

THE CampChuck REVIEWER

A nonprofit subsidiary of CampChuck

THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL EDITION: Special Manufactured Mailbag Retrospective

www.startlets.com

February 20, 2011

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



Meryl Streep to Head Cast in Manufactured Mailbag Movie

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Manufactured Mailbagness

Perhaps the most endearing comments through the years of "The CampChuck Reviewer" refer to the Manufactured Mailbag, including not infrequent questions about whether these perennial letters to the editor are real.

Consider the following letter and response from the 1993 edition:

Dear Editor,

My husband gave me one of those looks. He says, "Pinny." He calls me Pinny. He says, "Pinny, those letters to the editor aren't real. Don't you get it?" I says, "Hiney." I just always called him Hiney. I says, "Hiney, I don't always get it, but I get it sometimes."

That's okay, isn't it?

Pinhedda Hiney, Hollowtater, ID

Dear Pinny,

It's better if you get it just once, but sometimes is probably enough. Ed.

Several years of feedback loop across the first 31 years of "The CampChuck Reviewer." By far, most frequent is "How many did you guess right," or "You guessed well (or not so well) this year."

It's always heartening to hear that "The CampChuck Reviewer" is a point of reference on Oscar night or when selecting films to view.

This special retrospective edition will *not* include analysis of the movies, directors, actors and actresses, or supporting actors and actresses vying for Oscars this year. Yes, you will find CampChuck predictions on page two (2), but this 32nd annual edition is essentially a catalog of decades of letters to the editor.

Why? Because it's fun. And because this special edition can be produced, almost entirely, prior to the crunch time between the Academy Awards nominations on January 25 and Oscar night February 27. This mitigates some of the complications of a first ever "snowbird" residence (from the last week in January through March) in Green Valley, Arizona.

This less fettered, temperate winter adventure will include its own expression of the CampChuck newsletter tradition.

Every letter to the editor is prescreened before it falls through the cracks in the sideburns of CampChuck.

Nominees and Predictions

Best Picture

127 Hours
Black Swan
Fighter, The
Inception
Kids Are All Right, The
King's Speech
The Social Network, The
Toy Story 3
True Grit
Winter's Bone

Best Directors

Darren Aronofsky
 David O. Russell
Tom Hooper
 David Fincher
 Ethan Coen, Joel Coen

Best Actor

Javier Bardem
 Jeff Bridges
 Jesse Eisenberg
Colin Firth
 James Franco

Biutiful
True Grit
The Social Network
The King's Speech
127 Hours

Best Actress

Annette Bening
 Nicole Kidman
 Jennifer Lawrence
Natalie Portman
 Michelle Williams

The Kids Are All Right
Rabbit Hole
Winter's Bone
Black Swan
Blue Valentine

Best Supporting Actor

Christian Bale
 John Hawkes
 Jeremy Renner
 Mark Ruffalo
 Geoffrey Rush

The Fighter
Winter's Bone
The Town
The Kids Are All Right
The King's Speech

Best Supporting Actress

Amy Adams
 Helena Bonham Carter
Melissa Leo
 Hailee Steinfeld
 Jacki Weaver

The Fighter
The King's Speech
The Fighter
True Grit
Animal Kingdom

Plea

CampChuck continues as it has **since 1992, matching every subscription dollar for dollar**. All subscriptions – more than \$29,000 plus CampChuck's 100% match of \$29,000 -- have funneled through CampChuck to RMI and Food Banks. Whether you subscribe at the official \$5 level or the average participation of \$30, think sustainable economic practice and the golden rule. And think access to CampChuck's newsletters.

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 CampChuck
 15656 Mountain View Dr. Nevada City, CA 95959

Please, make checks payable to
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 (or to "Food Bank of Nevada County")

Rocky Mountain Institute

This nonprofit helps individuals and communities and businesses and governments to make money, yes, make money, by being smart about the environment. By research and science, by education and negotiation, by example, the Rocky Mountain Institute helps us ... and the U.S. ... and the world "us" to make long term economic sense by making long term environmental sense.

Food Bank of Nevada County

CampChuck continues its encouragement of the fundamental human sharing embodied by the "Food Banking" concept. Since CampChuck now resides in Nevada County, CA, please make checks payable to "Food Bank of Nevada County." Of course, if your inclination is to continue with a check to "Second Harvest Food Bank," you are still riding the CampChuck spirit.

CampChuck Predictions (as indicated by underlined nominees on this page)

Only *The King's Speech* has the buzz (and advantageous British aura) to pinch top gold away from *The Social Network*, though this Facebook film may be the best film of the decade. I predict a split: *Social Network* wins Best Picture; Hooper peels Best Director from Fincher. Firth's excellence locks-in Oscar, since his acting in *A Single Man* should have won last year. Portman wins for a performance that exudes "most courageous." Leo and Bale slap voters up side the head in such a way that Supporting Actress & Actor go to these two fighters.

Picture and Director: *The Social Network* Tom Hooper *The King's Speech*
Actress and Actor: Natalie Portman *Black Swan* Colin Firth *The King's Speech*
Supporting Actress & Actor: Melissa Leo *The Fighter* Christian Bale *The Fighter*

Manufactured Mailbag from “A friend”

Dear Editor, [1981]

Who the hell do you think you are? “Unsolicited Movie Newsletter” indeed. What makes you some kind of movie expert, and who do you think cares what you think, anyway? I go to movies, too, but you don’t think I’d waste people’s time with this kind of self appointed tripe. Get a job.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1981]

You said it.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1982]

Hey man, who sold you my address anyway? It’s bad enough you think anybody cares what you write. Why won’t you let me have my movies in peace? Woody Allen is an egghead, pinko fairy, and so are you.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1982]

Thanks for keeping in touch.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1983]

I thought it over. This movie malarky you put out is okay. I figure if you got the nerve, go for it, you know. I’ve been going to the movies every day for the last few weeks. For instance, take the “Friday the 13th” all three parts triple bill at the Driveplex Drive-in

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1983]

So glad I won you over. I’m sure you’ll excuse me for not printing all 12 pages of your letter.

Ed.

Dear friend, [1984]

Because of the inspiration of your newsletter, I have sold a bunch of movie articles of my own, and my paper says it might even give me a column. So, I thought I owed you a tip or two. You don’t talk up sexual acts and trippy violence in your reviews, man. Hey, I’ve found out that you can even use actual curse words in your articles as long as you’re making some fancy point about censorship or art, even. How’s this for a column header: “A friend at the flicks, Los Angeles”?

Dear friend, [1984]

There’s nothing like a helping hand from a seasoned pro.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1985]

Man, like, I am supremely disappointed. Those Academy ostrich heads totally overlooked “The Terminator.” No Best Script, Best Effects, nothin’. Man, I’ve staked my recent career on Arnold Schwarzenegger for Superstardom. I trust you, man. I had to write.

A friend at the flicks, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1985]

It will do you well to add a chaser of widened perspective when dealing with the crazy business of Motion Pictures. For instance, as much as I flinch to admit it, “The Terminator” is as well done as violent trash gets. Arnold is no slouch, but I think he might even suggest that you shift your impression of him.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1986]

I got a great idea for your newsletter name, man. How about, “a friend at the flicks”? I know, I know, it’s the name I use. Don’t worry. I’ll sell it to ya, for, like, nothin’. Besides, my column kinda fell through, and you could feature me or something.

