

THE NIGHT OF THE LONG KNIVES— THE 72nd ACADEMY AWARDS CEREMONIES

By Dr. Ted Baehr, Publisher

The 72nd Oscar ceremonies were a long but generally tasteful presentation of the most tasteless movie awards in the history of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Billy Crystal shined in the first half-hour, except when he cross-dressed as Mrs. Robinson from *THE GRADUATE*. The retrospectives of movies throughout the 20th Century left much to be desired because there was no thematic unity. Anyone who had the opportunity to see the magnificent history of Jesus in movies at the *Eighth Annual MOVIEGUIDE® Awards Gala and Report to the Entertainment Industry* would be struck by the contrast in talent and production values.

First time Academy Awards producers Richard and Lili Zanuck tried to streamline the ceremonies by cutting the dance numbers (The Gap picked up West Side Story dance numbers for its commercials) and curbing the long acceptance speeches of years past. Also, for the first time in my memory, the recipients avoided all references to God and higher virtues, although God was mentioned as an exclamatory profanity.

Somewhere in the streamlining process, the political speeches of years past were dropped, although John Irving was able to extol the abortion message of the movie he adapted from his book, *THE CIDER HOUSE RULES*, and Hilary Swank, who won for her cross-dressing role in *BOYS DON'T CRY*, prayed for the day when America “would celebrate its diversity.”

This request seemed disingenuous in the midst of an Academy Awards ceremony which was shoving diversity down America's throat while cutting away at everything that is moral, decent and true. For instance, *AMERICAN BEAUTY*, the vicious homosexual attack on the American family, swept the big awards in every category except best actress, where it was one upped by the deceitful, cross-dressing performance of Hilary Swank in *BOYS DON'T CRY*. Ironically, despite all this sanctimonious talk of diversity, most of the awards went to white men!!!

Going from the least important to the most important Oscar, the first sign of trouble was when the excessively violent movie *THE MATRIX* walked away with Visual Effects, Movie Editing, Sound, and Sound Effects Editing. Thus, *THE MATRIX* ended up trumping movies which should have won in these categories (*THE PHANTOM MENACE* and *STUART LITTLE*). The inexplicable logic of *THE MATRIX* winning the four awards suggested not so much that it deserved these awards, but rather that the Academy members were proclaiming that they didn't care about the influence of this ultra-violent movie on our youth.

Not caring about our youth seemed to be the theme of the awards, which passed over positive and redemptive movies for movies that pushed a vicious, mean-spirited, homoerotic agenda and even the “neo-nazi throw the baby in the incinerator agenda” of John Irving's *CIDER HOUSE RULES*.

Even the *THALBERG AWARD* went to a mediocre moviemaker whose only commendable attribute was his outspoken lifelong commitment to Marxism: Warren Beatty.

As a result, *MOVIEGUIDE®* and many of the most prominent secular press were disappointed with the Academy choices. The New York Times news service ran an article

with the headline, "According to Oscar, nation's psyche a mess." The NY times summed up the Awards with the comment, "17 Oscar nominations went to movies that demonstrate the national obsession with nuts" and went on to say, "Once upon a time, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences honored movies about tightly knit clans....This year no less than 12 nominations have gone to movies about fractured families...." Furthermore in its sagacious analysis, the Times commented that "heroism is dead" in Hollywood. When the leading press has nothing good to say about the Academy choices, its clear that the Academy has descended into new depths of politically correct dysfunctionality. Is this Monica Lewinsky and Bill Clinton's revenge on America?

The Oscar winning movies are enough to make any sane person very discouraged by the entertainment industry...unless you went to the *Eighth Annual MOVIEGUIDE® Awards Gala and Report to the Entertainment Industry*, which lifted up movies such as TOY STORY 2, which proclaimed that family was more important than fame, and THE WINSLOW BOY, which quoted Jesus Christ in order to win a legal case and redeem the innocent; as well as television programs that set forth the Gospel of Jesus Christ clearly, showed people coming to Jesus Christ and showed a gang member repenting of revenge.

The good news is that the Academy's choices do not reflect the choices of the American public. The American people went to the box office and voted for heroism in TOY STORY 2, TARZAN and THE PHANTOM MENACE. They also voted for morality and decency, thus making the better movies the top grossing movies. Furthermore, the good news is that the MOVIEGUIDE® Award winners were those movies and television programs that the American people chose at the box office and in the Nielsen ratings.

Regrettably, some people will be confused by the perverse choices of the Academy and will rush out to see some of these immoral winners. Soon thereafter, MOVIEGUIDE® phones will ring with the question, "How could they?" The remedy to this confusion is for you to tell your friends not to be duped by the self-promotion of the media elite, but to consult MOVIEGUIDE®, the only worthy critical source which reflects Christian faith and values.

One might wonder how Steven Spielberg could give an award to, much less make, a movie that promotes pedophilia or how the Academy could vote for a movie that promotes the principles of the Holocaust. Regrettably, both choices show Hollywood's obsession with sex rather than sanity—a lust that foreshadows some dark days ahead if the American people fail to become media-wise.

