

# THE CampChuck REVIEWER

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THIRTY SIXTH ANNUAL EDITION

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Editor, critic, layout, distribution, and general factotum ...



## Meryl Advises Hillary, Elizabeth, and Bernie

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### The 87th ANNUAL ACADEMY AWARDS Nominations

Oscar Night: Sunday, Feb. 22

#### Best Picture

*American Sniper*

*Birdman*

*Boyhood*

*Foxcatcher* (director only)

*The Grand Budapest Hotel*

*The Imitation Game*

*Selma*

*The Theory of Everything*

*Whiplash*

#### Best Director

Alejandro González Iñárritu

Richard Linklater

Bennett Miller

Wes Anderson

Morten Tyldum

#### Best Actor

Steve Carell

Bradley Cooper

Benedict Cumberbatch

Michael Keaton

Eddie Redmayne

*Foxcatcher*

*American Sniper*

*The Imitation Game*

*Birdman*

*The Theory of Everything*

#### Best Actress

Marion Cotillard

Felicity Jones

Julianne Moore

Rosamund Pike

Reese Witherspoon

*Two Days, One Night*

*The Theory of Everything*

*Still Alice*

*Gone Girl*

*Wild*

#### Best Supporting Actor

Robert Duvall

Ethan Hawke

Edward Norton

Mark Ruffalo

J.K. Simmons

*The Judge*

*Boyhood*

*Birdman*

*Foxcatcher*

*Whiplash*

#### Best Supporting Actress

Patricia Arquette

Laura Dern

Keira Knightley

Emma Stone

Meryl Streep

*Boyhood*

*Wild*

*The Imitation Game*

*Birdman*

*Into the Woods*

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### The Biggest Tattle Ever Told

Put aside whether a documentary film – with its own Oscar category – should ever be nominated for a Best Picture. (None ever have.) The Best Picture of the year is “Citizenfour.” Though it rankles, and the way it rankles, it will win Best Documentary.

Fictional narratives don’t outdo how much larger than life and focused on truth this tense film feels. To say this about a documentary film bubbles reactions that range from paralysis to outrage, from abdication to activism, from cynicism to some absurd aura of hopeful potential.

It documents the coming together of a filmmaker (Laura Poitras), two journalists (Glenn Greenwald and Ewen MacAskill), and Edward Snowden. Snowden was planted in your brain through countless media cycles. Might he be a spy, a traitor, at least a misguided young man who has sorely compromised the U.S of A? How about this? He’s a whistleblower, a hero, an example of a patriotic American sacrificing his liberty so that liberty in the world stands a chance of being reinvented.

After seeing the film, it seems no one would dismiss the courage, genuineness, and well-spoken thoughtfulness of Edward Snowden and Glenn Greenwald. The film bleeds a combined sense of anxiousness and poise.

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(Underlined nominees equal CampChuck predictions)

## Best Supporting Actor

collaborating with director Richard Linklater and it's good to see Oscar nominations that grease appreciation for both of these low key movie-business types.

Playing a noncustodial but increasingly devoted dad, Hawke supports the mom-is-it center of gravity without diminishing the importance of a person who matures a bit late on the adult continuum. It's a sturdy performance, not a contender.

Mark Ruffalo often finds a tone worth watching and avoids easy pigeonholing. In "Foxcatcher" he's a wrestling coach with an Olympic Gold background. He's a devoted family man and mentor to his brother (Channing Tatum), also a top wrestler.

The acting and interplay between Ruffalo and Tatum is more interesting than the hyped and competent lead by Steve Carell. Anyway, the acting can't escape the script, which mostly exists so that creepiness can end badly.

Robert Duvall is getting on in years (84). He isn't resting on laurels that include an Oscar for "Apocalypse Now" and five other nominations before this most recent one as "The Judge." He continues to instill a presence that has made him an actor's actor.