A friend at the flicks, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1986]

Actually, the name has more flare than our newly christened masthead, but we’re probably too conservative for your working tastes.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1987]

What is going on, man? A slide show ain’t no Film Festival. OK, so you snookered the Academy Awards theme one year. That’s cool. Hey, the Film Festival is a great idea, but what’s with the slides? That whole trip of yours sounded a little off the deep end to me. Besides how come I wasn’t invited to your half baked slide show “Film Festival” anyway?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1987]

Not that your babbling deserves a response, but an article on page 3 [in 1987] lends some perspective.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1988]

Man, I have a great theme for your next Film Festival. How about “Best of the Colorized Classics”? Talk about a friend to the movie goer, isn’t that Ted Turner a real magnet?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1988]

Magnet/magnate/maggot, whatever... if there was money to be made computer dubbing voices to silent films, Mr. Turner would no doubt apply his distorted devotion to cinematic art and entertainment. I hope such free enterprise does not siphon the treasury of film history.

Ed.

Notes

“The CampChuck Reviewer” began in 1980 as “The Unsolicited Movie Newsletter.” The current name was initiated in 1986.

CampChuck held its first “occasional” film festival in Feb. 1986, followed by a film festival of sorts in November 1986 – really just a slide show of our four month bicycle trip in Europe. The other two film festivals happened Aug, 1990 and July 1994.

Manufactured Mailbag from “A friend” (continued)

Dear Editor, [1989]

Who do you think is goofier, man, the “Last Temptation of Christ” protesters or this crazy Ayatollah dude? Do you think Anthony Perkins is too much of a kick to play Khomeni in a biopic?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1989]

Would Tony Perkins in an imaginative romp called “Who Framed Ayatollah Khomeni” be a goofy enough satire to deal with the perversities in religion and politics and business? Could a cartoon lasso corral the protesting voices and roll them flat under a steamroller of enlightenment, or would the cartoon machinery slip backward and steamroll the enlighteners... and who’s driving the steamroller? Ed.

Dear Editor, [1990]

Get with this, man. Until we see film legends like The Three Stoogeniks or blockbuster pictures like “Pee Weekovich’s Big Adventure” made in Russia, I don’t know how anyone can rest easy that Communism is out and Freedom is in.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1990]

Rarely have I seen “Motion Pictures as Political Barometer” so concisely leveled. Perhaps you should move to Russia and open a studio. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1990, special edition]

I think I figured out, man, like could it be you’re just using me or something? Here it is, I write you six, eight, twelve times a year now. You never write back. You pick my movie brain. I don’t hear from you except you print me in your once a year little rag. Should I be hurt, man, or what?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1990, special edition]

Because of this special Film Festival edition of “The CampChuck Reviewer,” which I’m sure I wouldn’t write but for my growing file of letters from you, we get this extra opportunity to share. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1991]

Hey, man, I got a Film Festival angle and it tunes in on your Academy Awards gig. Get this. “CampChuck Presents A Friend at the Flicks’ Picks....” (That’s me.) “See the Flicks that Should Have Won Best Picture.” What do you think? Cool, right?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1991]

Some people feel that too many yuppie bergs and verbose nerds muddle away with film festivals already. Others feel the more the merrier. Don’t let anyone run your “gig.” No doubt you’ll let me know how your independent film festival efforts pan out. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1992]

Man, don’t go political on me. It’s not just that your “Oh, See, Can You Say” article is cowardly scumbait. If you need filler, keep it in bounds like “Arnold Schwarzenegger for President” or something.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1992]

That one article received more praising response than any issue in twelve years of CampChuck. Ed.

Notes

Hold the cursor over “Oscar Newsletter” (left side, navigation link of startlets.com) & click the submenu item “Oh See, Can You Say.”

See the response to a 2000 letter to the editor for a list of special editions. (under “CampChuck or Newsletter Oriented Letters.”)

Dear Editor, [1993]

Man, I don’t care where they dig up Best Song, and they can’t buy me off with yuks from Robin Williams. Do you think we can get past these cutesy googly cartoons like “Aladdin” and “Beauty and the Beast” and make something classy like a feature length Road Runner?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1993]

I prefer the pop, pop, pop whirl of “Aladdin” to the more ordinary elegance and imagination of “Beauty and the Beast.” I’m glad “Aladdin” made the Oscar race in five of the less prominent categories. If Road Runner hits the big screen, it will likely mark the end of the current feature length animation boom.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1994]

Man, I can just about take this do-gooder hokum that’s lodging itself into your newsletters, but what gives with these special editions full of hiking, biking, mountain, waterfall, vacationing diarrhea? Focus, Jack, where’s your film focus?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1994]

There’s more than one camp in CampChuck. Besides, it rounds the contact with and appreciation for those who now officially subscribe. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1994 special edition]

I’m on to you, man. You’ll have another “occasional” film festival real soon. I see you pushing harder on this CampChuck buzzer.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1994 special edition]

Your insightfulness, similarly incorporated into 9 letters since the last CampChuck festival 4 years ago, continues to amaze me. Ed.

Manufactured Mailbag from “A friend” (continued)

Dear Editor, [1994 2nd special edition]

Man, like, is Jim (“The Mask”; “Ace Ventura”) Carrey the new Jerry Lewis or what?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1994, 2nd special edition]

I have nothing against the man-like, but surely, there is a third choice. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1995]

You know I watch you. OK, like you grow on people, maybe, but tell me you're not taking up golf, man.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1995]

There's more than one camp in CampChuck. Besides, if four rounds of golf in a year make me a golfer, the much-to-be-respected game is in trouble. Bottom line, I have neither the dispensable hours nor the disposable income. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1996]

Man, all these years, I don't know why I never thought of this. Like, I'm in your neck of the woods a couple-three times a year. We should go to a movie together, down some brew, talk shop.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1996]

Sorry, I'm busy that week. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1997]

Statistics? Like, you're giving us statistics now? It's enough you're blowing your own horn, but with statistics? Man, get on with it.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1997]

Studies suggest that eighty-one point two six percent of the time I feel the same way you do about it. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1998]

Man, don't think I haven't noticed this poetry thing in your newsletters. Like, you're marginal enough as it is.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1998]

One can never be too marginal. I'm trying to tell myself something. I thought I'd have my third volume of poetry done in 1997. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1999]

Man, now that Jim Carey has sold out to making fancy trumancy art films, I'm just glad we've got a guy like Adam Sandler who can come off the bench to tackle your basic hilarious night at the movies.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [1999]

Having successfully avoided the Adam Sandler phenomenon until now, I responded open-mindedly to the teenage son of long-time friends who ranked *The Waterboy* as numbers 9, 7, 5, 3 and 1 on his top ten list for 1998. I have shut my mind and will be more cautious opening it next time. Ed.

Dear Counselor, [2000]

Get it? CampChuck. Dear Counselor. All these years I've been sending you letters to the Editor. I don't know why I didn't think of it sooner. Ha. Ha.

A friendly camper, Los Angeles

Dear friendly camper, [2000]

Funnier than wearing your underpants on top of your jeans. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2002]

Jeez, like I didn't notice you didn't publish my letter last year? You think I didn't see what hole your little publication slid into last year? I've got my eye on you, man.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2002]

You know that we always have space for you when you're taking your medication. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2003]

Catch it, Dog. Did Adam Sandler do the deeds, or what. Get it, do the “Deeds”?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2003]

The only thing worth noting about Sandler's badly acted *Mr. Deeds*, is to quickly cross reference the charming and corny 1936 original, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, with Gary Cooper. Sandler's *Deeds* not only scores as a disrespectful homage to a particular film, it succeeds as a prime example of commercial viability with actual disdain for the art and craft of film making. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2004]

Ah nold. Like, Governor Ahnold Terminegger, man. Is that a trip?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2004]

It is America. It is California. It is. Ed.