Remarks from the stage:

MICHAEL CAINE to fellow best supporting actor nominee Tom Cruise: "If you had won this, your price would have gone down so fast. Have you any idea what supporting actors get paid?"

CHER speaking of her relatively conservative dress: "You've probably already noticed that I'm dressed like a grown-up. I apologize to the academy and promise I will never do it again."

HILARY SWANK to her mom: "It looks like living out of our car was worth it."

The Oscar goes to. . .

None of the winners were MOVIEGUIDE® choices. Two of the awards, however, were runner-up choices, THE RED VIOLIN for Best Original Score and "You'll Be in My Heart" (TARZAN) for Best Original Song.

BEST PICTURE: AMERICAN BEAUTY, a predictable, pretentious, politically correct movie, converts a middle-aged businessman into a pot-smoking pedophile who tries to molest his daughter's underage friend, makes a peeping tom and drug dealer the hero, bashes the military, mocks sexual morality and monogamy, and portrays two very fractured families. It violates every real sense of truth, beauty and goodness.

ACTOR: Kevin Spacey, AMERICAN BEAUTY. Mr. Spacey has already received many accolades for his role as Lester Burnham, a disenfranchised suburban man who turns to marijuana, extortion and lusting after a teenage girl. His character keeps extolling his own personal freedom, but it comes to a tragic cost to all those around him whom he once loved, but now has lost the ability to love or care at all. Ironically, Lester irrationally criticizes his wife's materialism just after he's spent thousands of dollars on a classic car fit for a teenager, not a mature adult.

ACTRESS: Hilary Swank, BOYS DON'T CRY. In this movie, Ms. Swank plays a young woman who deliberately deceives the people around her by posing as a man. This is not a role model for young people; it's a travesty of the identity we've each been freely given by our Benevolent, Divine Creator.

SUPPORTING ACTOR: Michael Caine, THE CIDER HOUSE RULES. Caine's character is an abortionist and moral pragmatist who's also a neo-Nazi socialist. Throughout the movie, he constantly makes the case for moral relativism, corrupting the boy who's become like a son to him.

SUPPORTING ACTRESS: Angelina Jolie, GIRL, INTERRUPTED. The daughter of Jon Voight, Ms. Jolie is becoming a darling of awards ceremonies. Her role in GIRL, INTERRUPTED is fierce and unchanging, as she plays a mentally institutionalized young woman without the courage and resources to get better.

DIRECTOR: Sam Mendes, AMERICAN BEAUTY . See comments above.

FOREIGN MOVIE: ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER. An overrated mess.

SCREENPLAY (written directly for the screen): Alan Ball, AMERICAN BEAUTY. See comments above.

SCREENPLAY (based on material previously produced or published): John Irving, THE CIDER HOUSE RULES. See comments above.

ART DIRECTION: Rick Heinrichs and Peter Young, SLEEPY HOLLOW.

CINEMATOGRAPHY: Conrad L. Hall, AMERICAN BEAUTY. See comments above.

SOUND: John Reitz, Gregg Rudloff, David Campbell, and David Lee, THE MATRIX.

SOUND EFFECTS EDITING: Dane A. Davis, THE MATRIX.

ORIGINAL SCORE: John Corigliano, THE RED VIOLIN.

ORIGINAL SONG: "You'll Be in My Heart" from TARZAN.

COSTUME: Lindy Hemming, TOPSY TURVY.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE: ONE DAY IN SEPTEMBER.

DOCUMENTARY (short subject): "King Gimp."

MOVIE EDITING: Zach Staenberg, THE MATRIX.

MAKEUP: Christine Blundell, Trefor Proud, TOPSY TURVY.

ANIMATED SHORT MOVIE: "The Old Man of the Sea."

LIVE ACTION SHORT MOVIE: "My Mother Dreams of Satan's Disciples in New York."

VISUAL EFFECTS: John Gaeta, Janek Sirrs, Steve Courtley, and Jon Thum, THE MATRIX.

Oscar winners previously announced this year:

THALBERG AWARD: Warren Beatty.

HONORARY LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: The great Andrzej Wajda.

Gordon Sawyer Technology Award: Dr. Roderick T. Ryan (Kodak director of engineering services).

Interesting fact: The Oscar show lasted four hours, four minutes, 60 seconds shorter than last year.

Other notable quotes:

Academy spokesman John Pavlik on the stolen Oscar statuettes: "A lot of people thought Jim Carrey took them."

Junk man Willie Fulgear, 61, about finding the missing Oscars: "If anybody says honesty don't pay, send them to me."

Michael Caine, commenting on his role in THE CIDER HOUSE RULES in TV Guide: "Somebody said to me, 'He's a drug-addict abortionist,' and I said, 'Yeah, but he's the kindest man I ever played!'"

Richard Farnsworth of THE STRAIGHT STORY, asked if it was tough to star in a movie at age 79: "I ride a lawn mower in most of the film, so I got to sit down a lot."