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BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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## Ellen: Bad Idea, Says Tom O'Neil

The LA Times awards show guru Tom O'Neil says Ellen Degeneres is a bad idea to host the Oscars. Why? She ain't Hollywood enough and she only got good reviews for her post-9-11 Emmys braodcast. The other times she's hosted awards, reviews have been lukewarm. True, but the reviews are wrong and Ellen is a charmer who -- like Johnny Carson -- can deflate the pomposity of the room without anyone feeling threatened or belittled. The main problem with the Oscars isn't the host anyway: it's the show as a whole. Here's hoping Ellen doesn't fill a room with comedy writers and try to create 20 minutes of fillers, skits, audience interviews and so on. The Oscars is THREE HOURS LONG -- it doesn't need comedy sketches. It needs Ellen to come out, do 6-8 minutes of humor and then politely HOST -- simply smooth things along with the occasional aside. That's ALL. Do that and people will love you, Ellen. (Also, get the producers to show substantial clips of the top acting and picture nominees, cut out banter among presenters (who should just stride quickly to the podium to show what they're wearing and then announce the nominees), have only ONE tribute (not two; they do drag and having two undercuts both) etc, etc. Anyone with half a brain could improve the Oscars dramatically, given a free hand. (Aye, there's the rub.)

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 10:09 PM



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