Notes

For current statistics about CampChuck Oscar predictions, hold the cursor over “Oscar Newsletter” (left side, navigation link of www.startlets.com) and click the submenu item “statistics.” Check out the poems that have appeared in “The CampChuck Reviewer” clicking the submenu item “poetry.”

Manufactured Mailbag from “A friend” (continued)

Dear Editor, [2005]

You are gloating, right, over getting your six for six predictions last year? Well, how come it's the first time in 25 years?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2005]

Actually, it happened once before in the 1994 newsletter (66th Oscars), but thanks for trying to keep track.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [2006]

Netflix is a pox on purist devotions to film viewing.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2006]

Pox be with you.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [2007]

Man, the Inconvenient Truth is that Al Gore is lame. That's proof enough for me that Global Warming is bunk.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2007]

You didn't see the film, did you? Gore doesn't especially reduce his anti-charisma factor in the way he makes himself so prominent in the film “An Inconvenient Truth,” but his professorial case is impressive. It's a shame that a knee-jerk reaction against Gore would keep some people from educating themselves better about facing this issue and facing it intelligently. For such a sobering subject, it's a fairly entertaining film.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [2008]

Hey, I caved and actually looked at your www.startlets.com web site. You got, like, nothing there but reviews from mostly films people don't care about.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2008]

I appreciate that you checked the web site. You probably will do fine getting your movie reviews from TV commercials. My web-based reviews tend to offer a look at films that receive less -- sometimes way less -- media attention and distribution.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [2009]

Man, what is all this documentary film appreciation pouring into your halfway sane movie madness?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2009]

Halfway sane, indeed. You just keep your balance by going to see “The Dark Knight” for the 18th time. Some of my loose movie screws are held in place by the improving presence of documentary films. From the heartwarming vitality in 2008's “Young@Heart” to a treasure trove of films at the Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival, moviegoers should be on the lookout for the variety, awareness-raising, and typically non-commercial-minded qualities of documentaries.

Ed.

Dear Editor [2010],

I saw your statistics thing, man – 58% guess rate before last year. You couldn't sneak up to 60%, even guessing them all right last time, could ya?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2010]

Yes, saying 60% resonates better than “almost 60%.” Guessing 5 of 6 right this year would tip the arithmetic past that benchmark. I suggest you rag on me for only averaging about 3.6 of 6 right, rather than quibbling about a percentage point or two.

Ed.

Besides the devoted perennial letters to the editor from “A friend,” CampChuck acknowledges the published contributions of all the following manufactured voices:

Aboudit, Fahged	Mernt, Louella
Balstatten, Karen	Mumlich, Ellen
Beckman, Tyna	Myowmek, Claudia
Bertram, Morton	Neenemeener, Beth
Bizzebod, Bea	Optoman, Sigrid
Buchannon, Tiger	Overbringer, Mortimer
Bucks, Osgood	Panglow, Dawnee
Bunger, Kit	Peckaliddle, Winny
Canton, Marla	Peenzacker, Jersey
Caroline, Spanky	Penstemon, Rose
Caxton, Zake	Perclact, Gertrude
Chinster, Cole	Pfaff, Gabriel
Chumley, W.	Pitt, Pat
Cnkka, Henrietta	Plaim, Hester
Dexit, Winifred	Prodder, Grace
Dons, Adam	Quinn, Mary Beth
Dug, Nora	Rulleckstein, Adelle
Dutz, Cleabold	Sanborn, Chevy
Fay, Augustina	Scairdy, Cathryn
Foles, Dorothy	Shine, Tilly
Franklin, Bill	Smiddeon, DickDidi
Freelist, Ina	Snaidtil, Gracie
Frost, Emily	Standish, Edith
Gage, Corvin	Streff, Kaleb
Glein, Lynnina	Stylus, Chad
Grihja, Jossilaine	Sven, Inga
Hassendish, Wiff	Symmer, Jan
Hidalgo, Estella	Taddle, Sue Jean
Hiney, Pinhedda	Taggart, Brian
Homestead, Tisha	Tahmwitel, Alma
Huccard, Carl	Thacker, Galby
Jadford, Parnay	Tipton, Joan Baerlytord
Jimache, Poodle	Tockit, Sedge
Jonasson, Marci	Trowp, Carla
Jonkew, Pub	Tweed, Charlie
Kastenbump, Edyne	Tweemer, Scoop
Kay, Carly	VanerKinder, JoAnn
Kowdzidzny, Eddie	Waggly, Fanga
Layhee, Joe	Waivel, Jackson
Lepianka, Marvina	Warne, Lindy
Litney, Adeline	Warne, Lindy
Lu, Ed	Weck, Tod
Lussly, Jay	Woderhast, Sarah
Madderthrall, Hatty	Yager, Bo
Max, Myna	Yi, Consuela
McKay, Farber	Zanovsky, Yal
Meacke, Arthur	Zasziewcz, Eva

CampChuck or Newsletter Oriented Letters

Dear Editor, [1981]

I'm only glad your selection of Oscar winners was wiser than your choice of type size. If I had to squint to read a batch of haphazard predictions, I don't know if it would be worth the eyestrain.

Bill Franklin, Philadelphia, PA

Dear Bill, [1981]

This sort of comment outnumbered all others, including words of praise and swacks at my mental stability. Ever sensitive to my unsolicited readership, I have honed the material, stretched the paper and steered clear of the reduction copier. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1981]

I enjoyed your movie and Oscar capsule a great deal, but I was wondering why you omitted a critique of the Best Director candidates. I believe this rates at least as much attention as the Supporting Actor categories.

Charles Tweed, New York, NY

Dear Charles, [1981]

Of course, space is the telling factor, but I like to think I wriggle in whatever extra material I justly can. I did, without attending specifically to the category, make my choice impressions known. In fact, I'll use this space to suggest that The Academy, if it steals Best Picture away from "Raging Bull," would have a sturdier leg to stand on if they made sure Martin Scorsese's direction was singled out. At any rate, "Raging Bull" deserves both Oscars this year. Ed.

Notes

The premier edition of the newsletter in 1980 was scrunched onto four pages using a font size inspired by resource constrained judgment. After three years of four 8.5x14 pages, the newsletter settled into its eight page 8.5x11 format.

CampChuck's professional computing began in 1983 at Four Phase (bought by Motorola), then Arix, then 18 years at Hewlett-Packard Company.

Dear Editor, [1982]

We noticed that two years ago, you were almost across the board right on, whereas last year you only barely lit up the scoreboard with your predictions. What gives?

Dick & Didi Smiddeon, Buffalo, NY

Dear Dick & Didi, [1982]

Were wisdom my aim, I would be smart not to guess. Were integrity first priority, I would ignore these ultimately arbitrary Oscar comparisons. I enjoy movies, opinions, and writing. I only hope that in that there is something to give. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1982]

Through your Newsletter my interest in CampChuck has grown, however, I can't seem to locate any information on it at all. Is CampChuck a reputable institution?

Bryan Taggart Portland, OR

Dear Bryan, [1982]

Yes, CampChuck certainly does have a reputation. Two places you will find us are "The National Rumor Catalog" and "The Sourcebook of Alternative Presumptions." If you can't find us at your local bookstore, try asking around at airline terminals.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1982]

I just wanted you to know that I appreciate your elaborate attempts to express your Oscar considerations and analytic guesswork all in one little bundle. I think it's very cute. I'll bet you have curly hair and a wonderful mother.

