

Reverend Al Goes to Hollywood

✘ I don't know about you, but I think Al Sharpton gets a bad rap.

The guy can't do anything without conservatives jumping all over him. Even when he does something clearly worthwhile, all he gets is grief from Whitey.

Take Sharpton's latest attempt to make America a better place. He's called for an "emergency meeting" to deal with the lack of diversity in Hollywood. Everybody knows Hollywood liberals hate black people but apparently Al Sharpton is the only one who has the guts to say it out loud.

The issue is the Academy Awards, where each year beautiful white people get all dressed up and tell each other how wonderful they are. Turns out that all the nominees for best actor this year are white; all the nominees for best actress ... white; all the nominees for best director – white again. In the past two decades this has only happened one other time.

As Sharpton – President Obama's go-to man on race – so elegantly put it: "The movie industry is like the Rocky Mountains, the higher you get, the whiter it gets." There are rumors that Sharpton soon will hold another "emergency meeting," this time in Aspen, to deal with another issue involving diversity. The working title of the meeting is "Why the hell is snow always white?"

Sharpton might have called for an emergency meeting to deal with fatherlessness in Black America, where the out-of-wedlock birth rate is north of 70 percent. He might have called for an emergency meeting to deal with the disproportionately high number of black kids who drop out of high school. He might have called an emergency meeting to deal with black crime, whose victims are overwhelmingly black people.

But there are just so many hours in the day, so Al had to prioritize. Memo to Whitey: Lay off the Rev, a man who never lets an opportunity (to stoke racial tensions) go to waste.

Who's the Boob?

✘ I haven't watched the Academy Awards in years and had no clue why Seth McFarlane was the host. I don't watch cartoons so I have no idea what "Family Guy" is all about. That being said, the next day my news page featured several headlines about him and some stupid song he sang at the Awards show called "We Saw Your Boobs!"

Lots of tweets, lots of blogs, lots of this and that from all sorts of people being outraged about the song, some sincere, some feigned, I'm sure, but it caught my eye so I had to see what all the hoopla was about.

If you didn't watch the show, you can see what I'm writing about here.

Two things came to mind when I saw it.

The song is so immature, sophomoric, foolish, stupid, juvenile and ridiculous (I'm running out of synonyms) that it could've been written by my 13-year old grand nephew but that would be insulting to him since he is a honor student. If this is the quality of entertainment that is now presented at the Academy Awards, I know why I haven't watched it in decades. I can't imagine Bob Hope or Johnny Carson doing a shtick like this, but I guess this type of crass humor is expected and, apparently, wanted. (I read several comments noting this is "typical McFarlane, so the producers knew what they were

getting.”) I also think it reflects our society’s obsession with breasts.

The second thing that came to mind, and more interesting to me, is the “outrage” coming from women. He’s being called “sexist” and “misogynistic,” and Jamie Lee Curtis called the whole thing a “cheesy vaudeville show.” I’ve even read comments that the song was offensive because the scenes in which the some of the actresses were topless were rape scenes. You’re telling me a rape scene cannot be portrayed any other way? Seriously? They dealt with the issues back in the 40s and 50s and it was handled quite differently and without any nudity. Anyone remember the horrific rape scene in “Two Women” from 1960?

Here’s a typical comment from a real boob, Gloria Allred: “It’s one thing to be topless and to have that in the context of the film, for a purpose in a particular scene for a particular reason. It’s another to take it out of context and just focus on women’s breasts.” What a load of BS. (Maybe she’s fanning the flames for some ridiculous class action lawsuit against Mr. McFarlane on behalf of all the actresses he mentioned. It wouldn’t surprise me.)

Just about every cover of every magazine at the newsstands show actresses in plunging necklines, “side boob shots” or “wardrobe malfunctions.” I’m convinced they crave and love the publicity. Why would there be a red carpet at every one of these award events if the actresses didn’t want to show off their wares?

These actresses who are so “outraged” by this song voluntarily chose to take off their clothes and show their boobs in their films for money. I’ve never once read a story that a gun was put to an actress’s head which forced them to remove their bras in front of the camera or that their paychecks were withheld.

A couple of weeks ago, I wrote about the outrage from the British royals after photos were taken of them they didn't like. I gave them some simple advice, "just put some clothes on!" End of problem.

Here's some advice to actresses. If you're willing to take your clothes off and, by the way, get paid very handsomely for it, why complain when someone points out they "can see your boobs"? Don't show them. Simple solution.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.

