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O.WJ

December 27, 1996

Dear Mr. Lamb,

As a former devoted viewer of CSPAN and now one who at least, checks in first with CSPAN to review the level of vitriol and snake oil, before searching aimlessly for something else or turning on AM radio.

You seem not to understand viewer dislike of your perception of fairness (3 phone lines). However, in the good old days of CSPAN, true fairness prevailed.

Your arrangement of having guests with opposing views is quite acceptable and fair. However, for reasons I know not what, guests with a liberal bent are vitriolic, loud, disrespectful and when pinned to the wall, aim for the jugular and spew venom. Frequently, the conservative side is unable to shout out or wedge a phrase into the unrestrained and uncontrolled liberal diatribe.

At least, under the old system, liberals were confronted with the ugly fact that a majority of callers did not agree with them and for a brief moment, had to "get off message" and listen to the caller.

With the addition of the new telephone lines, a new phenomena was created. First there was an artificial sense of fairness. Next, a signal was sent to the liberal establishment to "ready" the scripts and phone banks for an assault on CSPAN. As an experienced viewer of CSPAN and other programs with a semblance of fairness, or with unashamed announcement of bias (NET), I have come to recognize the scripted calls versus those of true, unadulterated American citizens. NET has become victimized by hateful liberal callers who, for reasons beyond me, couldn't be paid to watch the network. Maybe they are being paid or urged to watch so they might be able to inject some hate into an otherwise peaceful network. Often, I think I recognize the voices and know that I recognize some of the names. Norman of Norcross Georgia is one who immediately comes to mind. Norman is the liberal watchdog on NET and is a frequent CSPAN spewer.

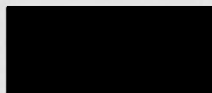
I look at your "fair" telephone line implementation much the same way as I would view the following scenario: In order to enforce fair elections, an equal number of Republicans and Democrats will be allowed to vote, the number being the lowest number of registered members of either party. If Republicans outnumber Democrats by 7:1, then will the outcome of the election truly be a fair representation of the voters? Of course not! By excluding the calls of a majority of CSPAN viewers, you allow the liberals to get their fuel replenished every other call, perhaps getting prods to launch them into a previous diatribe which will be repeated, reemphasized, from beginning to end, and nearly word for word. I sometimes speculate that the liberals report back to headquarters to announce that they managed to get "Message #2" repeated 3 times during the show, used "cuts" 18 times and "hungry children" 7 times.

The singular telephone line seemed to force some meaningful discourse - if that's possible with a liberal. When obviously outnumbered, the liberals seemed to moderate their rhetoric but now have no need to. Their phone banks will rescue them on the next call. I do find the professional Conservative callers disgusting but I honestly can't say that I sense their presence en masse.

What kind of fairness monster have you created? To many of the less enlightened viewers, 1) you have created the impression that you have imposed a significant increase in liberal rhetoric to CSPAN - hence biased, 2) you have increased the volume of unrestrained liberal rhetoric beyond the threshold of pain, and 3) you have alienated a significant body of objective viewers who could *sense* the true majority of viewer opinion and perhaps form an informed opinion unaffected by the brainwashing, propagandizing techniques of the liberal machine.

I am a publisher and know too well the demands of fairness but not to the point of denying a demonstrated majority opinion that is not consistent with their degree of majority. If I have 7 letters supporting a particular issue and 1 letter opposing - the opposing letter is the combined length of the 7 supporting letters and is filled with hateful opposition rhetoric - the readers will easily determine wherein the reasonable and objective opinion resides. CSPAN has slipped down the slippery slope of fairness by excluding the large body of the majority. Outcome based anything produces aberrations and abominations.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the letter.