Dorothy Poles, Elizabeth, NJ

Dear Dorothy, [1982]

Pshaw.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1983]

Your newsletter was such a surprise treat. I want you to know that I had it by my side Academy Awards night. It added a special enthusiasm to my viewing. I do hope CampChuck supports you in step two of a perennial edition.

Adeline Litney, St. Louis, MO

Dear Ad, [1983]

Not without trepidation, CampChuck decided to back a second edition. On other fronts, CampChuck is contemplating other forays into print. Possible projects: "Marriage and Bunk Beds"; also, "A Guide to Obsessive Tennis." Ed.

Dear Editor, [1983]

Now that you're practically an institution, what with your Academy Awards every year and all, when might we hope to see you, perhaps, quarterly?

Mary Beth Quinn, Chicago, IL

Dear Mary Beth, [1983]

I toy with the idea of issues featuring expanded individual reviews, but then I've considered taking off my clothes and jumping into a bed of cactus. Be careful with that word, "institution." Ed.

Dear Editor, [1984]

From what I gather about CampChuck, I'm wondering if you're planning Oscar predictions by computer.

Tyna Beckman, New York, NY

Dear Tyna, [1984]

01010111	01101000	01111001
00000000	01101110	01101111
01110100	00111111	Ed.

CampChuck or Newsletter Oriented Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [1984]

I have a bet with my brother. He says you'll fall flat on your face or get one right if you're lucky. I say 4 out of 5.

Tod Weck, Arlington, VA

Dear Tod, [1984]

I make newsletters, not book, but I can't help but hope you win. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1986]

I keep your newsletter where I do most of my reading, and so long as I pick up the appropriate sheets for the appropriate function, both experiences help clear my mind.

Jackson Waivel, Wheeling, WV

Dear Jackson, [1986]

I've been there myself, and it isn't clear to me yet. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1986]

I looked over all the new names you suggested for your newsletter, and well, none of them excited me much. Why don't you be different and call it "Osc3ar"? The "3" of course is silent.

Henrietta Cnkka, Toledo, OH

Dear Henrietta, [1986]

I did a name search on "Osc3ar" at the state offices. Sorry, it's taken." Ed.

Dear Editor, [1987]

Which would you choose: always guessing right on who will win the Oscars or seeing movies for free?

Cole Chinster, Scranton, PA

Dear Cole, [1987]

If I could do the first, I'd have the second. Ed.

Dear Editor: [1987]

How come you stick so closely to the Academy Award nominations in your choices for Best this and Best that? Doesn't that shortchange you and us?

Myna Max, Boston, MA

Dear Myna, [1987]

True, it hurts my movie appreciation sensibilities to the quick that a wonderful, understated film like "Desert Bloom" seems overlooked. Fitting CampChuck's annual Oscar theme into a few pages barely leaves a line or two for nonsense. Rather than cover more, I'm tempted to publish different kinds of less. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1988]

Enclosed, please find my check for \$12,000. If I can enjoy the pleasure of "CampChuck Reviewer" coverage of current films on a monthly basis, I may well "subscribe" every year.

Joan Bairlytord Tipton, Atlanta, GA

Dear Joan, [1988]

To test if I was dreaming, I somewhat rashly fed your patronage to the garbage disposal. I realize I might have pinched myself more prudently by depositing the check. Would you please run that by me again? Ed.

Dear Editor, [1990]

What other CampChuck treats are there and where can I purchase them?

Sue Jean Taddle, Obladee, MO

Dear Sue Jean, [1990]

Among the titles, there's a book of essays, "You Think You're the Only One Who Works Full Time?" There's a syndicated column, "The Knowbuddy." There's a novel, "Bum's Rush." If you would, please enlist 23,611 of your closest friends to subscribe their devotions to CampChuck in print. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1990, special edition]

Why do you refer to yourself as CampChuck rather than Camp Chuck?

JoAnn Van derKinder, Twin Forks, ID

Dear JoAnn,

This is the sort of trivial curiosity that warms the lifeblood and the life blood of CampChuck. CampChuck is morethanaplace; it is a conjunction, a confluence. Now, let me ask you a question. Which is more spaced out: CampChuck or C a m p C h u c k?

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1992]

So, did anyone win the "CampChuck Challenge"? After all, you only got half right. What was this "keepsake of inestimable value"?

Josslaine Grihja, Great Neck, NY

Dear Josslaine, [1992]

If only I were in earshot of your comforting voice that, no doubt, others cling to routinely. Actually, only one person outguessed me of those who took the challenge. He received a six inch chocolate Oscar and a complete set of CampChuck newsletters dating back to 1980. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1992]

Where do you find time to write the newsletter? If I'm not mistaken, you have a job and a wife.

Sarah Woderhast, Oklahoma City, OK

Dear Sarah, [1992]

An evening or two here, a weekend or two there ... 5:30 to 7:30am often proves productive. You were the one who mentioned my wife second, but I laugh since my wife at times enthusiastically suggests I do this quarterly. I probe gently, "You mean you *want* me to be this unavailable four times a year?"

Ed.

CampChuck or Newsletter Oriented Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [1993]

How much camp would a camp Chuck chuck if a CampChuck could chuck camp?

Lynnia Glein, Hakaminchinik, ME

Dear Lynnia, [1993]

At CampChuck, camp camping and Chuck chucking are electives. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1995, special edition]

When you die, will they find any "lost issues" or unpublished CampChuck Reviewers?

Mortimer Overbringer, Yorn TN

Dear Mortimer, [1995, special edition]

Questions like this, asked of writers before anyone actually cares, could prove a boon to archivists who don't have a life in the actual present worth living. Last year, for instance, CampChuck started a Special Edition after a summer trip to Lake Tahoe and Mammoth Lakes in California. Since not enough writing occurred during the vacation, the frenzied attempt to whip out an issue (before work and other routines insinuated) fell short of completion. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1995, special edition]

Would you ever put out an edition of The "CampChuck Reviewer" that wasn't all tidy and fit and edited proper or really finished even?

Pat Pitt, San Luis Obispo, CA

Dear Pat, [1995, special edition]

Not taking itself too seriously, sometimes CampChuck

Dear Editor, [1996]

Do you suffer much putting out your newsletter? Do you like to suffer?

Edyne Kastenbump, Rye, NY

Dear Edyne, [1996]

There should be a separate mailbag that my wife answers. Since you turned up in my mailbox, I'd have to admit some anxieties over finding time and purporting clever, telling "litterature." This makes for lightweight suffering, but if that's suffering, I guess I like it. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1998]

You're a computer guy. How come you don't have a Web page? If you're anybody you have a Web page.

Galby Thacker, Ft. Collins, CO

Dear Galby, [1998]

I was somebody once, but I fell off into a parallel inertia. I have a vision of putting the entire "CampChuck Reviewer" archive on the Web, but it's one of those things I never get to after working all week as a computer guy. Ed.

Notes

CampChuck also published special newsletter editions in Aug. 2001 (NV, UT, CO), in May 2002 (central CA coast) and Sep. 2002 (Mt. Lassen in CA) and in May 2003 (Italy) and Sep. 2003 (Lakes Basin, in CA Sierra). The next special newsletter edition was published in August, 2010.

Dear Editor, [2000]

How come I haven't received your CampChuck special editions?

Dawnee Panglow, Azusa, CA

Dear Dawnee, [2000]

What started as occasional CampChuck Film Festival editions shifted to accounts of vacation getaways. Out of cheapness, I tend mostly to send these special editions to current CampChuck subscribers.

05/99: Death Valley, CA; Zion, UT

10/98: Washington D.C.

