

# Oscar nominations laced with controversy

by Michael Dugan

Every winter, the Golden Globes and the Grammy Awards sit in the back seat, while the Oscars, the country’s most watched awards show, take center stage and have the attention of the entire country. On Feb. 22, fan favorite Neil Patrick Harris will take the reigns as the host of this year’s star-studded event.

In terms of the nominees, this year may have the most impressive lineup. Best picture is headlined by an heroic true story “American Sniper” and one-of-a-kind “Boyhood”. While “Boyhood” is taking heat for not necessarily being worthy of the discussion of best picture, Clint Eastwood’s Sniper includes questionable political components which anger some viewers.

“American Sniper” portrays a cowboy-turned-gunman by the name of Chris Kyle. The Texas native opts to fight for his country after seeing the bombing of a military base on the



Bradley Cooper, star of controversial “American Sniper” | AP Images

news. Throughout the film, viewers watch as Kyle kills in combat to the point where his body count passes the mark of 150 kills.

Many who walk out of the film are moved by his heroics of risking his life for his country and for his new family, yet others weren’t completely

satisfied with his work.

Critics believe that Kyle’s decisions and actions were unethical. People also complain that everyone in the movie who is not American is portrayed as a bad guy. Others are uncomfortable with the fact that even though he directed the film, this is not

a Clint Eastwood type of movie.

While all of this is a matter of personal opinion, a film that is widely considered to be the best of the year might miss out on the award for Best Picture due to the controversy.

Although it is one-of-a-kind, there are many people who also believe “Boyhood” isn’t quite as deserving as the others. Arguments have been made that the film is quite basic and the story line is nothing special.

English teacher and movie junkie, Brett Rubin, disagrees with naysayers regarding the film: “Say what you want about the film--it is a cohesive narrative. Only a filmmaker of genius level talent could make something like this,” he said.

Rubin had extremely high praise for the masterpiece, and disagrees with people who criticize the film’s complexity. “I challenge anyone who said “Boyhood” is easy, go do it yourself,” he added. He also noted

the film’s uniqueness and overall execution, saying “The amount of improv used and the amount of trust Linklater had in his actors is incredible.”

When push comes to shove, Rubin believes all the marbles will belong to “Boyhood,” despite all the fuss. “ ‘Birdman’ is easily the most complex, sophisticated work of post-modern deconstruction,” he said, “but much of “Boyhood” is improvised. In the end, it’s probably going to go to ‘Boyhood’.”

The Oscar awards will air on Feb. 22nd on ABC at 7:30 CT. Joining “American Sniper” and “Boyhood” for best picture are “Birdman,” “Imitation Game,” “Selma,” “Whiplash,” “The Theory of Everything,” and “The Grand Budapest Hotel.” Both “Birdman” and “The Grand Budapest Hotel” are nominated for 9 awards, the most this year.

# Edzo’s marries gourmet burgers with gourmet fries

by Charlie Clarke and Max Borushek

The first time I went to Edzo’s I was immediately hit by the smell of grease and beef, and that was when I knew that I was going to have a good burger.

Edzo’s is shortly becoming a North Shore staple for quality fast food along with other favorites such as Buffalo Joe’s, Chuck Wagon, and Sarkis.

Edzo’s offers quality burgers and fries that really haven’t been seen on the North Shore, or for that matter, in a lot of burger places.

While Edzo’s is primarily a burger joint, it is probably most well-known for their gourmet fries. Edzo’s offers many different combinations for their fries, which are hand cut daily and twice cooked. Edzo’s offers ten different kind of options for their fries, almost unheard of in many different burger joints.

Classic burger joint options like the fries prepared plain or standard cheese fries made with Merkt’s cheddar cheese are available to enjoy, or if you’re feeling a little more adventurous they have options like their buffalo fries topped with blue cheese, buffalo sauce, and celery or their Taylor Street Fries paying homage to the neighborhood in Chicago topped with Italian beef gravy, sweet peppers, and giardinera.

Secondly, you need to know that even though it might take you 20 minutes to get through the massive burger and fries you ordered, it’s never going to take more than 10 minutes to get your food, and if you order a shake they’ll give that to you right when it’s done with the extra in the mixing cup.

The Five Dollar Milkshakes (actually \$4.75) are another claim to fame for Edzo’s. They have all of the traditional flavors: vanilla, chocolate, strawberry (only in the summer as to get the best ingredients), but Edzo’s does offer some more flavors, including spicy Mexican chocolate,



Edzo’s burgers are nothing without their decadent french fries | Clarke

salted caramel, hot fudge, and many more.

