



Meryl Streep won her nomination for her portrayal of Lindy Chamberlain in "A Cry in the Dark."



Glenn Close has been nominated for an Oscar for her role as the scheming Madame de Merteuil in "Dangerous Liaisons."

## The best actress: It may be Glenn, but it'll be close

By Dan Greenberg  
staff writer

Frankly, after perusing the nominations for best actress of 1988, I called the Academy and suggested they drop it this year. For some reason, however, they didn't pay any attention, so we'll have to deal with Melaine Griffith ("Working Girl"), Sigourney Weaver ("Gorillas in the Mist"), Glenn Close ("Dangerous Liaisons"), Jodie Foster ("The Accused") and Meryl Streep ("A Cry in the Dark").

One of the problems in analyzing these women in those roles is the difficulty of separating performance from character and from the vehicle which roachd the screen. In three of the five instances (Close, Foster and Streep), the portrayals were excellent, but the films were unpleasant. Close's and Griffith's movies also received best picture nods.

In all these cases, the actresses ought to be complimented for doing well with unattractive material. Nonetheless, the general flavor of the film reflects poorly on the performers and viewers tend to give more credit to more positive films.

That may be why Melaine Griffith was nominated. "Working Girl" wasn't particularly unpleasant, but it wasn't particularly engaging either, just a silly, inconsistent and weakly structured film that panders to feminist aspirations. There's very little tension or excitement, just a lot of pleasant meandering through the business world's fast lane.

GRIFFITH's portrayal of a fading secretary with management aspirations is not the high caliber performance associated with an Oscar. Among other things, her diction shifts, not as to be expected as the character grows and matures, but as the situation fluctuates. Sometimes she's a competent businesswoman who has studied diligently and sometimes she's a lousy secretary from Staten Island. Neither her performance nor the film work very well.

To my mind, the other weak performance that got nominated was Sigourney Weaver who has a fairly rare distinction — she's only the fifth performer to receive two acting nominations in one year — best actress for her role as Dian Fossey in "Gorillas in the Mist" and supporting actress as the nasty executive tormenting poor Melaine Griffith in "Working Girl."

In both instances, Weaver's performances are thin, unpleasant caricatures. In the latter, she projects an unbelievable veneer that is so

pretentious even phonies were ringing up their complaints.

Clearly, Weaver's competition for Supporting Actress, which includes Joan Cusack as Griffith's bizarre, but fast friend in "Working Girl," is way ahead on this one.

As for Weaver's "Gorilla" performance, that, too, was a caricature of an obsessed woman, who placed "her" gorillas above all else, even survival. But Weaver played it strictly from the Magic Kingdom, so that's two down.

JODIE FOSTER's portrait of "bad" girl abused by men and by the system in "The Accused" is a worthy performance but, again, the general aura of the film with its brutal, and unnecessary, rape scene distanced me from Foster's performance.

Some may argue that such feelings testify to excellent acting, but I stick by the principal, that the best roles are the positive although not necessarily heroic ones.

Glenn Close's pre-Revolutionary French aristocrat whose sexuality is her only weapon in "Dangerous Liaisons" is another case of an unpleasant and generally uncinematic film which detracts from performance. The decadence of the times reflected in the film — it was too talky and generally lacked motion — turned me off early on, so that Close's excellent characterization was wasted on this viewer.

This is Close's fifth nomination in eight films and while she ranks near the top in nominations, she has yet to win an Oscar and that may add a few points to her side. But she is up against one of the top nominees, Meryl Streep, who counts eight nominations for her 15 films. Streep won twice, in 1982 for "Sophie's Choice" and as supporting actress in the 1979 "Kramer vs. Kramer."

IN "A CRY IN THE DARK," Meryl Streep plays a mother falsely accused of murdering her child and unjustly, the butt of public hysteria. Despite Streep's excellent work, the role is one of considerable ambivalence. While it probably reflects the way such an accusation would destroy a woman's life — and her reaction probably is reasonable — the film was sufficiently discordant so that it never is convincing.

Despite my distaste for "A Cry in the Dark," there's no question in my mind that Meryl Streep's performance was the best of the five.

Nonetheless, the reasoning goes, she's won some, this one wasn't that great and so it's time for Glenn Close to be a bride instead of a bridesmaid. She's my pick, not for best actress, but to win the Oscar in that category.

## Who's going to name that moose?

### Odds and ends from the 'Upper'

By Iris Sanderson Jones  
contributing travel editor

This column should be headlined "Name that moose, and other interesting bits of miscellany," but who has that much room for a headline?