09/97: Central and Easter Oregon

09/96: Andalucia, Spain

05/96: Jawbone Falls, CA

12/95: Santa Barbara, CA

07/95: Rocky Mountains, CO

10/94: 5th Festival (Hidden Villa)

06/94: 4th Festival (Best Scripts)

01/94: Anza Borrego, CA

05/93: Northeastern CA

07/90: 3rd Festival (Best Pictures)

10/86: 2nd Festival (Spain trip)

02/86: 1st Festival (Movie favorites)

Scanning the panorama of seven consecutive years of bonus editions and then some, you remind me that these extra efforts are especially gratifying to me. I surely will share with anyone who expresses interest. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2004]

Don't you just look up the winners of the Golden Globes, toss a few words around them, and call it a newsletter.

Kit Bunger, Delta, CO

Dear Kit, [2004]

That's all I do. Actually, the Golden Globes are a very undependable predictor of Oscar winners despite a likely match up this time around. Ed.

Find *The CampChuck Reviewer* at <http://www.startlets.com>. Email: jaffee@startlets.com (that's three "t's" in startlets).

Movie or Actor Specific Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [1991]

I heard that hanging prominently at CampChuck is a glamorous 8 x 10 glossy of Meryl Streep. What does your wife have to say about that?

Claudia Myowmek, Brooklyn, NY

Dear Claudia, [1991]

My wife alternates between having plenty to say, and what can speak louder, having nothing to say, about my affliction for Ms. Streep. However, if I may blow the nosy, you should know that my wife gave me that glossy photo for a birthday present. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1992]

Hey, moonstruck, how was Meryl Streep in "Defending Your Life"?

Beth Neenerneener, York, PA

Dear Beth, [1992]

She still lights up the acting firmament each time out. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1993]

Let me try to put this delicately. Didn't your precious Meryl Streep make a stinky picture last year?

Spanky Caroline, East Weston, AZ

Dear Spanky, [1993]

When Meryl decided to have fun making a movie like "Death Becomes Her," she may not have noticed or had control over the "special effects disease" where filmmakers wholly neglect the importance of a decent script. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1994]

Would you please tell my kids not to watch so many violent movies? Maybe they'd listen hearing it from you.

Angustina Fay, Little Rock, AR

Dear Angustina, [1994]

What about telling it like it is: "Searching for Bobby Fischer" (no violence; a functional family with choices and excellence to nurture), "Menace II Society" (violence; despair riddled hope in the ghetto).

What about telling it like it was: "Gettysburg" (violence; a historical imperative and emblazoned stupidity repeating itself).

What about living happily ever after: "Dave" (no violence; government cured in two hours), "Sleepless in Seattle" (no violence; life and love cured in two hours)

What about living ever after: "Heaven and Earth" (violence; no cure from the Viet Nam war), "A Bronx Tale" (violence; growing up "good" in the inner city).

What about bounding creativity and imagination and fun: "Nightmare Before Christmas" (gruesome and ghoulish), "Groundhog Day" (no violence, clever silliness). Ed.

Dear Editor [1994, special edition]

I like Winona Ryder.

Zake Caxton, Buffalo, NY

Dear Zake, [1994, special edition]

There it was, your whole letter, and I'll bet you do. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1994, special edition]

I have this nagging feeling that movies with Julia Roberts or Arnold Schwarzenegger are rotting my brain. How do you suggest I curb my megastar viewing habits?

Corvin Gage, Santa Barbara, CA

Dear Corvin, [1994, special edition]

The so called experts disagree. Some advise weaning very slowly. Start with, say, Harrison Ford or Whoopi Goldberg. Balance this with, say, Tom Hanks or Susan Sarandon. Chill with Keanu Reeves or Demi Moore. Meanwhile, season choices with Denzel Washington or Emma Thompson.

Other experts insist you switch outright to film festivals or foreign language films (avoiding Gerard Depardieu at all costs, in any language).

If you find yourself sucked into the next Bruce Willis gamble or hoping against hope that Goldie Hawn has something to offer, don't beat yourself up about it. Life (and megastardom) is too short. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1995]

Movies like *Schindler's List* keep alive the overblown fiction of that overblown word, "holocaust." To use a word you movie pushers use, you "romanticize" a tough period of economic depression and war.

Bo Yager, Raleigh, NC

Dear Bo, [1995]

I think you may be confusing Spielberg's nearly documentary *Schindler's List* with his wonderfully overblown science fiction *Jurassic Park*. Speaking of pushers, are you, by any chance, associated with the tobacco industry? Ed.



Movie or Actor Specific Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [1995]

Hoop Dreams is the best movie of the year. I read critics who think so, too. It's a great story. It's a great commentary. Don't you think it should at least be an Oscar nominee for Best Picture?

Parnay Jadfard, Sunnyvale, CA

Dear Parnay, [1995]

As long as Oscar awards Best Documentary films, it insults documentaries to say *Hoop Dreams* is so good it deserves to be in the higher profile, bigger bucks bucket of Best Picture. It honors *Hoop Dreams* that a mere documentary made a modest splash at the box office. Don't worry too much about Oscar categories. Don't worry that such quibbling may be why it wasn't even nominated for Best Documentary. Just encourage friends to see *Hoop Dreams*. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1996]

I knew the Spring release of *Don Juan DeMarco* would bury that picture. Didn't Johnny Depp do a great job in a neat movie?

Eva Zaszewcz, Madison, WI

Dear Eva, [1996]

Depp succeeded in another peculiar yet surprisingly mainstream vehicle. I'm sorry its clever insanity bait didn't catch more inmates at the box office. We could use more of the mind bending romance of *Don Juan DeMarco*. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1997]

Don't you think that *Evita* is the part of a lifetime for Madonna?

Tiger Buchannon, Boston, MA

Dear Tiger, [1997]

It may be, but Madonna will have to do better than that for me to say much more than "so what" about the weak chemistry of her talents. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1997]

I know this is just one of those "Why didn't such and such picture get nominated" questions, but isn't director John Sayles and his film, *Lone Star*, the kind of excellence that deserved Best Picture and Best Director Oscar nominations?

Consuela Yi, El Paso, TX

Dear Consuela, [1997]

Besides the disadvantage of being released too early last year, *Lone Star* travels a path of subtle richness that stirs less notice than films like *Shine* or *Secrets & Lies*. *Fargo* (also an early '96 release but with more hook) usurped what might have been *Lone Star's* slot since *The English Patient* is such an unstoppable nomination hog. At least Sayles is nominated for Best Screenplay. We should be happy that three small, independent films populate the top categories this year. Ed.

32nd year

Dear Editor, [1998]

Will Woody Allen continue being a juicy fill of tabloid gossip?

Winnie Peckaliddle, London

Dear Winnie, [1998]

Woody Allen took a brilliant movie turn in 1997 with *Deconstructing Harry*. Harry writes racy novels about his own racy life. Harry says that only the quality of his art matters, not the quality of his life.

Deconstructing Harry is very creative, biting, smart and funny, and untypical for Allen, rather mean spirited. Does Woody Allen's personal life turn you off to his movies? How many of his movies have you seen? If you don't like his movies, is it easier to think ill of him?

If you enjoy what a celebrity does professionally, are you more willing to overlook his or her "bad behavior"? If you enjoy a celebrity, does a celebrity's "badly behaved" plight ever add to your total attraction?

What do you really know about any celebrity? Did you know that Woody Allen has six fingers on his left hand? Did you know that there is actual filmed evidence that Mia Farrow bore the devil's child? Ed.