With decent chemistry, Robert Duvall does a feisty Robert Duvall thing while Robert Downey, Jr., playing his son, does a feisty Robert Downey, Jr. thing. The ding is more toward the movie than the acting. It's a good couple of popcorn hours.

## Manufactured Mailbag

Dear Editor,

Bingo, bango, blockbuster, Bro. Dude, like, "American Sniper" is pushing \$300 million in the theaters. How's that for crashing your intellectual consciousness Best Picture list?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend,

Indeed, "American Sniper" has outsold any of the other 7 Best Picture nominees 5 to 10 times over -- except "The Imitation Game" (about nerd zapping the WWII Germans off their evil world dominance gig). Credit Clint Eastwood not only for tagging Oscar's top honor seekers. He's also trending box office boffo with Americans' taste for good vs. evil, entertainment franchising: "The Hunger Games," "Guardians of the Galaxy," "The Lego Movie," and "The Hobbit."

Ed.

Dear Editor,

I'm so frazzled from being bombarded everywhere with electronic devices. Even in the movies nowadays they all seem to have scenes with people searching the internet, emailing, or texting.

Analou Ohzenwuns, Naples, FL

Dear Analou,

All of nowadays pretty much does itself digitally. Nowadays movies are made and shown on digital devices -- even on phones. There are places to escape the frazzle, but it will also help if you can find ways to roll with it.

Ed.

Dear Editor,

Meryl Streep. Meryl Streep. You're so into her, why not just do an all Meryl Streep edition?

Tally Alejef, Pallato, CA

Dear Tally,

I just might. In fact, I just might have started one already.

Ed.

Dear Editor,

Is there a joke that captures the CampChuck ethos?

Ulysses Sless, Dublin, OH

Dear Ulysses,

How's this: "Whatcha doing?" "Nothing." "You did that yesterday." "I wasn't finished."

Ed.

Dear Editor,

Did you move? How come?

Tabatha Keepin, Eastport, ME

Dear Tabatha,

Yep. Look for CampChuck's new address on page 3. It's one of those "if it makes the wife happy" kinda things for this "six of one, half a dozen of the other" camper. About 20 miles from where we were, we're below the typical snow threshold. We're in a newer, better appointed house, including air conditioning, solar panels, and other aging couple features.

Ed.

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Email: [jaffee@startlets.com](mailto:jaffee@startlets.com)  
(that's three "t's" in startlets).

## Degrees of Separation

The Ebola scare came and went. What was it, one person died? A few were treated, quarantined, and released? The news cycle peddled elsewhere. Oh, there was the Africa piece of the story. Dial them in and it's still only about 20,000 cases, 10,000 deaths. Anyway, in the U.S. it was brouhaha, and batten down the hatches, then business as usual.

You might hope the global climate change scare can work the same way. Not only are you and I and Kevin Bacon just six degrees of separation from everybody on the planet...wait, which people count? Everyone, no matter how you count, is civilization-threateningly connected by six degrees of average global temperature change. Already we're noticeably affected by one degree of average change since we short ordered the fossil fuel follies.

As current momentum to two degrees becomes un-ignorable, what sort of behaviors will manage the brouhaha and the battening down? Toward three degrees (we've not really started trying to turn the tide), with far more changed than the world's shoreline maps, what behaviors will we have practiced well?

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### CampChuck Predictions (as also indicated by underlined nominees on page one)

Released way back in summer, the frontrunner charms of Richard Linklater and his 12-years in the making "Boyhood" fade just behind the bold scripting and orchestration of Alejandro Iñárritu's "Birdman." The sheer physical challenge, while incorporating a range of human facets, edges Redmayne past Keaton's high powered yet vulnerable performance. Moore parlays a "disease movie of the week" role and a respected career with 4 previous nominations to stand out in the lightest slate of nominees. The size and central significance of her role boosts Arquette to Supporting Actress Gold. The size and irritating quality of J.K.'s role grabs his Gold.