The Oscars and Other Travesties

It is once again that time of year when we are told that a billion people around the world will be tuned in to see which of the over-hyped movies and actors get to take home Academy Awards. My wife will be tuned in because she likes to see what everyone is wearing and I'll be watching because I enjoy seeing the winners trying to act humble and I get a kick out of watching the losers pretend to be good sports.

The fact of the matter is that as with most elections, the winners have to spend a king's ransom advertising. For months, the same people who will go on stage and pretend they are unworthy have been waging war in the Hollywood trade papers.

This year, there's been a lot of static over the fact that Kathryn Bigelow, who directed *Zero Dark Thirty*, wasn't nominated for an Academy Award, even though the movie was. As a result, as happens whenever a woman appears to have been slighted, we have been hearing from the usual suspects that

sexism reigns in Hollywood.

The dopes ignore a few salient points. For one thing, although they are now nominating 10 movies for Best Picture, they continue to only nominate five directors. Therefore, if one were to say that if it was an injustice in her case, it was equally so for Ben Affleck, whose *Argo* was nominated, while he wasn't. For another thing, how is it that if the Academy is now riddled with sexists, it wasn't two short years ago when they actually gave Bigelow the Oscar for the mediocre *Hurt Locker*. Is it possible that the Academy been over-run with right-wingers? And if so, why wasn't I invited to join the coup?

We had the same scenario when Barbra Streisand wasn't nominated as Best Director for *The Prince of Tides*, and outraged feminists –there being no other kind! – ignored the fact that she had been given an Oscar for the very forgettable song, "Evergreen."

Back in 1958, David Niven won the Best Actor Oscar, Wendy Hiller won as Best Supporting Actress and Deborah Kerr was nominated as Best Actress. What's more, the movie they all appeared in, *Separate Tables*, was nominated as one of the five Best Pictures. In spite of all that, its director, my friend, Delbert Mann, was not nominated. To his credit, he didn't whine about it. He was disappointed, but he didn't complain that the Academy members had it in for guys born in Kansas.

It seems to be a constant complaint that when women don't win any award they might have a shot at, it's because of blatant sexism. And when they do win, it's based on recognition of their sheer genius, even when there might be more women than men casting ballots on both occasions.

It reminds me of the black college basketball coach who, after several losing seasons, was let go a few years back, and accused the university of racism, ignoring the obvious fact

that it was the very same institution that had hired him in the first place.

Only the folks who hand out the Nobel Peace Prize make as many bad decisions as the members of the Motion Picture Academy. These are the folks, let us never forget, who decided that "Sweet Leilani" was a better song than "They Can't Take That Away From Me" and that "Three Coins in the Fountain" was better than "The Man That Got Away."

They gave Oscars to the likes of *The Greatest Show on Earth*, *The English Patient*, *The Deer Hunter*, *Driving Miss Daisy* and *Platoon*, but never even nominated *Roxanne*, *My Cousin Vinny*, *Hail the Conquering Hero*, *Singin' in the Rain* or *Groundhog Day*.

These are the very same goofballs who have given not one, but two Oscars, to Sean Penn, Tom Hanks and Jane Fonda, but none to Irene Dunne, Jean Arthur, Claude Rains, William Powell, Montgomery Clift, Thelma Ritter or Preston Sturges, and never even got around to nominating Joseph Cotton, Steve Martin or Edward G. Robinson.

This year, the biggest blemish on the Oscars had nothing to do with Kathryn Bigelow. It's the fact that they, who saw fit to bestow Oscars on Michael Moore and Al Gore, for such left-wing crapola as *Bowling for Columbine* and *An Inconvenient Truth*, respectively, never even had *2016* on their short list of 15 documentaries worthy of consideration.

One thing for certain is that on Oscar night, when one recipient after another rushes on stage, and with the sort of cloying humility that made Charles Dickens' Uriah Heep so singularly obnoxious, insists that they are undeserving of such an honor, I'll be sitting home, echoing their sentiments.

©2013 Burt Prelutsky. Comments? Write BurtPrelutsky@aol.com.

The Silly Season

by BurtPrelutsky

With football season finally over, we face the rest of the year, during which victories and awards are not usually determined by actual talent, true grit or any other standard that can be measured objectively. Instead, we will have some group of generally goofy individuals determine who will cart home Oscars, Nobel Peace Prizes and the U.S. presidency.



