

HollywoodChicago.com Analyzes 10 Oscar Contenders For Best Actor, Actress

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on February 3, 2008 - 7:15pm

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CHICAGO – HollywoodChicago.com film critic Adam Fendelman has analyzed the 10 nominated contenders (five men for best actor and five women for best actress) and reveals his selections for the top prize. Hosted by Jon Stewart, the 80th Academy Awards ceremony will be presented in one form or another on Feb. 24, 2008.

Best Actor Nominees

George Clooney for the character Michael Clayton in “Michael Clayton”

Adam Fendelman says: Clooney upgrades himself from the “A” list to an “A+” grade and his report card earns him a richly deserved fighting chance. Leading this masterful but underrated film the way a leading Hollywood man should, Clooney – led by first-time director Tony Gilroy – will fight for “blood” and come up short.



George Clooney in “Michael Clayton”.
Photo credit: IMDb

Daniel Day-Lewis for the character Daniel Plainview in “There Will Be Blood”

Adam Fendelman says: Like a bat, Daniel Day-Lewis goes into Hollywood hibernation and only comes out when the pickings are prime and perfect. “There Will Be Blood,” which is only his third film in the past decade, is a monster of an epic and he’s nothing short of brilliant in it. This best-actor shoo-in should fit snugly.



Daniel Day-Lewis in “There Will Be Blood”.
Photo credit: IMDb

Johnny Depp for the character Sweeney Todd in “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street”

Adam Fendelman says: Watch closely and you’ll see Depp in “Sweeney Todd” superbly slip back into his haunted, quirky “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory” mindset. His vengeance, though, is bittersweet, his melodies serve justice to Stephen Sondheim’s music and Depp’s creative license merits a formidable runner up.



Johnny Depp in “Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street”.
Photo credit: IMDb

Tommy Lee Jones for the character Hank Deerfield in “In the Valley of Elah”

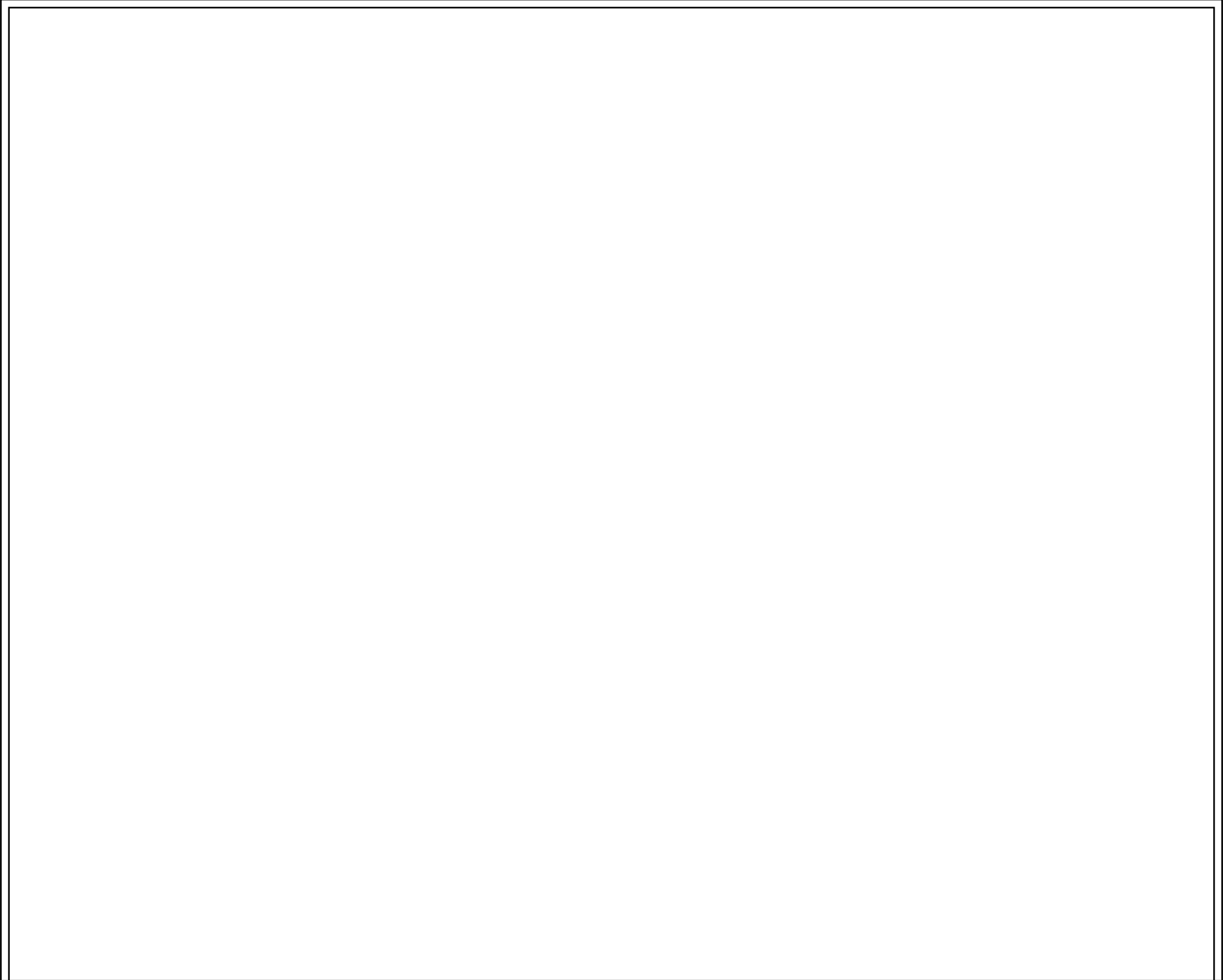
Adam Fendelman says: No. No. No. While Paul Haggis’ “In the Valley of Elah” pulls at your patriotic heartstrings on an important and niche topic, Tommy Lee Jones delivers an adroit but subdued lead performance that won’t compete with the memorable punch and power of the other gentleman in this year’s best-actor race.



