade.
Join now.

TOP NYTIMES.COM ARTICLES

- [Supreme Court Bars Death Penalty for Juvenile Killers](#)
- [Leaders Sharpen the Call for Syrian Troops to Leave Lebanon](#)
- [B. T. K. Suspect Is Charged With 10 Murder Counts](#)

TIMES NEWS TRACKER

Topics [Alerts](#)
Williams, Robin

- [U.S. Cites Array of Rights Abuses by the Iraqi Government in 2004](#)
[Go to NYTimes.com Home](#)

TOP MOVIES ARTICLES

- [Critic's Notebook: A Ceremony Stuck in the Past Clings to Its Old Glory](#)
- [Ratings for Oscars Down a Bit, Despite Innovations](#)
- [Later, Stars \(and Claws\) Come Out](#)
- [Critic's Choice: New DVD's](#)
[Go to Movies](#)

[Dobson, James C](#)

[Wittman, Scott](#)

[Oscars](#)

Track news that interests you.

› Create Your Own	› Manage
› Most Popular Alerts	› Take a Tour

[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#) 