

I WATCH C-SPAN BECAUSE--

I watch C-Span because it enriches my life.

Because C-Span interviewers, by not expressing their own views about what interviewees or callers say, thus enable me to distill a clearer perception of what I hear. Watching the House of Representative proceedings and the Hearings of the Senate and House Committees has increased my respect for our government. Listening (sometimes with gritted teeth) to a full exposure of a view which I dislike has helped me to temper my prejudices: sometimes my adversaries have a point. Again, I may tune in to C-Span and find something I didn't even know I would be interested in or I find out things I didn't even know I didn't know.

I must also mention that C-Span lets me range around the country and listen to callers from Honolulu, Fairbanks, Des Moines or Portland, Maine. I even keep a U.S. map by my chair. Sometimes the diversity of view I hear seems regional, sometimes idiocentric. Which? But all together the program makes a thought provoking montage of the country.

For detailed, involved, super-energy travelling, however, there has never been anything as exciting as C-Span coverage of the caucuses and primaries: plus coverage of the press, politicians, average citizens, landscapes, companies and customs of these localities. If I spent time and money to visit these places, I still could never experience such a thorough and invigorating look at each locality and set of customs.

NOT ↑ The caucuses were particularly exotic customs to me and their televising turned me into a C-Span Junkie during their entire coverage.

In general, however, I am surprised to find how many of your programs relate to my own everyday life. A few examples: after watching the interview with Bob Green of Chicago I now read his columns with greater interest. Early morning reviews of the newspapers help me evaluate the impact and fads of that day's news and guide my own news consumption accordingly. In a different vein, in 1983 it was fascinating to watch the House of Representatives decide if they wanted my Green Thumb job (under Title V) to continue for another year. (How good it would have been to watch the Senate's subsequent debate!) Again and again I find instances of information, insights, personality glimpses which are relevant to my living.

And because I am discriminating about what I find entertaining, I have a special appreciation for the real life entertainment on C-Span. I remember particularly watching the Moe Udall Roast and seeing Edward Kennedy break up when reading (for the first time?) his script writer's jokes. At another Roast, bless me, if there wasn't Tip O'Neil suddenly caroling forth an irish ballad. And tuneful it was. Other times I have enjoyed many laughs while watching the Press Club Luncheon.

Much of my entertainment has always consisted of reading, but I continue to check the schedule first to be sure that reading won't make me miss some fresh, live reality being shown on the Cable Industries' C-Span. I often watch a regularly scheduled program on another channel, but I will continue to tune to C-Span first to be sure that there isn't something there that would take precedence: something uncanned, exciting and real-- something unexpected, perhaps, that will enlarge my experience and expand my horizons.

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