

Dr. Ed's Movie Reviews 2004

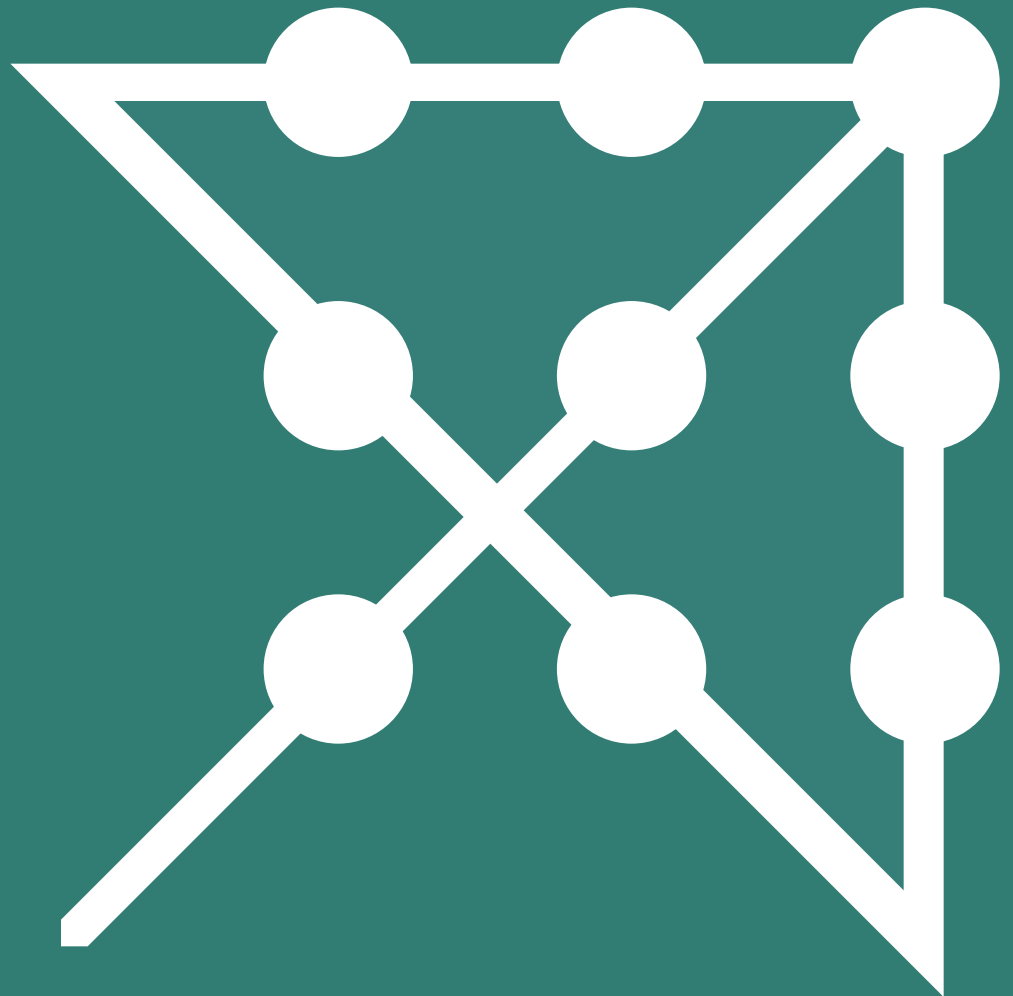
Yardeni Research, Inc.

Dr. Edward Yardeni

516-972-7683

eyardeni@yardeni.com

Please visit our sites at
www.yardeni.com
blog.yardeni.com



thinking outside the box

Alexander (- -) really wasn't so Great, according to this truly awful Oliver Stone movie. Alexander the Great invaded half of Asia simply to get as far away from his snake-obsessed mother as possible. Perhaps the movie should have been titled "Mother Dearest II" or "Mother Dearest B.C."

Finding Neverland (+++) is outstanding and deserves the Oscar for Best Picture. I still think that Jamie Foxx should get Best Actor for his portrayal of Ray Charles, but Johnny Depp is a close second for his role as Sir J.M. Barrie, the playwright who authored "Peter Pan." My all-time favorite Depp flick is Edward Scissorhands (1990), a true cult classic. The Disney animators transformed Peter Pan into a classic kids movie (1953), and now video. However, after seeing "Neverland," I intend to read the original play for the deeper meanings. For example, did you know that the croc who swallowed the clock is a metaphor about time catching up with us?

Hotel Rwanda (+++) is a deeply disturbing movie about the barbaric side of human nature. We are the only living organisms that discriminate and commit genocide against our own species, including our young. It is as powerful as "Schindler's List" (1993) and "The Killing Fields" (1984).

Meet the Fockers (- -) is the sequel to "Meet the Parents" (2000). I really don't care for Ben Stiller, who is right down there with Jim Carrey and Adam Sandler--funny if you like crude humor. Robert De Niro hogged the movie and Dustin Hoffman and Barbara Streisand were really lame.

Million Dollar Baby (+++) is a really fine film with Clint Eastwood as both lead actor and director. Hillary Swank is truly an amazing actress. Her performance was as intense as in "Boys Don't Cry." Clint could upset Martin Scorsese's bid to finally get the Oscar for Best Director, which he should have gotten for "Gangs of New York." The only weird thing about the movie was the product placement for Clorox Bleach.

Motorcycle Diaries (+) is another 2004 movie about two buddies on a road trip of self-discovery. I enjoyed it better than last year's other buddy movie, wine-soaked "Sideways." Diaries is also more interesting because it is about Che Guevara during his wonder years. He was a nice rich kid who was on track to become a doctor. The movie suggests he was sidetracked by the injustices he discovered while cycling through Latin America. So he became a revolutionary agent for Castro and was gunned down in Bolivia by the CIA.

Ocean's Twelve (- -) was filmed with a hand-held camera held by a drunken sailor. I got dizzy from watching it. The plot and the pacing of the movie were just as jerky as the cinematography. Julia Roberts wasn't as pretty a woman in this movie as she was in "Pretty Woman."

Ray (+++) Jamie Foxx was brilliant as Ray Charles in "Ray." The music was also great, of course.

Sideways (- -) Sorry, but I just don't get why so many critics love "Sideways." Today's New York Post has a front-page headline: "Robbery at the Oscars." The Post's movie critic is outraged that Paul Giamatti didn't get nominated for Best Actor, though the flick did get a shot at Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor, and Best Supporting Actress. I thought it was a boring, slow-paced buddy movie. Think of Thelma and Louise on downers without the off-the-top ending. The two buddies are losers. They can't even stage a proper auto collision. Giamatti plays (or is) very depressed, very depressing, and very annoying. The only truly intriguing question is why the girl was attracted to him at all, aside from their mutual interest in vino.

The Aviator (+++) is a fascinating biopic about a genius gone mad, though it is too long at 3 hours. Howard Hughes was a true visionary and wacko germaphobe. Leonardo DiCaprio's performance is outstanding. (He was also great in "Catch Me If You Can.") Director Martin Scorsese should have won the Oscar for "Gangs of New York." Maybe he'll get it for this one. Cate Blanchett played Katherine Hepburn almost as well as Hepburn played Hepburn.

The Incredibles (++) wasn't an incredible movie for me. It was boring. However, my two little ones enjoyed it, so I have to give it two stars in their honor.