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August 5, 1992

Mr. Brian Lamb
C-Span
400 N. Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 650
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Journalists and Electronic Media

Dear Brian:

I have enjoyed watching C-Span and believe I have learned a great deal about the various subjects and interests that are discussed on your programs. I do have one huge concern that bothers me and I wish to share it with you.

Two or three years ago I was watching a program on a PBS station and the topic was journalism and journalistic schools, etc. The guest is a very well known media person, although I cannot recall his name at this time.

The host asked this man a very interesting question about the fairness in reporting and in editorials by the national media. The guest started his answer by advising the audience that he is a registered Democrat and considers himself a liberal.

He then went on to state that there is no way the national news media is reporting the news fairly and equally nor are they giving the American public all the facts to many issues, but rather, their interpretations and or biased thoughts. He also stated that this really bothers him. It bothers him because the public is getting too much of one-sided journalism. This is what has concerned me for so long, the one-sided reporting.

This gentleman explained that 94% of all journalistic graduates are liberal and that leaves only 6% conservative. With these kinds of percentages how can the American people ever hope to fully receive equal coverage and/or information about the issues without biased and one-sided opinions?

It has always been my opinion and understanding that the news media was to fairly report the news, not direct the news and give both sides of the issue equal coverage.

Brian Lamb - page two

A couple of evenings later I watched an interview with Walter Cronkite. One topic discussed was the "infamous" unidentified source and/or the "anonymous source that does not wish to be identified."

Mr. Cronkite stated that if he were president of CBS or any other news agency neither he nor any reporter working for him would be allowed to run a story without identifying their source(s). I believe Mr. Cronkite referred to the unidentified source type reporting of today as "yellow journalism." I agree.

I realize that the argument from the other side is that without their sources many stories couldn't be reported. That may be true under normal circumstances. However, we live in the real world and we are told by a national journalist that reporting is neither fair or unbiased. How then do we know when a source is actually used or is allegedly used? This is not to say that I believe all or even the large majority of journalists create stories, but in this world we live in today I also cannot believe that the news media industry is the only perfect industry.

Investigative reporting brings out the very worst in politics, although it is more and more one-sided, the very worst in industry and the entertainment industry, however, I have never seen an investigative report of any kind relating to the media industry. No one can convince me that on average there aren't just as many less than honorable people in the media. Yet, we never see a report about "unscrupulous" news media types. Please realize that I don't consider tabloids as true media.

I have just realized that I have made some typos in this letter, which I will not correct. I did believe I was perfect!?

Seriously. If one watches CNN, CBS, NBC and ABC or a multitude of local or state-wide TV stations you will see a very definitely one sided reporting. With 94% of media graduates being one-sided, how could a caring public expect (and may I add) a trusting public, expect anything but brain washing from one side? I don't care if a person is Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative, we are all American citizens and we deserve fair and unbiased reporting.

It is refreshing to watch C-Span because you and yours do not devulge your politics. Please keep up the tremendous job.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

