

July 9, 1996

Mr. Brian Lamb
CSPAN
400 N. Capitol St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb,

I write in reference to Book Notes. I have come to enjoy it enormously, and look forward to it every Sunday. You are a very significant reason for that. First of all, you really do read the books thoroughly, and seem to capture the essence of the author's purpose - and style. So often one reads the book reviews, even in The New York Times, and the reviewer seems barely to have skimmed the book as evidenced by the number of letters by the author written in rebuttal showing inaccuracies simply because the book was not read in depth. Your questions are to the point and objective. Of course, much depends upon your guest who may not be so interesting or articulate.

The Greenberg (No Surprises) interview made me want to write to you rather than to him (publisher) because there is so obviously nothing one could write that could make a dent one way or the other. I write to you because so much of what he said goes to the kinds of phone calls you get, even though he says there's nothing hateful or vicious about his book. It's when he said, "There's nothing to hate - it's just emptiness" that I really felt very irritated. How can someone who is completely 'empty' have been a Rhodes scholar? How can President Clinton be devoid of anything except political motives and still have taken an enormous risk in Haiti, and in Bosnia (and in the latter case I would remind him that President Bush totally ignored outcries from the new segments of Yugoslavia). I have been irritated with the President at times for backing down about some things, but not nearly so many as the press has made a lot of noise about. I think a President should be able to reconsider things in the light of bold reality. And to have all of his assets of communication boiled down to 'charm' is really irritating. He connects with people in a very personal, meaningful way. And I have no doubt that he really cares. I have watched him on CSPAN many times at hearings (e.g. agriculture, small business). This is a man who really listens and collates everything he hears, and responds. He is responsive at press conferences. As for Greenberg's remarks about Hillary Clinton's having sublimated her own identity, that is a speculation about which I have grave doubts. Who gives her credit for staying with her man - and what happened to all the compliments that were flying around in the beginnings of the health care issue - her brilliance, how much she knew about the subject, from both sides of the

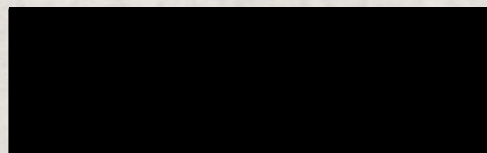
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aisle? If these two people rebound as they do, it is because they are people of substance, high intelligence, humanity and of caring.

I don't have quite the argument with the press that so many people have. Most of it is responsible and enlightening. But I do think that for all their faults, the Clintons have been put very often in an unflattering light without justification. I'm glad that they fought back, for instance, about the Woodward book - he should have known better than to depend on one source.

At any rate, I wish you well, and thank you for your significant contribution to responsible journalism.

Sincerely.



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