Manufactured Mail, New for 2011

Dear Editor, [2011]

Which do you think are better: boxing movies or food movies?

Rachel Ray Robinson, Clovis, NM

Dear Rachel, [2011]

Talk about comparing apples and upper cuts. Boxing movies contain more readily realizable movie juices, but a story well choreographed around a food theme, pound for pound, is more gratifying. Ed.

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Dear Editor, [2011]

I've been thinking you were already fairly over the hill when you started this newsletter gig. Don't get me wrong, dude. You've shown your chops now and again, but man, I kinda see you kicking back and tossing out a "Greatest Hits" type issue or two before you, well, you know.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend, [2011]

Well, someone knows. Meanwhile, issues happen. Ed.

Movie or Actor Specific Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [1999]

What do you think about the AFI list of the 100 greatest movies?

Scoop Tweemer, Sioux City, IA

Dear Scoop, [1999]

At first I was put off by this pure marketing gimmick designed in the American Film Institute's (AFI) name to ring up video rentals. Without quibbling about such an impossible ranking exercise, I have to say this is a solid course in "America's Greatest Movies."

At the risk of supporting such a pure marketing gimmick, I'd say don't whine about "There's nothing to rent" until you've seen all 100. I'd already seen about 85 of them and every one of the top 43 films (if you don't count #4 *Gone With the Wind*, which I refuse to see).

I'll mention some of my favorites that are *not* on the list, although favorite is a different slant than greatest. I find it hard to imagine that films like *Cabaret* and *Sophie's Choice* are not on the list. They certainly belong instead of *Unforgiven* or *Easy Rider*.

There is a dearth of some of the finest plays made into excellent movies like *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe* and *The Miracle Worker* and *Inherit the Wind*. Some of my favorites have a smaller, more personal ring like *A Thousand Clowns* or *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* or *Harvey*.

Mostly, lists like these remind me that I love the movies. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2001]

Am I a racist if I refer to Tom Hanks as "the Tiger Woods of movie stars"?

Joe Layhee, Cincinnati, OH

Dear Joe, [2001]

While not the most sharply drawn comparison, another Oscar or two for Hanks might make the phrase worth misusing. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2003]

In *Bowling for Columbine*, I think Michael Moore ambushed a frail, old man when he interviewed Charlton Heston.

Farber McKay, Knoxville, TN

Dear Farber, [2003]

Yes, that segment took unfair advantage of the symbolic NRA leader. Still, the thought-provoking, telling, and funny documentary is one of the year's best pictures. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2003]

I just loved *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. Didn't you?

Winifred Dexit, Athens, GA

Dear Winifred, [2003]

Love? No. However, I did like this exaggerated entertainment. Indeed, the love story was refreshingly sweet and the over-the-top comedy was fun. For excellence in filmmaking under the wedding banner, last year's *Monsoon Wedding* shined the ethnic spotlight more impressively. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2004]

Don't you think the world needs more corny movies? Do people even say "corny" anymore?

Tilly Shine, Topeka, KS

Dear Tilly, [2004]

"Corny" is one of the great movie juices. I'll just say that if Hollywood could remake *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* cast with a global slant and still retain all the corniness to go along with the substance, Hollywood and the world would be a teensy bit better off. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2004]

Everybody has a top ten list. Do you have a 2003 top ten list?

Sigrid Optoman, Stowe, VT

Dear Sigrid, [2004]

1. In America
2. American Splendor
3. The Last Samurai
4. Lost in Translation
5. Finding Nemo
6. Something's Gotta Give
7. The Triplets of Belleville
8. Monster
9. Mystic River
10. Girl with a Pearl Earring

A list of ten squeezes out films like *Pieces of April*, *Shattered Glass*, *Elephant* and *Thirteen*. This list is influenced by a certain pleasure in its range. A few characterizing words hint at the diverse offerings.

1. hard, life affirming, magic, story-rich, character-rich
2. nerdy, creative slice of life
3. violent, spiritual epic
4. low key, untypical pairing
5. perfect cartoon family fun
6. top formula romantic comedy
7. bizarre animated genius
8. intense singular focus
9. intense interwoven acting
10. museum mood piece

Only two of the ten appear on the Oscar Best Picture list, and four of ten don't show up in any of the six major categories. Ed.

Notes

The AFI "America's Greatest Movies" top 100 was updated after several years, in a somewhat arbitrary way, but still serves as a "course" in American films as well as a marketing gimmick.

Beginning in 2007, after three years of top ten lists in the Manufactured Mailbag, it became a separate feature in each Oscar edition.

Movie or Actor Specific Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [2005]

I especially appreciated you including a top ten list last year. Doing it again?

Lindy Warne, Roseburg, OR

Dear Lindy, [2005]

1. Million Dollar Baby
2. Super Size Me
3. Hotel Rwanda
4. Kinsey
5. Ray
6. Finding Neverland
7. Fahrenheit 9/11
8. The Aviator
9. The Incredibles
10. Vera Drake

Conetenders for the top ten include *Garden State* and *Love Song for Bobby Long*. A few characterizing words hint about each of the top ten.

1. Story-rich, character-rich; Eastwood's best ever
2. Important, eye-opening, fun
3. Important, eye-opening, scary
4. A textbook new look at sex
5. Soulerrific Foxx and Charles
6. Gently grounded and fanciful
7. Manipulative, granted; but smart, crafted, provoking
8. Complex, careening biopic
9. Aminated vitality wins again
10. Impressively dreary

Dear Editor, [2010]

My best friend Daisy said if I write to tell you we liked "Where the Wild Things Are" you would put us in your newsletter.

Rose Penstemon, Olympia, WA

Dear Rose, [2010]

Here you both are, and I'm with you on liking "Wild Things."

Ed.



Dear Editor, [2006]

I repeat my question from last year, since I so appreciate you including a top ten list. Doing it again?

Lindy Warne, Roseburg, OR

Dear Lindy, [2006]

1. *Brokeback Mountain*
2. *Good Night, and Good Luck*
3. *Junebug*
4. *A History of Violence*
5. *Crash*
6. *Breakfast on Pluto*
7. Documentary Films including *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill*; *Mad Hot Ballroom*; *Enron*; *Murberball*; and *March of the Penguins*
8. *Pride & Prejudice*
9. *Me&You& Everyone We Know*
10. Yes

Contenders for the top ten include *Munich* and *Downfall* and *The Upside of Anger* and *Cinderella Man*. A few characterizing words hint about each of the top ten.

1. story-rich, character-rich; Ang Lee knows relationship angst
2. taut, telling docu-drama
3. a stereotype underminer
4. story grabs you all the way
5. in your face mesh of prejudice
6. strangely innocent, waifly tale
7. great alternative for seeking satisfaction at the movies
8. top notch period piece
9. odd genuineness grows on ya
10. a poetic, sensual, intelligent, film experiment

Dear Editor, [2007]

What's this penguin thing? Best Documentary of 2005 for "March of the Penguins." "Happy Feet" is going to win Best Animated Feature for 2006. Something's fishy.

Adam Dons, Tuxedo, Tennessee

Dear Adam, [2007]

Hardly a trend. Write me again when a penguin figures in Best Actor or Best Picture. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2008]

In your Mailbag last year, Adam Dons wrote about "Happy Feet" (Best Animated Feature, 2006). And "March of the Penguins" (Best Documentary, 2005). Will "Surf's Up," yet another Oscar nominated penguin film, win the 2007 animated feature Oscar?