The Academy snubbed
Jimmy in 1939...

In fact, I'm convinced that the reason that so many people are addicted to sports is because they remain just about the only meritocracies in existence. While it's true that injuries occasionally play a role in which team wins the World Series or the NCAA basketball tournament, it is nearly always the best team that cops the trophy.

When it comes to Academy Awards, there is a long history of mind-boggling injustices. For instance, "Sweet Leilani" beat out the Gershwins' "They Can't Take That Away From Me"; James Stewart got the Oscar for *The Philadelphia Story* to make up for his losing it the previous year to Robert (Mr. Chips) Donat, when he starred in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*; *Going My Way* and its director Leo McCarey beat out *Double Indemnity* and Billy Wilder; *The Greatest Show on Earth* beat out *High Noon*, *The Quiet Man* and *The Bad and the Beautiful*; and, lest we forget, the Academy members, in their infinite stupidity, decided that "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp," performed on the

Oscarcast by the group that composed it, the 3-6 Mafia, was voted the Best Song of 2006. It thereby took its place on a list of honorees that included "The Lullaby of Broadway," "The Way You Look Tonight," "Over the Rainbow," "The Last Time I Saw Paris," "White Christmas," "It Might as Well Be Spring" and "Moon River." If you close your eyes, you can almost picture some bureaucrat in Heaven telling the likes of Harry Warren, Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Irving Berlin, Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein, Henry Mancini and Johnny Mercer, to be sure and make room in their clubhouse for the dudes in the 3-6 Mafia.

I keep hearing that Newt Gingrich is a great idea man. That begs the question why he should be the president. It seems to me that if someone is an innovator, you don't make him the CEO of the company, you put him in charge of the lab. In Newt's case, I think he might make an admirable Secretary of State or, maybe better yet, as a John Bolton-like ambassador to the U.N.



... so they gave it to him in 1940.

When it wound up taking Iowa weeks before deciding that Santorum and not Romney had won the caucus – but even then they couldn't be sure because they had somehow misplaced a ton of ballots – I expected Florida's governor, Rick Scott, to send Iowa's Governor Terry Branstad a one-word telegram: "Thanks!" After those folks botched the counting of a mere 121,000 votes, it couldn't help but take the onus off Florida. Iowa didn't even have all those blankety-blank hanging chads to contend with.

Speaking of which, one of the absurdities of the primary system is how much attention it focuses for months on end on states such as Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina. In

addition to the 121,000 caucus votes cast in Iowa, there were 248,000 cast in New Hampshire and roughly 600,000 in South Carolina. In short, we have devoted endless time and energy to analyzing less than a million votes when, in the general election, more than 140,000,000 votes will be cast. To me, that makes about as much sense as judging a book by its first paragraph.

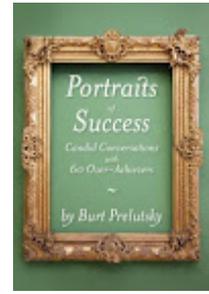
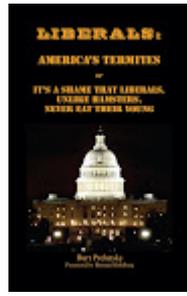
Finally, as dumb as Obama's nixing the Keystone XL oil pipeline is, it's even dumber that we're not drilling for oil in Alaska and in the lower 48. I still recall when Bill Clinton was railing against the endless demands that he "Drill, Baby, Drill!" In 1996, he actually had the gall to argue that even if they opened ANWR to the oil industry, it would still take 10 years before the oil would reach our local gas pumps. At the time, I pointed out that it would eventually be 2006 in any case, and wouldn't it be nice if we no longer had to depend on the likes of Saudi Arabia, Iran and Russia, to supply our energy needs.

The fact is, because of environmental Nazis and their advocate in the Oval Office, we have pretty much shut down the oil and coal industries. It seems to me that should be a constant source of shame for every member of Congress, including those on the right side of the aisle.

The very idea that America is still dependent on foreign oil makes about as much sense as Mexico having to import tortillas, Italy having to import olive oil and France having to depend on Luxemburg to supply them with snails.

©2012 Burt Prelutsky. Comments? Write BurtPrelutsky@aol.com!

Get your personally autographed copy of *Liberals: America's Termites* or *Portraits of Success* for just \$19.95, postpaid.
Get both for just \$39.90.

