

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.

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