

# STUDENT LIFE

## 'Baby' goes one more round with 'Aviator'

By Daniel J. Stasiewski  
editor in chief

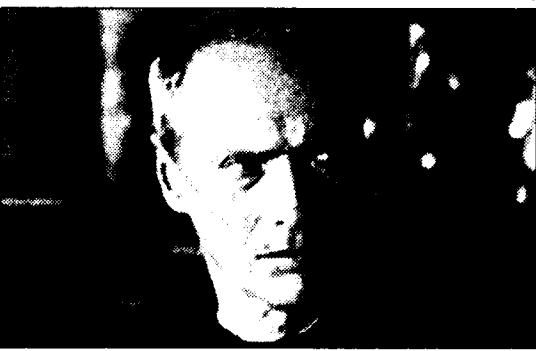
As excited as I usually am this time of year, I'm starting to have that feeling I had the week before Election Day 2004. I just want it over. At this point, two worthy candidates (unlike Election 2004) are up for the top spot; the rest of the categories are heated races, then there is Jamie Foxx, the sure thing.

**Best Picture**

Nominees: "The Aviator," "Finding Neverland," "Million Dollar Baby," "Ray," and "Sideways"

As Steve Buscemi would say, "Define irony." Six years after Miramax's "Shakespeare in Love" stunned the world with its deserved win over "Saving Private Ryan," Miramax's year-in-advance favorite "The Aviator" is looking down the barrel of a surprise loss to "Million Dollar Baby." As a fan of the epic, "The Aviator" I do want to see it win. But the Director's Guild Award win for Clint Eastwood says it all. It's the most accurate Oscar precursor when it comes to predicting both Best Director and Best Picture. The conservative activist groups and fundamentalists who have lambasted the film's final scene, have only fueled the fire underneath what could be Warner Bros. first winner in nearly 12 years. The same thing happened with "A Beautiful Mind," and as long as the controversy is short-sighted and easy to overcome, the Academy will stick it to the right-wingers and vote "Million Dollar Baby." Of course, Clint's pure Hollywood-style also works toward the favor of "MDB" over the stylized "Aviator." The epic isn't back quite yet.

Prediction: "Million Dollar Baby"  
Close Second: "The Aviator"



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**Best Director**

Nominees: Clint Eastwood, "Million Dollar Baby;" Taylor Hackford, "Ray;" Mike Leigh, "Vera Drake;" Alexander Payne, "Sideways;" and Martin Scorsese, "The Aviator"

While Scorsese may be overdue, he'll likely join



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the elite circle of directors to go zero and five when it comes the Best Director Oscar. If Hitchcock and Robert Altman couldn't win, I doubt New York-boy Scorsese can get over the Academy's distain for outsiders. Eastwood on the other hand is all Hollywood. Even though he's already won a directing Oscar for "Unforgiven," his work today is as poignant as it is classical. His purely American directing style woos the Academy for a second time and Hollywood once again salutes its own. Because Eastwood is doing some of the best directing work of his career, he should easily overcome Scorsese, who people seem to dislike for not being as brilliant as he was almost 30 years ago.

Prediction: Clint Eastwood, "Million Dollar Baby"

Close Second: Martin Scorsese, "The Aviator"

**Best Actress**

Nominees: Annette Bening, "Being Julia;" Catalina Sandino Moreno, "Maria Full of Grace;" Imelda Staunton, "Vera Drake;" Hilary Swank, "Million Dollar Baby;" and Kate Winslet, "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"

I may be making this category harder to predict than it really is, but a "Million Dollar Baby" Best Picture win doesn't seem like it would help Swank. With one Oscar to her name already, a Swank win here would make her royalty. The last actress to win two award this close together was Jodie Foster,



FINE LINE FEATURES

and Swank's no Jodie Foster. Imelda Staunton got a major push got three major nominations. Her role in "Vera Drake has wowed critics and the political theme may be enough for the film to take one award home. Of course, Bening may sneak in, also. Unpredictable? Maybe, but this is the category that looks best set for an upset.

Prediction: Imelda Staunton, "Vera Drake"  
Close Second: Hilary Swank, "Million Dollar Baby"

**Best Actor**

Nominees: Don Cheadle, "Hotel Rwanda;" Johnny Depp, "Finding Neverland;" Leonardo DiCaprio, "The Aviator;" Clint Eastwood, "Million Dollar Baby;" and Jamie Foxx, "Ray"

I won't waste much space with this one. But I will say if Foxx doesn't win, I will be eating a shoe in the Beacon office Monday at noon.



UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Prediction: Jamie Foxx, "Ray"  
Slam Dunk

**Best Supporting Actor**

Nominees: Alan Alda, "The Aviator;" Thomas Haden Church, "Sideways;" Morgan Freeman, "Million Dollar Baby;" Jamie Foxx, "Collateral;" and Clive Owen, "Closer"

This category is a three-horse race with Screen Actors Guild winner Morgan Freeman leading the pack. Traditionally a supporting award goes along

with Best Picture and Alan Alda isn't likely to get more than a thank you from the winner of this category. Church was a critical darling, but has faded. Owen is the Globe winner, but his film wasn't carried enough to make it look like a winner. Church and Owen could still pull it off, they've been campaigning like Kerry and Bush in October. The overdue veteran, however, has a solid role, and Freeman is likely to finally get the little gold guy.