Tommy Lee Jones in the film "In the Valley of Elah".
Photo credit: IMDb

Viggo Mortensen for the character Nikolai Luzhin in “Eastern Promises”

Adam Fendelman says: Viggo Mortensen has clout and solid industry backing in his “Eastern Promises” performance and especially earns theatrical kudos for a particularly difficult and raw fight scene in the nude. Mortensen, though, deserves to stay among his mammoth peers on the best-actor nominee list.





Viggo Mortensen in “Eastern Promises”.
Photo credit: IMDb

Best Actress Nominees

Cate Blanchett for the character Queen Elizabeth I in “Elizabeth: The Golden Age”

Adam Fendelman says: Yes. Yes. Yes. After winning best-supporting actress for “The Aviator” in 2005 and being recognized as not only one of the most successful actresses by Forbes but one of the most influential people in the world by Time, it’s Cate Blanchett’s time to shine in this year’s best-actress limelight.



Cate Blanchett in “Elizabeth: The Golden Age”.
Photo credit: IMDb

Julie Christie for the character Fiona Anderson in “Away From Her”

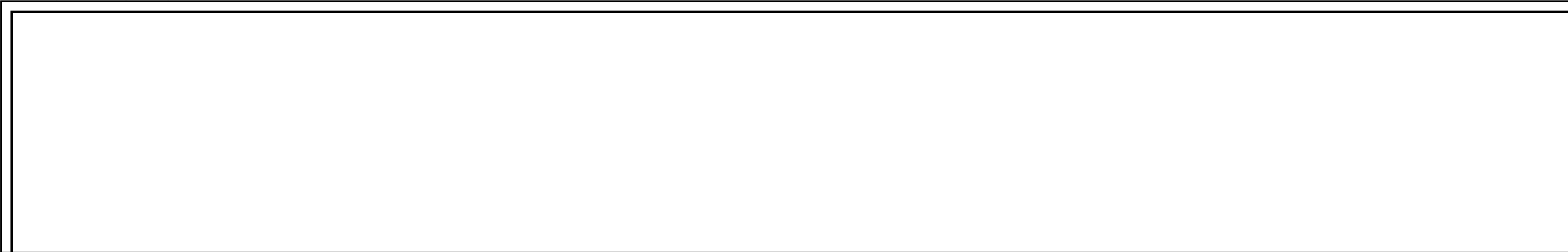
Adam Fendelman says: Julie Christie in “Away From Her” authentically portrays the ghastly and evocative battle that is Alzheimer’s disease with conviction, reality and heart. She’s making lists across the U.S. as a best-actress nominee but has at least two adversaries who deserve the ultimate prize more.



Julie Christie in “Away From Her”.
Photo credit: IMDb

Marion Cotillard for the character Édith Piaf in “La Vie en Rose”

Adam Fendelman says: Chicago and Boston film critics along with various film festivals say she’s their best actress. She’s nominated by the Broadcast Film Critics Association and the British Academy of Film & TV Arts. Industry experts speak loudly: Marion Cotillard is this year’s top foreign-language selection.





Marion Cotillard in "La Vie en Rose".
Photo credit: IMDb

Laura Linney for the character Wendy Savage in "The Savages"

Adam Fendelman says: Any daughter who deals with a dad who literally writes wall messages with poop is a fine sibling indeed. In "The Savages," though, her somewhat memorable performance is trumped by the always dominating Philip Seymour Hoffman, which reminds you she'd more appropriately be up for a supporting role.



Laura Linney in "The Savages".
Photo credit: IMDb

Ellen Page for the character Juno MacGuff in "Juno"

Adam Fendelman says: Though many haven't heard of the meek Ellen Page until now and interpret her "Juno" performance as a breakout, she actually broke out in "Hard Candy" in 2005. In 2007's "Little Miss Sunshine"-like film you can't help but love, she's the underdog with a shot at being recognized for coming full circle.



Ellen Page in "Juno".
Photo credit: IMDb

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