MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INNOVATIVE MOVIEMAKING

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, during the past few years, Marcelle and I have come to know Christopher Nolan and his wife Emma Thomas, both of whom are extraordinarily talented and have made breakthrough movies.

One of the things that we have enjoyed talking about with both of them is the concept of what movies can be as real entertainment, and that movie theaters provide an audience an experience they would not have otherwise. Recently, Chris wrote an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal explaining just how movie theaters will survive. That was music to my ears, as I too want them to survive. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CHRISTOPHER NOLAN: FILMS OF THE FUTURE WILL STILL DRAW PEOPLE TO THEATERS

When Movies Can Look or Sound Like Anything, Says the 'Dark Knight' Director, Extraordinary Work Will Emerge.

In the '90s, newly accessible video technology gave adventurous filmmakers (such as Lars von Trier and his colleagues in the filmmaking movement Dogme 95) an unprecedented wedge for questioning the form of motion pictures. The resulting 20-year process of radical technical and aesthetic change has now been co-opted by the very establishment it sought to challenge.

Hungry for savings, studios are ditching film prints (under $600 each), while already bridling at the mere $80 per screen for digital drives. They want satellite distribution up and running within 10 years. Quentin Tarantino's recent observation that digital projection is the ''death of cinema'' identifies this fork in the road: For a century, movies have been defined by the physical medium (even Dogme 95 insisted on 35mm film as the presentation format).

Savings will be trivial. The real prize the corporations see is the flexibility of a nonphysical medium.

MOVIES AS CONTENT

As streams of data, movies would be thrown in with other endeavors under the reductive term ''content,'' jargon that pretends to elevate the creative, but actually trivializes differences of form that have been important to creators and audiences alike. ''Content'' can be ported across phones, watches, gas-station pumps or any other screen, and the idea would be that movie theaters should acknowledge their place as just another of these ''platforms,'' albeit with bigger screens and cupholders.

This is a future in which the theater becomes what Tarantino pinpointed as ''television in public.'' The channel-changing part is key. The distributor or theater owner (depending on the vital question of who controls the remote) would be able to change the content being played, instantly. A movie's Friday matinees would determine whether it even gets an evening screening, or whether the projector switches back to last week's blockbuster. This process could even be automated based on ticket sales in the interests of ''fairness.''

Instant reactivity always favors the familiar. New approaches need time to gather support from audiences. Smaller, more unusual films would be shut out. Innovation would shift entirely to home-based entertainment, with the remaining theaters serving exclusively as gathering places for fan-based or branded-event titles.

This bleak future is the direction the industry is pointed in, but even if it arrives it will not last. Once movies can no longer be defined by technology, you unmask powerful fundamentals—the timelessness, the otherworldliness, the shared experience of these narratives. We moan about intrusive moviegoers, but most of us feel a pang of disappointment when we find ourselves in an empty theater.

The audience experience is distinct from home entertainment, but not so much that people seek it out for its own sake. The experience must distinguish itself in other ways. And it will. The public will lay down their money to those studios, theaters and filmmakers who value the theatrical experience and create a new distinction from home entertainment that will enthrall—just as movies fought back with widescreen and multitrack sound when television first nipped at its heels.

These developments will require innovation, experimentation and expense, not cost-cutting exercises disguised as digital ''upgrades'' or gimmickry aimed at justifying variable ticket pricing. The theatrical window is to the movie business what live concerts are to the music business—and no one goes to a concert to be played an MP3 on a bare stage.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

The theaters of the future will be bigger and more beautiful than ever before. They will employ expensive presentation formats that cannot be accessed or reproduced in the home (such as, ironically, film prints). And they will still enjoy exclusivity, as studios relearn the tremendous economic value of the staggered release of their products.

The projects that most obviously lend themselves to such distinctions are spectacles. But if history is any guide, all genres, all budgets will follow. Because the cinema of the future will depend not just on grander presentation, but on the emergence of filmmakers inventive enough to command the focused attention of a crowd for hours.

These new voices will emerge just as we despair that there is nothing left to be discovered. As in the early '90s, when years of bad multiplexing had soured the public on movies, and a young director named Quentin Tarantino ripped through theaters with a profound sense of cinema's past and an instinct for reclaiming cinema's rightful place at the head of popular culture.

Never before has a system so willingly embraced the radical teardown of its own formal standards. But no standards means no rules. Whether photochemical or video-based, a film can now look or sound like anything.

It's unthinkable that extraordinary new work won't emerge from such an open structure. That's the part I can't wait for.

REMEMBERING CHARLEY GREENE DIXON, JR.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am saddened to report to my Senate colleagues the passing of a fellow Kentuckian, Mr. Charley Greene Dixon, Jr., who lost his battle with cancer on June 23 of this year. Charley was a consummate public servant who spent his life working to better his community. Knox County, and the entirety of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, is poorer for his loss.

The overriding ambition in Charley's life was to help others. His wife Marcia Dixon said, ''He believed that if he could make one life better he was a success.'' This is a bar for success that Charley cleared time and time again.

Born in Barbourville on November 19, 1964, Charley lived in Kentucky his whole life, mostly in his hometown in Knox County. He attended Union College in Barbourville and earned his juris doctorate from Northern Kentucky's Salmon P. Chase College of Law.

Charley started his career working as the Barbourville city attorney, later becoming the Knox County school board and Barbourville city school board attorney.

His most recent position was of Knox County attorney, one that he had held since 2003. In that capacity he played a leading role in creating juvenile, family and adult drug courts in Knox County. Through these courts, Charley helped countless individuals reclaim their lives from the clutches of drug addiction.

Outside of his official duties, Charley continued to work tirelessly to better Knox County. He chaired the Knox County UNITE Coalition an organization that combated illicit drug use through education, law enforcement, and rehabilitation. As chairman he spearheaded events, such as ''Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs,'' where kids and their families could enjoy themselves in a drug-free environment.

For his selfless work in the community, Charley was named the 2013 Man of the Year by the Knox County Chamber of Commerce a fitting award for a man who helped so many.

Charley is survived by his wife Marcia, his daughter Callie Ann, and his son Charleston Arthur. Knox County was undoubtedly bettered by his life's work, and he will be sorely missed by all who loved and knew him.

I ask that my U.S. Senate colleagues join me in honoring the life of Charley Greene Dixon, Jr.

The Mountain Advocate recently published an article chronicling Dixon's life. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Mountain Advocate, June 26, 2014]

''HOMETOWN HERO'' LOSES BATTLE WITH CANCER

(By Melissa Newman)

John Ray Gray sat quietly in the waiting area at the Knox County Attorney's Office Monday morning. He wasn't there because he needed help—at least not this time.