<b>Picture and Director:</b>	<i>Birdman</i>	Alejandro González Iñárritu,	<i>Birdman</i>
<b>Actress and Actor:</b>	Julianne Moore, <i>Still Alice</i>	Eddie Redmayne,	<i>The Theory of Everything</i>
<b>Supporting Actress &amp; Actor:</b>	Patricia Arquette, <i>Boyhood</i>	J.K. Simmons,	<i>Whiplash</i>

the moral high ground;  
after sea level rises,  
who will stand on what

## Best Supporting Actress

Sorry, Meryl Streep. You'll not land your 4<sup>th</sup> Oscar from your nineteenth (19!) nomination.

It's still remarkable watching Meryl show off her range yet again. It's fun to see her make the over-the-top most of playing the witch in "Into the Woods." It's satisfying to watch her have fun in this less than satisfying musical. Although she's sung in films a few times before (especially "Postcards from the Edge," 1990), it's swell to watch her belt out the witch's big song.

The apology to Laura Dern runs bigger. The most refreshing thing about "Wild" is Dern playing Cheryl Strayed's (Reese Witherspoon's) mom. Dern has a marvelous way of retaining girlishness in a middle aged role, and it's good to see this supporting actress boost a layered appreciation for Witherspoon's "Wild" journey.

The apology for Dern not winning this Best Supporting Actress Oscar could come from Patricia Arquette. With her as the mom in "Boyhood," the film might more appropriately have been called "Familyhood." She's so noticeably central to the 12 year personal dynamics of the film. She's the only one who could be called the film's female lead.

Sometimes – and there ain't no rules which way – when you line up for a Best Supporting trophy you're confessing that it's a dead end chasing the bigger trophy. That said, Arquette's is a generous role. For the kids, for the slow to mature

ex-husband, for practicing self-bettering womanhood she's the unsung hero. For texture in the acting



challenge, she's serially short sighted in relationships with men.

The charm of "Boyhood" largely resides in some kind of organic wholeness. It isn't especially in the acting. It isn't exactly in the story. Amidst some integral quality, it makes sense that Patricia Arquette deserves a Supporting Oscar.

Actually, Emma Stone deserves an apology similar to the one that Dern rates. Stone also enlivens her part with the kind of supporting presence that can so enrich a film.

In a way, Stone anchors "Birdman." The supercharged, needy egotism in this film challenges you to hang on for the ride, and it's quite draining. Stone's character needs her famous daddy's love and she needs to stay sober. Hey, she's normal compared with what else is going on in this film. As with Dern, Stone is the most refreshing thing about "Birdman," but Keaton and Norton raise the bar so high, it's hard to steer enough kudos to Emma Stone.

Keira Knightley is a bit outclassed in this year's set of Best Supporting Actress nominees. That said, she too lends a vital spirit to her film, "The Imitation Game." This dramatization doesn't work unless the only substantive female role in the film comes off as sweet yet strong, as a pretty young thing but an important player in the intellectual challenge at hand.

Beaming most of its tried and true Hollywood storytelling style on Benedict Cumberbatch, "The Imitation Game" doesn't leave enough spotlight to make too much of Knightley's nomination in the same film.

## Best Supporting Actor

The winner for Best Supporting Actor seems clear, but Edward Norton makes for an impressive and deserving contender. In "Birdman" Norton plays a great Broadway actor who knows, off stage, he's a major jerk.

Even though Norton's big role feels somewhat Best Actor-ish, it's quite clear that Michael Keaton and the title character he plays are the central focus of the film. Still, you might think the hyper flavor of Norton's acting would hog the Support spotlight.

Maybe, but J.K. Simmons also has a supersized supporting role. In "Whiplash" the energy of the film seesaws closer to 50-50 with Miles Teller playing a best-ever drummer in training.