But the real star of the meal is the burger. Burgers come in two different options: a 4 oz. griddled burger which can be ordered as a single, double, or triple, or the 8 oz. char burger which only comes in one size. Edzo’s also offers more traditional toppings for their burgers such as lettuce, tomato, onion, and pickles which are all free. They also have additional toppings such as sautéed mushrooms, jalapenos, and hot giardiniera that can be added for an additional fee.

The burgers themselves are delicious. Made everyday fresh in the kitchen, Edzo’s never uses frozen patties, which is always nice to see from a burger joint. The griddled burger is probably the go to option for those who want to have a burger and enjoy a side of gourmet fries, but the char burger is always available for those who have a bigger appetite.

Speaking of fees, if you plan on coming to Edzo’s, be prepared to pay some serious money for your food. Burgers are fairly cheap but if you plan to put some cheese and extra toppings on it, it’s going to add up. Add on a milkshake and one of the

many options for the gourmet fries (which range from about \$4.50-\$6) and you’re going to spend about \$18 for your meal. Even though the prices are fairly expensive, Edzo’s is definitely worth the price of admission.

While Edzo’s might not be able to beat out some North Shore classics like a Nikki from Chuck Wagon, a Hot Dog from Irving’s, or a Loretta from Sarkis, it offers a quality burger and an even greater selection of fries. The biggest downfall to a small burger place is their lack of variety.

While any given place might have one or two items that are top notch, the rest of the menu tends to be neglected. But at Edzo’s you can go in and get something completely different every time and be just as satisfied with it regardless of the fact that you’re getting something on the menu that most people haven’t even thought of getting before.

Edzo’s is located at 1571 Sherman Ave. in Evanston. They are open from 10:30 to 10 Tuesday through Saturday and are open from 10:30 to 4 on Sundays. Edzo’s is closed Mondays.

# The Decemberists reemerge with new album

by Michael Blickstein

The Decemberists are back from their four-year hiatus with their new album What a Terrible World, What a Beautiful World.

Back in January 2011, The Decemberists entertained their smaller fan base with their sixth studio album, The King is Dead, which featured faster tempo songs such as “Calamity Song” and “Down By the River.” But even at the core, the album was just as similar and rich sounding as their previous alternative folk catalogue.

Unfortunately, keyboarder and back-up vocalist Jenny Conlee was diagnosed with breast cancer later in 2011. This caused the band to go on a four-year hiatus, only putting out a couple of singles (one of which was featured in the “Hunger Games” film) and making a brief cameo in the TV show “Parks and Recreation.”

As of Jan. 20, 2015, The Decemberists are back with their new album just four years and one week later. What a Terrible World, What a Beautiful World will definitely make a wonderful addition to their touring setlist.

At the core, this album is straight-up Decemberists, with a great balance of high guitars, low pianos and some soft percussion in between. It’s still the soft jam that most fans are used to. The Decemberists have always had the sound quality of their music as a main focus and their attention to detail is not lost on this album.

The main difference is that this album feels a bit louder and upbeat than their other efforts. It feels much more like an alternative album than a folk or indie album. If I could compare this to anything, it sounds a lot like an REM album, which is a band that has played a clear influence in The Decemberists’ whole discography.

This album is the first of their

works where they’ve used horns and electric instruments, which are always welcome, especially in the alternative genre. When listening to it for the first time you feel it isn’t that different than anything else you’ve heard by them, but the more you listen, the more intricacies you pick up and the more detail you hear.

The one thing I can say that is exactly the same as any other of their albums is lead-singer Colin Melloy. Melloy is well known for his soft and slow voice that is notorious for pronouncing words in a very unique way.

This album really shines when you’re able to really splice your attention between the vocals and the instrumentals. The instrumentals in certain songs could belong in songs from Grouplove or OneRepublic, possibly certain songs from Panic! At the Disco, but Melloy’s voice is what really cements this album as flagship Decemberists.

This album is so crisp and clean that it’s really difficult not to like it. However, if you listened to their first single (“Make You Better”) and you’re expecting all of the songs to be like it, you would be incorrect and might not like it. Melloy’s voice also makes the album feel a bit slower than it actually is.

You will really like this album if you’re a big fan of folk music and can really appreciate a group of talented musicians that can work well together. You’ll appreciate this album immensely if you like bands like REM, Arcade Fire, or the National, all of who have similar sounds and would be fantastic in concert together. Like any album from them, you’ll like it if you have seen the Decemberists live or plan to when they come to Chicago.

The Decemberists will come to Chicago on March 27th at the Chicago Theatre, and if you want to see how their official declaration of the end of their hiatus plays out, you should absolutely see them live.