W. Chumley, Tuskegee, GA

Dear Mr. Chumley, [2008]

"Ratatouille" seems unbeatable. Permit an "I kid you not" aside: This month, I was flying home. A real penguin (followed by its San Diego Zoo trainer) walked down the aisle of my plane. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2008]

With you sticking to Oscar level films, we don't get to read about films you think are big stinkers?

Wiff Hassendish, Pittsburgh, PA

Dear Wiff, [2008]

Last year's "August Rush" of musical genius and family love was one of the biggest stinkers in recent memory. Anything-goes, mystical capability and far fetched coincidences surprised me by getting continually worse on its path of shallow predictability. Ed.

Movie-ish Letters

Dear Editor, [1984]

You often refer to “the Academy this ...” and “Hollywood that ...” in a slighting or sarcastic manner. Do you feel this is necessary?

Carla Trowp, Des Moines, IA

Dear Carla, [1984]

When you publish one movie newsletter per year, it makes more sense to associate with the Academy Awards celebration than with Arbor Day festivities. Hollywood has a commercial strain and the motion picture Academy has a political strain. It's merely a springboard both for well meted jibe and for my personal perspectives as a whole.
Ed.

Dear Editor, [1985]

I've heard the story of where the name Oscar came from a bunch of times, but I forgot. Could you fill me in again?

Gabriel Pfaff, Camden, NJ

Dear Gabriel, [1985]

Oscar Meyenik, catering to the delicatessen mentality of Hollywood, is remembered to have said, “I been feedin' you guys since before you cou' talk. You tink I evuh hea' so much as a tank you, Oscar?” The rest is motion picture huckstery.
Ed.

Dear Editor, [1988]

Is it true that Dudley Moore is being wooed for the lead in “Unix, the Motion Picture.”

Ina Freelist, Austin, TX

Dear Ina, [1988]

The executive producers who brought you “The In-grown Toenail that Ate San Jose” and “Silicon Valley Implants” feel Moore is a good artistic match for their kind of film projects, but as of press time none of the cast has been ported.
Ed.

Dear Editor, [1990]

You probably know people in the movie business personally. How does CampChuck handle writing about them?

Adell Ruleckstein, Santa Cruz, CA

Dear Adell, [1990]

It's not as if I know anybody really famous like Dudley Moore, but I did share dinner recently with a Hollywood producer. His film, “Blaze,” snuck only a Best Cinematography nomination, so for me to mention “Blaze” I must feel “Blaze” is truly a credit to Hollywood entertainment. I must feel that Paul Newman in “Blaze” anchored a richly characterized vehicle.
Ed.

Dear Editor, [1990, special edition]

My son and I both like movies, but I have to tell you he says things like, “that old Dustin Hoffman flick, “The Graduate,” or “The Godfather, now that's a classic.” How old do you think a movie has to be before it's “an old movie”? An 18 year old movie can't be “a classic,” can it?

Getrude Perclact, Pontiac, MI

Dear Gertrude, [1990, special edition]

Age is in the eye of the be older, and I'm afraid that you just be older than your son. The sixties may be near and dear to our movie memories, but it is almost a long time ago. Eighteen years, that's a bit too soon to become a classic.

Let's pigeonhole for now that the thirties and forties were heydays of the “old” movies. The fifties rounded out an era, marking a transition decade that I'd say respectfully could be called old. The sixties – my 1960s – naw, I wouldn't call that old yet.
Ed.

Dear Editor, [1991]

How do you deal with people who talk during movies?

Arthur Meacke, Baltimore, MD

Dear Arthur, [1991]

Recently I said to an offender who ignored repeated looks of disapproval, “Don't you think you're better suited to watching television?” He shut up and even apologized after the movie. I confess that he might also have responded by talking louder or by punching me in the face or both.
Ed.

Dear Editor, [1994]

This anti-violence hysteria is spilling over to movies that I pay seven hard earned dollars to see. I say don't mess with the violent realism and escapism I look for in a free country.

Fahged Aboudit, Washington, D.C.

Dear Fahged, [1994]

You do just look for it on the screen, right? The pipeline for movie (and all media) violence will remain full, notwithstanding the vandalism of good and bad intentions alike.
Ed.

Dear Editor, [1994, special edition]

My husband and I always have such a difficult time selecting videos to rent. He says he's only looking for action and yuks. I confess, I want romance or else a heart warming social message. How do you suggest we work this out week to week?

Gracie Snaidtil, Kansas City, KS

Dear Gracie, [1994, special edition]

I'm guessing your husband will tune out every other week if you take turns. Perhaps you should try a different tack like watching whatever he wants and using it to get your way on some entirely separate issue.
Ed.

Movie-ish Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [1999]

I love movies, but these days, the way they make them, what they put on the screen, well, I guess I don't know. I still love the movies, but give me something I can cling to, something I can depend on.

Hester Plaim, Ft. Meyers, FL

Dear Hester, [1999]

I think you can rest assured that no animals were harmed during the making of any movie you go to see. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2000]

"The Insider" lays into tobacco companies pretty heavily, but just about every movie I see has at least one character smoking on screen. I think the tobacco companies probably like what the film industry does for it.

Sedge Tockit, Boston, MA

Dear Sedge, [2000]

One might think that moviemakers have a ripe opportunity to ask every time whether a character really needs to be smoking. Maybe there's lots of peer pressure amongst directors about what to do with actors' hands. The trouble is that smoking scenes are addictive, maybe less addictive than shower scenes but more addictive than vomiting scenes. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2001]

Why don't they publish the vote count for the Oscars?

Chad Stylus, Miami, FL

Dear Chad, [2001]

I like the idea. On the other hand, it might compete unnecessarily with the mystique of Oscar. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2001]

Do you know any new things that show up in movies all the time, like chase scenes and shower scenes? And like someone smoking in nearly every film ... or vomiting ... or screaming one of those "Home Alone" screams?

Jersey Peenzacker, Bayonne, NJ

Dear Jersey, [2001]

Here's a dependable if less glamorous bit of scene chewing. Watch movie characters running down flights of stairs. No matter how pressing the situation, they don't fly two or more steps at a time but always one step at a time. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2002]

My husband watches too much television. The commercials every ten minutes on some of those cable channels last about five minutes. My husband watches two movies at the same time. Just for example, he changes back and forth between an intense war movie and a light romantic comedy. Does this disease have a cure?

Marla Canton, Teaneck, NJ

Dear Marla, [2002]

What disease? Ed.

Dear Editor, [2003]

This is a great Oscar year for "Z" names.

Yal Zanolovsky, Spoonful, AZ

Dear Yal, [2003]

Actually, Renee Zellweger broke the ice last year by becoming the first actor ever nominated for Oscar with a name that starts with the letter "Z." But you are right – having both Catherine Zeta-Jones and Renee Zellweger nominated in the same year, *from the same picture*, well ... Franco Zeffirelli, Robert Zemeckis, and Frank Zinneman are probably pizzing in their pants. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2005]

Did you ever notice that when you come upon a dead body in movies, one or both of its legs are almost always bent in some unnatural direction?

Morton Bertram, Pittsburgh, PA

Dear Morton, [2005]

This is the official violent death posture prescribed by the CoCD (Code of Cinematic Death) especially when falling is involved. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2006]

Did you notice that there are 21 double letters in the big five people categories this year? Director Bennett Miller, alone has 3 double letters in his name. All five Best Supporting Actor nominees have double letters including double doubles for Jake Gyllenhaal and Matt Dillon.

Hatty Madderthrall, Billings, MO

Dear Hatty, [2006]

You are dangerously close to unearthing classified code. Don't lose faith. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2006]

How come, on television, they can be so insulting as to scrunch the film credits alongside a rush to the next commercial?