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Prediction: Morgan Freeman, "Million Dollar Baby"  
Close Second: Clive Owen, "Closer"

**Best Supporting Actress**

Nominees: Cate Blanchett, "The Aviator;" Laura Linney, "Kinsey;" Virginia Madsen, "Sideways;" Sophie Okonedo, "Hotel Rwanda;" and Natalie Portman, "Closer"

This may be the only race where any of the five could take the award. Linney is overdue and plays a supportive wife. Portman is a young up-and-comer, like Mira Sorveno and Marisa Tomei. Madsen is a critical favorite. Blanchett plays an Oscar goddess. Okonedo plays a supportive wife. Of the five Blanchett and Madsen have the most heat going into Oscar night, but Okonedo may pull of an upset like Marcia Gay Harden did when she won for playing a supportive wife in "Pollock." Madsen has the problem of being in an Alexander Payne film and he couldn't even get Jack Nicholson an Oscar. With Blanchett winning the SAG award, I'll pick her. But watch out for Okonedo.



MIRAMAX FILMS

Prediction: Cate Blanchett, "The Aviator"  
Close Second: Sophie Okonedo, "Hotel Rwanda"

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**Best Original Screenplay**

Prediction: "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"  
Close Second: "Vera Drake"

**Best Adapted Screenplay**

Prediction: "Sideways"  
Close Second: "Million Dollar Baby"

The Academy Awards will air Sunday at 8 p.m. on ABC.

### Ask ASCII: Should I 'unsubscribe' from spam?

Dear ASCII,  
I get lots of spam and I read somewhere that I shouldn't reply to these messages asking to be removed or click the "unsubscribe" link at the bottom of the e-mail. Is this true, and if so why? Is there some e-mail equivalent to the "do not call" list?  
- Retching on spam

Dear Retching,  
The reason some people advise against replying is that a returned message allows the spammer to confirm that your address is active - that there is a real person who reads the mail at that address (unlike fake addresses or addresses that no one uses anymore so that messages sit in a bin unread until the mail server tosses them out unread because the in-box is full). If spammers discover the address is active, they know they're not wasting their time and bandwidth sending e-mails to it. And they can sell your confirmed address to other spammers at a higher price than they get for unconfirmed e-mail addresses.  
Still, others think replying is irrelevant because spammers can find out if you opened their message whether you reply or not. A great deal of spam has pictures in it. Sometimes they're hidden, so small you can't see them or the same color as the message background or both.

When you open the message with most common e-mail readers, such as Outlook Express, the spammer finds out. It works like this: To get those pictures, your computer must connect to the spammer's web site and download them. The spammer sets up his web site and e-mails to log which spam recipients open the messages and, as a result, downloaded the image. Your accidental request for the image might appear on the spammer's web server like this: "get http://www.spam-me.com/your\_email\_address/homeloan.jpg."  
The evil spam-lords may not even go to that trouble, not caring enough to set up the most basic of e-mail tracking systems. That is because the way e-mail works causes someone sending spam to care very little if the e-mail address is active or not. Bulk e-mail can be sent out (even with a customized "Dear <you>" line) to thousands of people in a second. The cost to send spam is lower than the morals of the people hawking male enhancement cream and you're footing half the bill!

The Internet is a great big shared network, and everyone who connects is paying for the upkeep of all the wires between their computer and everyone else's. The spammers are paying for their connection to you, but you're also paying for your connection to them. Every time you get a spam e-mail, the lines between you and them are clogged with extra data that you didn't want. So spam is like the trucks whose sole purpose is to drive around a portable billboard, taking space on rush-hour highways.  
There's nothing like a do-not-call list for e-mail. That is because enforcing one would be nigh-on impossible. Trying to track down who sent spam can be as useless as those male enhancement creams. Spammers almost always lie about where their messages originated, then bounce the spam off of an improperly configured computer owned by someone else (who now is also paying for the spam you are getting.)  
So, Retching, I am sorry to have to tell you this, but whether you reply or not, the solicitations for you to buy male enhancement cream will continue - whether you are male or not.  
Do you have a computer question? Then Ask ASCII! Send an e-mail to lws118@psu.edu with "Ask ASCII" in the subject line and you may see your question in next week's paper.

### And the Oscar for Best Trivia goes to ...

By Jeff Elder  
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

Q: What movie star has won an Academy Award more times than any other? - Mary Ann Flowers

A: That would be Pauly Shore.  
OK, the Academy isn't quite that bad.

Katharine Hepburn brought home the most little men - four. Can you name the movies for which she won?

Hepburn might win again this year - in a sense. Cate Blanchett is nominated for portraying the legendary actress in "The Aviator."

Walt Disney won more Oscars than anyone, 26, including three Special Awards and the Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award.

Meryl Streep has the most acting nominations, 13. She's won twice - for "Kramer vs. Kramer" (1979) and "Sophie's Choice" (1982). (Personally, I would've just given her an Oscar for that scene where she gets her hair washed by Robert Redford in 1985's "Out of Africa." That was magic.)  
Ever feel bad for the people - like Streep on 11 out of 13 times - who don't win on Oscar night? Well, Mark Berger doesn't even know what it feels like to be denied the hardware. The sound man has been nominated four times and every single time he's

taken the statuette home. He LOVES to put his tux on. Berger struck gold with "Apocalypse Now" (1979), "The Right Stuff" (1983), "Amadeus" (1984) and "The English Patient" (1996).

KATHARINE HEPBURN ANSWER: She won early - for "Morning Glory" (1933). And she won relatively late - for "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" (1967), "The Lion in Winter" (1968) and "On Golden Pond" (1981).

Raise your hand if you think she was actually better in "The Philadelphia Story" (1940) and "African Queen" (1951).

This year's Academy Awards are on Feb. 27.

Source: Academy Of Motion Pictures Arts And Sciences

**Walt Disney holds the records for winning the most Oscars.**

**Watch this year's Academy awards on Feb. 27.**

Want to write for the Beacon?

Weekly staff meetings are Sundays at 8:00 p.m. in the Beacon office.

Or e-mail story ideas to behrendbeacon@aol.com