Should the Emmy Awards have been cancelled?

BY JIM DUCKETT
CRUSADER NEWS STAFF

The last few weeks have been some of the most uncertain times in our nation's history. While a return to normalcy is surely called for, it should not come in the form of a Hollywood awards show. The show in question is the Prime Time Emmy Awards, which were cancelled in the wake of the Sept. 11 tragedies, and then again cancelled because of the bombing campaign in Afghanistan which began on Oct. 7. Sure, we need to get back in the swing of things, get back to our lives, but we don’t need to make a huge deal about the cancellation of an Awards show that most of us see as boring to begin with. The show’s second attempt on the 7th was slated to differ from the usual Emmy glitter and glitz, with guests being asked to arrive in “business attire” rather than evening wear. The show was also to include tributes to those lost on the 11th, and even include special words by New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Walter Cronkite. I respect the Academy for sticking to their industry saying that “the show must go on,” but the opportunity has come and gone when the show could feasibly happen successfully.

The definite cancellation of the Emmys is not a concession to the terrorists who attacked our way of life on Sept. 11, but rather a reaction to circumstances that lie out of Hollywood’s control. The Academy has already said that any re-scheduled Emmy Awards show would not be the same type of affair that we are used to seeing on Emmy night. For one, they do not have the Shrine Auditorium reserved anymore. As of now, have no available venue to even put on the show at this time. Logistically, staging the Awards would be a mess, but more than that, doing so now would not have the Shrine Auditorium reserved for the Awards show. The Academy should just release the names of those who won and send off their statues. After all, I’m sure the producers of “ER” and “Friends” would understand why they don’t have to make their usual speeches this year. Even the usual Emmys favorites, NBC president Jerry Zucker, suggests a different course of action. “I think they should just announce the winners in some kind of gathering at the academy or in a press release and forget about this show this year.” We all know why the Awards were postponed twice, and seeing what would be the ghost of a Emmys show. Even the most uncertain times in our nation’s history, there is still a way to maintain the spirit of celebration is no longer feasible.

A staging of the Emmy Awards at this point would simply remind people of the reason why the Awards are different and why they are happening weeks later than usual. The fact that the Emmys would take on a more somber and serious tone would only bring attention to the events of Sept. 11, not distract from them. The time when the Awards could have been effectively rescheduled has come and gone, and now it is time to admit that this year there will be no Emmy Awards ceremony.

Aside from the emotion that a postponed and altered Emmy Awards show would come up, the only definition of an issue of security surrounding the Awards, even if the Academy denies it. This past week, both ABC and NBC have been the targets of attacks in the form of anthrax being sent to their studios, and it is now clear that terrorism has begun to directly threaten the television world. It is not worth it at this point to try and stage an event whose purpose has changed and whose intent has been overshadowed by a national crisis, especially in light of the ongoing threats.

NBC’s news division made the right decision so far in postponing the Awards, but the spirit of celebration is no longer feasible. The show was already going to be toned down for the first rescheduling, but now that they are thinking of a third attempt, the tone of the show will be close to nonexistent. The Emmys favorites, NBC president Jerry Zucker, suggests a different course of action. “I think they should just announce the winners in some kind of gathering at the academy or in a press release and forget about this show this year.” We all know why the Awards were postponed twice, and seeing what would be the ghost of a former Emmy happy event would not serve to distract the American people, but to further focus their attention on the fact that the country is a very different place than it was on Sept. 10.

I think that in the big scheme of things, there are more pressing matters than which TV drama has the best leading actress this year.

-Nicole Arsenault ’04

BY MATTHEW HAYES
CRUSADER NEWS EDITOR

Once upon a time, the status of being a “celebrity” really meant something. Celebrities, in the old-fashioned vision, were not only entertainers whose audience no matter what the situation, but also served as role models and pillars of strength in times of difficulty. During World War II, movie stars such as Jimmy Stewart and Ronald Reagan joined the United States Army, just as singer Elvis Presley would do nearly two decades later. Funny men such as Bob Hope traveled overseas to dangerous areas to entertain troops on the front lines, even in the face of genuine danger. Though Hope went on to a successful post-war career and is still with us today, popular bandleader Glen Miller was not so fortunate; he was killed when his plane was apparently shot down over the English Channel, as he was returning from a USO performance. The celebrity Miller gave his life for his country, just as all the volunteers of the American soldiers did on both sides of the world. During World War II, Hollywood responded to our nation’s crisis by filming some of its greatest movies, such as 1943’s Casablanca, in an effort to entertain a war-weary public. Unfortunately, today’s small-screen actors, actresses, and networks seem to have none of the mettle of the movie stars back in a half century ago on the Silver Screen. The Emmy Awards, a hallmark of recognizing television excellence, were cancelled this year. Originally scheduled for Sept. 17, the Emmys were first rescheduled for Oct. 7 in the wake of the terrorist attacks which befell our nation on Sept. 11. On Oct. 7, as news of United States’ attacks on Afghanistan reached a money-grubbing network, and a scarcely-cut group of projects, the Emmys were cancelled once again. Although CBS, the network which had promised to air the awards ceremony, decided to cancel the ceremony because they believed that it would send off, in a time of national crisis, their true motives seem more questionable.

A few criticisms of the network’s actions immediately come to mind. Although I agree that speeches such as “We’re in this together” from CBS, and thus allow the Emmys to earn an extremely low rating and raise a disappointing amount of money for the network.

More interesting is the celebrities’ reactions to the state of affairs in the United States. In an age when the quirkiness of celebrities can be best exemplified by Michael Jackson—who wears a surgical mask in public and thus allow the Emmys to earn an extremely low rating and raise a disappointing amount of money for the network. More interesting is the celebrities’ reactions to the state of affairs in the United States. In an age when the quirkiness of celebrities can be best exemplified by Michael Jackson—who wears a surgical mask in public and thus allow the Emmys to earn an extremely low rating and raise a disappointing amount of money for the network. The definite cancellation of the Emmys is not a concession to the terrorists who attacked our way of life on Sept. 11, but rather a reaction to circumstances that lie out of Hollywood’s control. The Academy has already said that any re-scheduled Emmy Awards show would not be the same type of affair that we are used to seeing on Emmy night. For one, they do not have the Shrine Auditorium reserved anymore. As of now, have no available venue to even put on the show at this time. Logistically, staging the Awards would be a mess, but more than that, doing so now would not have the Shrine Auditorium reserved for the Awards show. The Academy should just release the names of those who won and send off their statues. After all, I’m sure the producers of “ER” and “Friends” would understand why they don’t have to make their usual speeches this year. Even the usual Emmys favorites, NBC president Jerry Zucker, suggests a different course of action. “I think they should just announce the winners in some kind of gathering at the academy or in a press release and forget about this show this year.” We all know why the Awards were postponed twice, and seeing what would be the ghost of a former happy event would not serve to distract the American people, but to further focus their attention on the fact that the country is a very different place than it was on Sept. 10.

I’d be fine if they did away with the Emmys altogether this year.

-Greg Weston ’05

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“Of course we should have the Emmys! Why wouldn’t we?”

-Suzie Kavanaugh ’03

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Compiled by Kate Meyers ’04