As a jazz band leader abusively committed to excellence Simmons kneads award-cinching abrasiveness that distinguishes him from his serial appearances as a cartoon-like foil in Spider Man movies and certainly from his Farmers Insurance TV ads.

Compare his role as the semi-savvy, dependable dad in "Juno" (2007) with his "Whiplash" performance. This time, Simmons gets a much juicier character -- a not entirely bad guy, but worse than inexcusable. It's the kind of irritating role that produces a small Oscar winning pearl.



Ethan Hawke is ever the likeable minor star and once again likable in "Boyhood." He makes acting look like it's not that big a deal. Hawke has a long track record

(continued on page 2)

## Best Picture / Best Director

If Richard Linklater had scoured the actor landscape and cast a brother and a sister set of lookalike children, ages 8, 12, and 16, his movie “Boyhood” could have been just as wonderfully rendered, and he wouldn’t have been the frontrunner for Best Picture and Best Director Oscars.

“Boyhood” is such an engaging and genuine family story along the loving, realistically challenged course it travels. It readily fits on any Best Picture list of 8 nominees. What catapulted Linklater and the film into Academy Award winning trajectory was the innovative risk of things working out filming two kids for 12 years, growing up who knows how -- physically and otherwise.

Writer and director Linklater managed the personal developments and dynamics with the kids – and not incidentally, with the adults too. It’s fair to say he shaped his luck masterfully.

However, one film sidetracks the “Boyhood” phenomenon. One director alchemized a brand of daring that will siphon batches of votes away from Linklater’s half-a-year-old Oscar buzz. Director  Alejandro González Iñárritu made “Birdman” (full title: “Birdman or the Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance”).

Iñárritu’s innovation is as different from Linklater’s as a microscope is from a telescope. Through intense preparation and orchestration that arguably makes Linklater’s efforts seem like a leisurely exercise in adaptability, Iñárritu essentially filmed all of “Birdman” to create the impression of filming one long, unedited take. It included several tactically demanding extended scenes.

Add to the challenge an in-your-face Broadway theater environment filled, to say the least, with uneasy personal character traits, confrontations, and looming meltdowns. Everything compelling about “Birdman” also makes it hard to recommend to lots of moviegoers. That said, the content and style skirts pretentiousness or gratuitousness and delivers Oscar winning edge.



Though it won’t run well against the deserved buzz for “Boyhood” and “Birdman,” “The Imitation Game” and its director Morten Tyldum shouldn’t be

dismissed too quickly from any talk of Oscar worthiness. Based on a true story, it tells how one man spearheaded a code breaking challenge that helped break German dominance in World War II.

Alan Turing is sometimes called the father of computer science and the study of artificial intelligence. These realms of his genius showcase well in this classic style, albeit nerdy, suspense movie. Deftly, the film integrates an eye-opening context about homosexuality plus a curious morph of male-female romance. The successful mainstream satisfactions of this film were not easily tackled.

Speaking of nerds, Physicist Stephen Hawking is way more famous than mathematician Alan Turing. “The Theory of Everything” feels more like ordinary filmmaking than any of the other Best Picture nominees. It actually makes for a readily satisfying trip to the movies. Depicting Hawking’s brilliance and humanity resonates more as an actor showcase, not the least of which is Eddie Redmayne’s extraordinary tackling of the physical challenge.

Effectively basing a film on a historic figure often boosts Oscar nomination chances. In “Selma” that figure is Martin Luther King, Jr. The content rates as a huge history lesson, and taps the enduring populist range of cinema. It captures a critical marker of courage and leverage in the Civil Rights Movement.

Speculation that Ava DuVernay was gypped out of a Best Director nomination is fair but not compelling. It’s fair enough subjective evaluation that “Selma” is a deserving Best Picture nominee but lacked the kind of filmmaking facets to make an impression as did, say, last year’s Best Picture, “12 Years a Slave.”

