

June 5, 1992

C-Span - Ste 650
400 North Capitol Street
Washington, D.C. 2001
Attn: Brian Lockmann

Dear Brian:

I'm beginning to feel like a pen-pal to C-Span but I think this letter is important, particularly the last half.

Today, Friday morning, you had three press people on the call-in show and you asked whether the press is "clueless". The answer is "yes". I've watched your show for a long time and I knew Ross Perot was "real" even as press people on your show were disclaiming his importance. The problem is the press feeds on the system. That puts them on the inside too much to be an effective barometer of what's going on, on the outside.

On this morning's show, a female guest was saying she didn't think the people really "knew what they wanted". As evidence, she pointed to the Hill/Thomas hearings. She stated she interviewed people who were in line to get INTO the hearings, and those same people were decrying the fact that the hearings were even being held. She couldn't understand that dichotomy.

I can. We the people, are not what we appear to be. We appear to be a single group with high minded ideals and goals. What we are, is a collection of individuals striving to be better than we know we are. That's an important distinction because it explains why we even have rules, laws, and regulations. It also explains why we have a government at all.

If it were not for our propensity to be self-serving, and greedy, and hostile, and angry, and lustful...we wouldn't need controls on our individual conduct. The truth is, we are different individually than what we WANT to be, collectively. We WANT to be just, honest, fair minded, decent, and honorable but we know given the opportunity, we stray far from that path. It's our individual natures.

Therefore, "society" is that entity which we, as a group, have chosen to promulgate the collective set of rules which represent the best way for us all to live together. The best way for us to really behave.

Now, let's look back at the problem we were discussing. The people decried the Thomas hearings while failing to resist the temptation to attend them. In my context, that is human weakness, to be overcome by innate good sense.

Look at it this way. Ask the people: "should there be a limit to explicit sex on television" and they'll say "yes".

Yet, if you put a lot of sex on the screen, ratings soar. The more seductive and unusual the sex, the higher the ratings. Why? Because what we individually want to see panders to our worst human characteristics, those which also need the most controlling.

In reality, we are animals and we have animal urges. If we want to live as animals, we can do so and we can then react individually. However, most of us know that is the wrong path. Seductive at times, yes. Appealing at times, yes. But the wrong path. So, to overcome that, we come together as a group (society) and try to control those unhealthy urges. It's as simple as that. We aren't always successful but we try.

That's why the people were in line even though, when she asked, they thought the hearings shouldn't have been public. They were there pandering to a human weakness. And they knew it.

You know, the rules of conduct we have set for our society are really set for ourselves. That's who society is, we the people. I may get angry enough to shoot you during an argument, if I have a gun, so I don't want guns around when we argue. The potential for violence is a human weakness. The control of those weaknesses is a human strength. We ban together to accomplish that.

I am reminded of World War II and the "Gold Star Mothers"

[REDACTED] If I were asked during World War II, if I thought the war was just, I would have said "yes". If I were asked: "will you give the life of one of your sons to prosecute this just war", I would have replied "NO". Not one of MY sons."

But if you ask me whether those others who lost their sons or daughters did so with meaning and purpose, I would reply "yes, they did", and if you ask me if the sacrifices were worth making, I would respond "indeed, they were".

So you see the difference. Ask ALL Americans whether the sacrifice of American lives was worth it to stop Hitler and they will answer "yes". Ask whether each would give his own child's life for that purpose and many, perhaps most, will answer "no".

One is the individual's response...the other "society's" response. There's quite a difference. And that's because the two entities are different. And when that difference disappears, the difference between what we want to be and what we are, I believe we may be flirting with the end of civilization.

That may be happening today.

Thanks

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