

[REDACTED]
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111
September 3, 1996
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Brian Lamb
C-Span
400 N. Capitol St. NW #650
Washington DC 20001

Dear Brian Lamb:

I never spent a better evening watching television than last night when you interviewed first, Edmund Morris on Ronald Reagan and Teddy Roosevelt; followed by Daniel Maraniss on Clinton and Richard Ben Cramer on Dole. This was all such good talk, heartfelt, witty, engaging. Morris is certainly a brilliant man, eccentric too, and he made me rethink my ideas on Reagan. I intend to go and check out his book on Teddy Roosevelt. The thing is, when you encounter a great writer, it hardly matters at all who they are writing about, because they will provide you with an entire world just the way a good novelist does. And you have the ability to let the writer reveal himself and his work.

I had read the Maraniss book on Clinton; this was not a brilliant book but it was absorbing and I liked hearing Maraniss describe the sections that he was first to dig up and describe. And Cramer was honest and objective about Dole.

There is no one on television doing interviews like these. I usually try to catch you on Book Notes but last night was Labor Day and I just happened to come upon your program. Unfortunately, we don't have C-Span's schedule in our paper so I have to depend on memory and luck to find you. How can we remedy this problem?

I thought it was especially amusing when you said to Morris first that you were sorry to be asking him all these specific questions about the physical act of writing, and then corrected yourself to say that actually you enjoyed asking those questions. As a writer myself, I like to know just how a writer proceeds. I always wondered how a biographer manages to tackle the huge morass of notes; Morris explained how he did so year by year.

One of the hallmarks of your style is to be neutral and not comment, even when the writers say things that are very moving and emotional. Don't you think that now and then you might respond to a passionate reply? I miss that sometimes. It

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seems that you go on too quickly to the next question while the audience is still involved in the last reply.

I have been meaning to write this letter for a long time, to say how much these interviews mean to me. I would much rather listen to an hour or more of good talk than anything else on television. The trick is to make the talk riveting and in your calm, quiet way you do just that. Many thanks.

Sincerely,