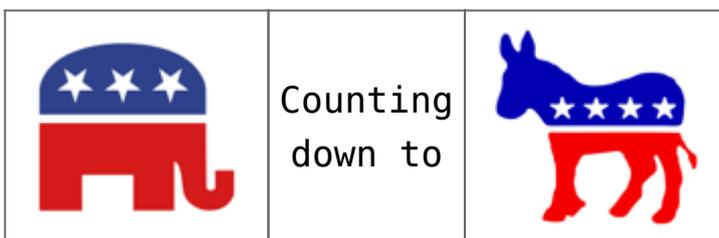


Vocational Guidance

by BurtPrelutsky

For the past three years, as we've watched Obama try to deal with a lot of things that we can all agree are way above his pay grade, we've been constantly mindful of the fact that this schmuck has never really held a job in the private sector.

The good news is that we are now less than 400 days away from November 6, 2012, when we can fire his sorry butt. The bad news is that no matter who replaces him in the Oval Office, we will still be stuck with a House and Senate filled with men and women who, for the most part, have spent their entire adult lives sitting on their butts making uninformed decisions that dictate how the rest of us get to live our lives.



Who, after all, do you think gets to decide all the regulations that often determine if companies succeed or fail, whether employers can hire more workers or have to file for bankruptcy? Who decides if people are allowed to turn a wasteland into a housing development or have to scuttle those plans because some wacko environmentalist has found, or

planted, an insect that's listed on the endangered species list? By this time, I suspect that this sacred text has more names in it than the New York City phone book.

There is a solution to the problem, though, but first let me share a couple of facts that led up to my insight. First of all, during the Iraq invasion, a large number of reporters were embedded with the American troops. The idea was that if they lived with the troops, they would come to identify with them, and they would shed the anti-military attitude that seems to infect just about everyone who works for an American newspaper or TV network.

For the most part, it worked. The only downside was that viewers of Fox News had to endure night after night of Geraldo ("I run with the bulls of Pamplona") Rivera's pathetic attempts to out-machismo our young G.I.s and their top sergeants.

Next, although in a completely different venue, there is a related example that will help me illustrate my plan. When it comes to the Academy Awards, it's the people who work in specific arenas, be they writers, directors, composers or costumers, who get to determine the nominees in their category. After that, everyone gets to vote for the ultimate Oscar winners. However, when it comes to documentary films and, possibly, foreign films, the only people who get to cast votes are those who can prove that they actually saw all the contenders. It would explain why there is occasionally a miracle, as when "The Lives of Others" beat out "Pan's Labyrinth" as Best Foreign Film a few years ago. On the other hand, these are the same clucks who gave Oscars to Michael Moore and Al Gore for Best Documentary. When it comes to Hollywood, one shouldn't expect too many miracles.

In any case, I give these examples as proof that even if it doesn't always help, it never hurts when people are as informed as possible on a subject they'd otherwise know

nothing about.

So, inasmuch as congressmen and senators rarely know anything about anything except how to troll for votes and campaign contributions, and their aides, whose primary function is brown-nosing or sexually servicing their bosses, know even less, I would insist that before any legislator gets to vote on anything, he has to be embedded for at least a week in the business or industry that will be affected by the proposed regulation. After all, what does a congressman from Chicago know about the oil industry? Or, for that matter, what does a senator from Iowa know about salmon fishing?

I'm not suggesting that 435 members of the House and 100 members of the Senate all take off for a week in Texas or Washington state. Maybe only five or six of them would go. But they would then be the only ones who got to vote on that specific piece of legislation.

For years, we've heard about these pampered pashas jetting off on "fact-finding missions." As a rule, what they come back with aren't facts, but very nice tans and brand new golf clubs.

Because I wouldn't trust any of these weasels any farther than I can throw Barney Frank, I would quiz them when they returned to Washington to make certain they hadn't just stayed in their hotels for a week, boozing and chasing women.

If they didn't like it, they could always resign. I just don't see any reason why these crumbs should be paid about \$200,000-a-year and yet get away with less homework than a typical fifth grader.

©2011 Burt Prelutsky. Comments? Write Burt! Click on the little envelope below to email this article.

Get your personally autographed copy of ***Liberals: America's Termites*** or ***Portraits of Success*** for just \$19.95, shipping included. Get both for just \$39.90.