According to the Upper Peninsula Travel and Recreation Association, known in the UP as UPTRA: Smokey the Bear had a name, Woody Owl had a name, even Paul Bunyan's ox, Babe, had a name. But what about Michigan's moose? Moose? Moose.

These moose are not native American citizens, they are naturalized immigrants, 60 of them having been transported here from Ontario in 1935 and 1936.

Our long-legged friends needed some way to keep warm during those long Michigan winters in the Upper Peninsula, so you won't be surprised to hear that the herd has grown to 140!

UPTRA is so fond of them that they have decided to adopt them all, and make the moose the token mascot of the Yoo Pee.

Now, if you would like to name the moose, you can write your creative selection on a three-by-five card and send it (one entry per card, please) to: Name the Moose Contest, UPTRA, Box 400, Iron Mountain, Mich. 49801.

Your deadline is Aug. 15, 1989. If you win, you receive a four-day tour of the UP with guest appearances on WLUC-TV in Marquette, a top-to-bottom tour of the Mackinac Bridge, a trip into moose country with a Department of Natural Resources biologist and "other surprises."

If you don't win (or even if you do) you will get a mailbox full of literature about the UP.

suckers for dumb publicity stunts? Not me. While we are on the subject of the UP, however, lets talk about what else is going on up there.

There is a Spring Carnival March 16-19 at Marquette Mountain, which has just been sold to Peter O'Dovero of Marquette. A Spring Funfest at Pine Mountain, in Iron Mountain, March 18-19 and 25-26. An Ice Show in Marquette April 1-2. A Picnic in the Snow in Menden April 9. North American Short-Track Speed Skating in Marquette March 25-26.

What else is going on in Michigan as we head into spring? You are not the only one with a primordial urge to come out of the winter cold into the warmth of spring. The fish have the same urge, and Michigan has 146 varieties, from minnows to lake sturgeon.

The smelt-dipping season began south of M-72 (a line from Harris-

ville to Empire) on March 1, and north of M-72 on April 1; the season closes May 31.

Smelt fishing may be less about catching fish than it is about the bonding between fisherfolk, who love to wade into icy waters and pass them out to their friends at home.

Dipping with hand nets is allowed on the Great Lakes and their connecting waters and within one-half mile of the mouth of any Great Lakes tributary. It applies to sucker, carp, bowfin and gar as well as to smelt.

THERE IS a Sport and RV Show at Grand Center in Grand Rapids March 16-19. St. Patrick's Day Parades all over the place, including March 17 in Manistee and March 19 in Bay City.



Spring is just around the corner, and fishing enthusiasts are getting their nets ready for the annual smelt run.

You can take your children to Jackson for maple tree tapping and sheep shearing at the Ella Sharp Museum March 19, or to Kalamazoo for sheep shearing at the Kalamazoo Nature Center March 26.

You can tell people are really getting desperate for spring.

If you want to do something about the tourist scene, sign up for the sixth annual Governor's Conference on Tourism April 9-11 at Grand Traverse Resort Village. The theme this year is "Service to Match the Scenery." The guest speaker is J.W. Marriott Jr., president and board chairman of the Marriott Corporation. Call (517) 373-0870.

Or, you could start warming up for Michigan Week, May 19-27.

OK, OK, so you don't care what you call the moose, you don't want to go to the UP, and you don't care about tourism. Or Susan McCord's Quilts at Greenfield Village, either.

So why don't you contact the Department of Natural Resources, Park Division, at Box 30028, Lansing 48909 and reserve a park cabin, a tent or a "tipi" in one of Michigan's state parks? If I count correctly, there are 668 parks.

Cabins are available in some of them: Bald, Mt. Brighton, Cheboygan, Craig Lake, Fort Custer, Highland, Holly, Island Lake, Orionville, Porcupine Mountains, Ruffe River, Waterloo, J.W. Wells, Wilderness and Yankee Springs.

At 15 parks you can rent a tent already set up on a lot and equipped with two cots and sleeping pads. Some of them are authentic Indian replicas tips. Call (517) 373-1370 for a list of the parks.

And if you would rather go in a group, ask about a big cabin or about the outdoor centers for 30-120 people.

If you have a travel question for Iris Sanderson Jones, send it to Street Scene, 30251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



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Enjoy your getaway even more by taking advantage of our Special Package rates during: Farewell to Winter — May 23-June 29; Memorial Day Weekend — May 26-28; Midweek Spring Fling — May 23-June 29; Lilac Festival — June 9-18; July 4th Celebration — June 30-July 5; Yacht Races — Chicago to Mackinac, weekend of July 14; Port Huron to Mackinac, weekend of July 21; Labor Day Weekend — September 1-4



For reservations and the information call 1-800-833-5583

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WHO SAYS that columnist is