“Selma” also messed with the facts and tone of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s role in Civil Rights gains. Everything considered, it doesn’t undermine the spirit or the content of a film everyone should see. Whether such a thing costs Oscar votes lies somewhere between “Why allow the taint” and “It’s *based* on a true story; it isn’t a documentary.”

(Note: The history fudging in “Selma” seems miniscule compared with the distance from biographical fact in “The Imitation Game.” That film is more typical of non-documentary filmmaking.)

## Best Picture / Best Director

Wes Anderson and his quirk-fest, “The Grand Budapest Hotel,” have garnered widespread critical clamor. I don’t get it. It’s fun, oddball fun. It looks like the stars had fun making it. It’s stylish and loosely satiric fun. Best Picture and Best Director worthy? Not so much. It just seems to fall off the edge of random to command so much respect. If you want to experience a better rendition of Wes Anderson’s weird, see “Moonrise Kingdom” (2011).

“Whiplash” delivers tension-drenched chemistry, but it isn’t the abusive behavior in the film that undermines its Best Picture chops. It isn’t the acting. The performances by J.K. Simmons and Miles Teller are pitch perfect. It’s the scripting. It forces an over baked capacity for identifying and achieving an excellent jazz band sound. It forces a distracting level of attention by band leader (Simmons) on the drummer (Teller). Without being as ambitious, “Whiplash” trips into pitfalls that “Birdman” avoids.

Convoluting formula produced only 8 nominees for Best Picture (of a possible 10). A ninth movie is up for discussion. Bennett Miller received a Best Director nod, but his film “Foxcatcher” did not. Though Miller renders a sufficiently gray, creepy tone, the film doesn’t touch us as notably as it might have from the mire of its truth-based story. To appreciate Miller better, check out “Moneyball” (2011).

Question: should being controversial be a point of Academy Award consideration? Should a film that generates passionate disagreement about its content be more deserving or maybe less deserving? The answer can depend on what the content is and what the disagreement is. Let’s just say that it adds difficulty points to doing what matters most in movie making – turning out a quality film.

Clint Eastwood’s “American Sniper” is a quality film. Its filmmaking vision is tautly realized. Its realism marches down a larger than life road without losing its personal tenor. Nominated for Best Picture, the much honored Eastwood was not nominated for Best Director.

“American Sniper” doesn’t rate against Spielberg’s more ambitious (in size and meaning) “Saving Private Ryan.” Eastwood’s Middle East war material doesn’t zero in as keenly as the story Kathryn Bigelow directed to Oscars in “Hurt Locker.” Still, Eastwood’s film is a well-wrought, racking film.

Does “American Sniper” shortchange examination of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder? Does it over-glorify heroic soldiering? Does it ignore whether we should have done what we did in Iraq? Calm down. Eastwood made the film he intended to make. He did a fine job. Not Oscar winning fine, but it’s a well-made, conversation-stirring movie.

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### Top Ten

A bunch of ways to think Best Picture and near best this year:

1. *Citizenfour*: Best documentary & best picture; a marker in history that leaps film categories
  2. *Boyhood*: Best charmer, realizing a 12-year filming schedule with a resonant family voice
  3. *Finding Vivian Maier*: Best peculiar documentary, exploring a most gifted, strange, mysterious nobody
  4. *Birdman*: Best of the year for realizing high-wired innovation, scripting, and acting
  5. *The Imitation Game*: Best of a more classic filmmaking style and substance
  6. *Selma*: A Civil Rights history lesson with content sorely needed to fuel repeated reminders
  7. *American Sniper*: A controversy-stirring story of top notch heroic soldiering plus some PTSD
  8. *A Most Violent Year*: A fascinating shift on the gangster genre and gangster world characterizations
  9. *The Theory of Everything*: A love story more than anything, but quite a rendering of Stephen Hawking’s life
  10. *Life Itself*: A thumbs up documentary about the most influential film critic ever, Roger Ebert
- Worth Mentioning: *Gone Girl* [plus OK, OK] *Wild*, & differently curious: *Locke*; *Nightcrawler*; *Tim’s Vermeer*; *Venus in Fur*
- Nominated but not yet seen: Documentary Features: *Virunga*; *The Salt of the Earth*; *Last Days in Vietnam*  
Foreign Language: *Leviathan*; *Tangerines*; *Timbuktu*; *Wild Tales* [saw the touted winner, *Ida*]

