

Not everyone enthusiastic about the future of TV

By Anne Stuart

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) — What will television offer at the turn of the century?

A combined menu of junk food and three-star meals, said Michael Fuchs of HBO. New opportunities to educate and enlighten, said Jennifer Lawson of PBS. Too many choices, said singer-actor Ruben Blades.

All wrong, said W. Russell Neuman, a Tufts University professor. "It won't even BE television."

Even the word will sound as dated then as "horseless carriage" does now, Neuman predicted at a recent Harvard University conference on the future of television.

It isn't clear what we'll call America's favorite pastime. But, Neuman said, "it will be an entirely new medium." Two-way fiber-optics will replace one-way cables, letting former couch potatoes and channel-surfers take a more active role.

"The number of channels becomes completely meaningless in the year 2000 because you've got as many channels as you want," Neuman said. "If you want to watch a particular episode of the 'Mary Tyler Moore Show,' you call it up."

Advertiser-supported programming and the network structures will eventually become "wonderful historical anecdotes," said Neuman, also a research fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Instead, he said, viewers will pay program fees; say, \$2 for a show with ads, \$4 without. "Television will really be in your control," Neuman said.

No one questioned the eventual arrival of some sort of interactive television, a concept that got wide public attention last year with Ross Perot's call for the "electronic town meeting." But not everybody embraced the idea with enthusiasm.

"We run the risk of the technology dehumanizing television, outstripping the content of television," said Fuchs, chairman and chief executive officer of HBO, which co-sponsored the conference.

The plethora of program choices will be "a wonderful thing," Blades said, but he questioned whether viewers would actually watch everything available — or even understand how to access it.

"I think that we risk becoming the best-informed society that ever died of ignorance," the two-time Grammy Award winner said.

And even with the much-lauded technological miracles, don't expect much improvement, sociologist Todd Gitlin warned.

"For all the abundance of delivery systems, under foreseeable circumstances, the small screen is unlikely to transform the possibilities of culture for the better," he said.

Ex-CBS News president succumbs to heart failure

Former CBS News President Newsweek died Tuesday, Feb. 17, of heart failure in Springfield, Conn. He was 79.

Edwin Newman, his close colleague of the Peace Award and the nation's largest group of senior citizens at the Country Club in Hartford when he died.

"I don't see doing what he loved best," said Mike Wallace, CBS News correspondent and co-author of "60 Minutes." "He was talking about covering news and the difficulty he had in getting to the heart of a story. Dick Nelson was greatly honored, one of the best and one I've known in all my long life."

Nelson was president of CBS News for a total of 30 years. He first served as News Division President from 1961 to 1966, before taking a position as special assistant to the President of CBS and CBS Vice President of Corporate Affairs. He returned to CBS News in February 1988 and served as its President until his retirement in April 1991.

During his tenure, CBS News covered such historic events as the Vietnam War, the Apollo 11 moon landing, Watergate, and the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. CBS News, under his leadership, introduced "60 Minutes," the "CBS Morning News" and "Sunday Morning," produced "The Morning of the Persecution," and expanded the "CBS Evening News." It became the first half-hour, Monday-Friday evening news broadcast on network television.

Howard Springer, president, CBS Broadcast Group, said, "Dick Nelson was one of the founding fathers of CBS News. Taylor has leadership, the highest standards of journalistic excellence were exhibited and exemplified for a generation of broadcast journalists. He clearly, more authority and creative creativity defined CBS News. He will be sorely missed, but long remembered."

Don Butler, author and managing editor of the "CBS Evening News," said, "For television news, Dick Nelson was the best on inventory, when you're talking. During his time at CBS, he set the world's standard for broadcast news leadership, and he managed to change television without actually changing it. It was an honor to work for him — and a loss for me."

Field of Oscar nominees contains some surprises

By Bob Strauss
Los Angeles Daily News

LOS ANGELES — There were few individual surprises among this year's Academy Award nominees — none actually. There's "The Untouchables" Miramax Richardson being named for the wrong film ("Damage") and "The Untouchables" Equinox's nomination in, arguably, the wrong category.

But the real surprise is the overall balance of the field chosen by the traditionally middle-of-the-

Analysis

road movie makers. Ironically, they selected unprecedented conservative — and actually, conservative — nominees of "Boyz n the City" (groundbreaking the top genre).

All the boldness and rigor of so many of this year's nominees is seemingly unexpected. We were going to that Clint Eastwood's unapologetically blood-soaked "Unforgiven" would do well, but a leading vote was...

We knew that "The Untouchables" a highly acclaimed but far from the best romantic thriller, was leading nominations, but we expected the small, breaking film to rise in its race.

Even "Unforgiven" for some nominations, listed as "Masterpiece Theater" nomination — and "Unforgiven" nomination — with a moderate amount of class and greater political, set to receive political nomination.

The fact that the most notable, Oscar-worthy entries in the Best Picture category, "A Few Good Men" and "Secret of a Woman's Mind" were not nominated...

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The boldness and rigor of so many of this year's nominees is encouragingly unexpected.

It's a real surprise to see a political thriller like "Unforgiven" nominated for Best Picture. It's also surprising to see "Boyz n the City" nominated for Best Picture. It's also surprising to see "The Untouchables" nominated for Best Picture. It's also surprising to see "The Untouchables" nominated for Best Picture.

The supporting actor category offers some of this year's most glaring omissions. Where's the reigning Best Actor, Anthony Hopkins, who'd led the pack in the "Unforgiven" nomination race? It's also surprising to see "The Untouchables" nominated for Best Picture.

Considering the fairly slight bump between "Unforgiven," "The Untouchables" and "The Untouchables" in the comparatively unexcited race and the fact that "Unforgiven" is the top pick to win the most Oscars.

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Not everyone enthusiastic about the future of TV

By Janet Rowland

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (UPI) — What will television offer at the turn of the century?

A continued news of first look and time-starved news, and Michael Parks of 1990. New opportunities to educate and enlighten, said Justice Lammie of PBS. Too many choices, and single-actor Robert Duvall.

All agreed, said W. Russell Newman, a Tulsa University professor. "It won't ever be television."

Even the word all seemed as dated then as "television network" does now, Newman predicted at a recent Harvard University conference on the future of television.

It isn't clear what will be America's favorite pastime, Newman said. "It will be something new medium." Two-way television will require two-way cables, but further cash penalties and channel shortages take a more serious toll.

"The number of channels to come completely unchanged in the year 2000 because you've got a particular number of the 'Star Trek' for News Show," you said it up.

Advertiser-supported programming and the network structure will eventually become "wonderful historical accidents," said Newman, also a research fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Instead, he said, viewers will pay programs from 1993. It's for a while with ads, he added. "The view will only be in your control," Newman said.

He also questioned the eventual arrival of some sort of interactive television, a concept that got wide public attention last year with News Corp.'s bid for the "television is less exciting," but not everybody endorsed the idea with enthusiasm.

"We run the risk of the technology disempowering television, cutting out the control of television," said Parks, chair of academic research at Harvard. "We're not going to have the technology."

The plethora of program choices will be "a wonderful thing," Parks said, but he questioned whether viewers would actually watch everything available — or even understand how to access it.

"I think that we risk becoming the least-entertained society that ever lived on television," the two-time Grammy Award winner said.

And even with the much-blaunted technological advances, don't expect much improvement, according to Parks.

"For all the abundance of technology options, better formative education, the only way to truly improve the quality of culture for the future," he said.

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