Inga Sven, Calgary, Alberta

Dear Inga, [2006]

Such crass commercialism won't happen if you see the movies in a theater, although theaters already make us suffer commercials before the film, eh? Ed.



Movie-ish Letters (cont.)

Dear Editor, [2009]

It irks me in movies when a guy, who's clearly way faster than the man or woman he's chasing, takes a ridiculously dramatic amount of times to catch the person.

Chevy Sanborn, Louisville, KY

Dear Chevy, [2009]

Yes, but at least they're never too out of breath to engage in script-advancing dialog or fisticuffs. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2010]

I'm afraid to let my children use those 3-D movie glasses. Should I worry about this?

Cathryn Scairdy, Rapid City, SD

Dear Kathryn, [2010]

The only known side effect of using 3-D glasses is that it causes more 3-D movies to be made. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2010]

These movies they make these days, you know what I mean, I like a lot of them. How do you know if a movie is funny?

Cleabold Dutz, Baton Rouge, LA

Dear Cleabold, [2010]

If you think a movie's funny, it's funny, even if you're wrong. Ed.

Notes, some milestone logistical dates related to CampChuck history:

Lived in Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, & San Jose, CA 1980-96 and late 1999- early 2003, and in Philomath, OR, in between; in Nevada City, CA, 2003 to present. Rented, except 6 years owning a condo in Santa Clara before OR & buying a house to move to in Nevada City.

Worked craft fairs 1980 into 1983 before getting "real" jobs technical writing at Four Phase (bought by Motorola) into 1986, then Arix into 1989, then Hewlett-Packard Company for 18 years until snapping up an early retirement package; one 8-month contract technical writer interruption of retirement in 2008.

Miscellaneous Letters

Dear Editor, [1982]

I thought I read something about CampChuck maybe being bought out by some hi-tech conglomerate located someplace called the "Silicon Wilderness." Something like that. I'm sure this wouldn't effect CampChuck's commitment to verbosity, ridiculousity, and well, osity in general. It wouldn't, would it?

Eddie Kowdzidzny, Gary, IN

Dear Eddie, [1982]

Eddie, Eddie, Eddie. Somebody has to pay for air time, for court time, not to mention slippin' a few to Ol' Father Time, under the table. Let's put it this way. As long as there's an osity without a home CampChuck's mouth is always open.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1985]

I believe I saw on a bulletin board that you make personal appearances. Do you?

Karen Balstatten, Atherton, CA

Dear Karen, [1985]

Indeed. The next appearance happens to be in your area – at the Peninsula Baptists' Lox and Bagel Forum, Sunday, April 21st. In addition to my lecture on "Authoritative Criticism Without Credentials," the forum has arranged for Dudley Moore to speak on "The Difficulties of Divorcing Talent from Acting." Watch to see if the CampChuck sponsored series is due out your way.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1989]

I've heard that CampChuck has ventured into real estate. Here I thought you were more of a pocket of cultural cuteness.

Estella Hidalgo, Pueblo, CO

Dear Estella, [1989]

Part of what now makes CampChuck cute includes a mortgage, condo dues, and a heightened definition of overhead overhead. If this estate is real, señora, then I don't know what else to es-say.

Ed.

Dear Editor, [1995]

I have tennis elbow. Someone told me to ask you about it.

Carly Kay, Orlando, FL

Dear Carly, [1995]

Ask me after my body releases me from some other proscriptions. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1996]

Are you moving to Oregon? Our records show conflicting data.

Kaleb Streff, Salem, OR
Council on Filtered Populations

Dear Mr. Streff, [1996]

Your data is conflicting correctly, and I can appreciate your concern. We currently are not looking to make such a move, but then we didn't move when we were. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1997]

I just want to tell you that I think that you are obnoxious – but in a good way.

Marci Jonasson, Beaverton, OR

Dear Marci, [1997]

I've always felt that about myself – having had that word associated with me for decades now. Word person that I am, I am nonetheless surprised to check the dictionary and find how little room it leaves to be obnoxious in a good way.

Ed.

Miscellaneous Letters (continued)

Dear Editor, [1997]

Is it possible that you are still so stubborn that you don't own a VCR?

Marvina Lepianka, Philomath, OR

Dearest Marvina,

It is possible, but in our new country setting with reception of barely 3 television channels, CampChuck's anti-VCR signal is being undermined by increasing static. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1998]

I forgot what I wrote to you. Could you remind me because if anybody finds out, it would be personally humiliating.

Jan Symmer, Corvallis, OR

Dear Jan, [1998]

You wrote you were subscribing to CampChuck because it would be personally humiliating if anyone found out you didn't. CampChuck makes it a policy never to publish the names of anyone it could personally humiliate. Ed.

Dear Editor, [1998]

Life is short. Ed Lu, Reno, NV

Dear Ed, [1998]

What's in a name? Ed.

Dear Editor, [2002]

Do you think anybody will make a movie about the Hewlett-Packard / Compaq merger quest?

Carl Hucard, Palo Bajo, CA

Dear Carl, [2002]

Compared with Bill Gates' recent slither through the United States Supreme Court and national implications of the Enron meltdown, the HP / Compaq soap opera would not make much of a script. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2002]

You definitely catch my interest with the poetry that appears in your newsletters. Did you ever publish the book of poetry you mentioned you were finishing 3 years ago?

Emily Frost, Rimenick, OH

Dear Emily, [2002]

There is much distraction and sloth at CampChuck. However I am pleased to say that the volume of poetry is complete including a wonderful collaboration with illustrator Bev Jauch. I have only to assemble and proof a final submission for publication. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2003]

Now that the Hewlett-Packard / Compaq merger is old news, what do you think the media will do for business related headlines.

Osgood Bucks, Washington, D.C.

Dear Osgood, [2003]

If the weight of economic slowdown doesn't press on the press enough and the heat of international conflagration doesn't burn up enough columns and time slots, it's none too early to start speculating about Carly Fiorina for President of the United States in 2016. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2007]

It's just a fashion question, but what do you think of the revealing gowns at the Oscars?

Grace Prodder, Van Nuys, CA

Dear Grace, [2007]

Often, allure increases because of what is not showing, but I can deal with revealing. One possible rule of thumb seems frequently ignored. If adhesive tape is required, it's probably a stylistic forced-fit. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2007]

You took an eight week vacation last year? Wow. Did you see, like, a hundred films in those two months?

Tisha Homestead, Tulsa, OK

Dear Tisha, [2007]

I saw more than 60 films in theaters in 2006. I saw only one during those eight weeks of travel. "Wordplay," a fun film about serious crossword puzzling, deserved a slot amongst the heavy duty Best Documentary nominees. Those eight weeks, including Wyoming and Oregon, Spain and Italy, were devoted mostly to outdoor adventure and to special connections other than film. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2008]

Now that you're retired, do you have a second career reviewing movies?

Jay Lussly, Greenville, SC

Dear Jay, [2008]

"Career" tends to involve earning a living, something my movie reviewing does not attempt. The retirement package I took last year was too enticing to ignore. After what will be a year of increased travel, film devotions, and more, I need a little more of that earning a living to sufficiently fuel such devotions. Ed.

Dear Editor, [2009]

Your retirement ended, didn't it?

Bea Bizzebod, Provo, UT

Dear Bea, [2009]

September 2008, the sun set on my June 2007 retirement. Back working til the next sunrise. Ed.

Find *The CampChuck Reviewer* at <http://www.startlets.com>.
Email: jaffee@startlets.com
(that's three "t's" in startlets).