## Best Actor

This year's competition for Best Actor is keen enough to make anyone stutter, but the smooth edge goes not to Carell, Cooper, Cumberbatch, or Keaton. It goes to Eddie Redmayne in "The Theory of Everything." His advantage is the extreme physical commitment required to play renowned physicist Stephen Hawking.

Transforming on screen into the ALS sufferer long familiar to millions, Redmayne does way more than sit scrunched and mostly paralyzed in a wheelchair. He portrays the initial and increasing physical insults of enduring so-called Lou Gehrig's disease. Better than that, he nails the thriving resilience, intelligence, and humor wrapped into Hawking's fame while somehow evoking a "just-a-man" essence.

It's tough to call Michael Keaton an also-ran this year in the title role of "Birdman." It's tough because Keaton rates difficulty points inhabiting a pressure cooked soul in a see-through crucible of Broadway theater ambition. Also, it's no tacked-on factor that Keaton's acting history somewhat mimics the leap of faith made by the actor he portrays.

Michael Keaton went blockbuster in "Batman" movies twice. He never was taken too seriously as an actor. In "Birdman," he's an actor strapped with the limiting celebrity of his superhero resume. Keaton's guy is producing a demanding, serious theater piece. He's sunk fleeting money into it. He's sunk his vulnerability into it, maybe his sanity, too. Even with Oscar written all over this performance, someone else's handwriting is a little bit clearer. It says "The winner is ... Eddie Redmayne."



With his third Oscar nomination in three years, Bradley Cooper is paving quite a road beyond People Magazine's Sexiest Man. "Silver Linings Playbook" to "American Hustle" to "American Sniper," he's marching.

Based on the true story of a superlative soldier, Cooper is the "American Sniper." Whether or not the film deserves the controversial harangues about the personal and other costs of such military commitments as Iraq, Bradley Cooper's acting is

spot on. He plays a trained lethal force, a tactically important team member, a patriot dedicated to a mission. He wears the difficult responsibility palpably and that includes the accumulating damage of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Cooper has tapped the exact proportions for causing a range of visceral and intellectual reactions to this individual military man. It's astonishing that he only seems to be third best in this slate of nominees.

The excellence feels a bit more ordinary once you get to Benedict Cumberbatch in "The Imitation Game" – not that the story of Alan Turing is remotely ordinary.

The script shapes him like a high functioning autistic. (Turing probably wasn't.) Like a dramatic and historically important variation on Jim Parsons in "The Big Bang Theory," Cumberbatch walks a tightrope of behaviors that remain believable amidst a storm of script pressures.

Steve Carell should really be on some other list. It isn't that he misses a beat playing the creepy, constricted soul he's called upon to play in "Foxcatcher." Between the three hours per day of makeup and the one-note foundation of his character's character, the Carell experience is nowhere near as rich as the other four nominees. It doesn't help that "Foxcatcher" doesn't engage much more than based-on-a-true-story curiosity. It doesn't count enough that comic actor Carell deserves respect for carrying this heavy role.

### January 2015: documentaries given awards at Nevada City's 13<sup>th</sup> Wild & Scenic Film Festival:

<i>All the Time in the World:</i>	Family values in the extreme wilderness
<i>Black Ice:</i>	Russian guns, jail & court vs. Greenpeace
<i>DamNation:</i>	Retool the era of the dammed economy
<i>DRAWN:</i>	Climbing, friendship, family, and sketch art
<i>Emptying the Skies:</i>	Saving wild birds from fancy dinner plates
<i>Pride of Namibia:</i>	Country-wide commitment to its wildlife
<i>Sand Wars:</i>	Sand: used how much? threatened how?
<i>Starfish Throwers:</i>	Inspirational commitment to feeding people
<i>Valley Uprising:</i>	60 years of evolving climber dude-ity
<i>Wrenched:</i>	Iconic monkey wrenching activism

## Best Actress

Getting nominated for a Best Acting Oscar when you're in a foreign language film doesn't happen often. Surely, seeing Marion Cotillard in "Two Days, One Night" would yield an impressive experience from the woman who well deserved an Oscar playing Edith Piaf in "La Vie en Rose" (2007).

Alas, far less was asked of Cotillard in "Two Days, One Night." Like many French new wave films over 50 years ago, stories take their time with mundane details that can fill a day. Representing her chore well, Cotillard plays a woman reluctantly canvassing fellow employees to forego a bonus so she can keep her job. It feels pretty much like an I-get-it-so-what performance.

At the other end of the energy spectrum, Reese Witherspoon is called upon to play a woman trudging with a heavy pack, essentially alone, across 1000 miles of Pacific Crest Trail. Her character is also carrying the baggage of a grieving, unfaithful, and drug addicted life she hopes to leave behind on this journey.

Reese Witherspoon produced the movie of Cheryl Strayed's bestselling book, "Wild." Producer Witherspoon would have been wiser to cast someone other than herself in the lead. She tackles the physical and mental stress of the role effectively. To win an Oscar, though, for this sort of biographical reality, she needed to distance us from images of pretty, perky Reese. She was good. "Wild" is good. Reese was just too Reese.

None of the Best Actress nominees seem to show anything undeniably excellent this year. OK, There's one performance that gives us something fresh, even if it's a fresh potboiler brand of creepy (not Kathy Bates, "Misery" creepy, but very creepy). Toward deserving an Oscar in this field of five, Rosamund Pike rides the adroit mystery thriller "Gone Girl."

Nothing should be said about the Pike part in a film that's so rife with twists. Here's something that can be said: Rosamund Pike is 36 years old. She stars in the plum characterization of her career to date, and about 75% of the Best Actress winners range in age from 20 through 39.

Julianne Moore, the frontrunner to win Best Actress, is 54 years old. In her favor, her lead in "Still Alice" is the kind of role that will parlay four previous Oscar nominations into her first Academy Award win. It's the kind of role that tugs with a sympathetic "TV disease movie of the week" flavor.



The film purposely showcases an early onset version of Alzheimer's. It's uncommon to contract Alzheimer's before one's senior years and this kind typically degenerates rapidly. Julianne Moore, looking quite ageless, shares her character's arc of decline. Much of the poignancy flows because we're watching a health conscious, high energy, high functioning person. She's an accomplished university professional. Indeed her academic career is all about communication.

Moore services this "what you should know about Alzheimer's" drama well, exhibiting all the courage, emotion, and dilemma that you'd expect. You might expect something more special for an Oscar Gold performance though. For better Julianne Moore, consider her two Oscar nominations in the same year, 2002: "Far from Heaven" and "The Hours."

Although "The Theory of Everything" is clearly about how transcendent Stephen Hawking is, given his severe handicap, the story gels because of the relationship he and his wife had. Felicity Jones is a good example of a role that deserves attention because it doesn't call too much attention to itself. For the same reason it's the kind of role that rates a nomination but not an award win.

### **Citizenfour** (continued from page 1)

"Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room" in 2005 (about corporate greed run amok) dealt a huge service to bearing witness. Such insidious individual and institutional behaviors must be exposed and exposed well. "Citizenfour" jacks up the ante big time. "Citizenfour" exposes industrial strength invasiveness that drops jaws and drawers, no matter what you think you already know about the NSA (National Security Agency) and so called homeland security operations. "Citizenfour" is an impressively charged Best Picture.