

Voice
FAX

Systems and Programming

Long Beach, CA 90808

May 26, 1993

Mr. Brian Lamb, President

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You recently aired a program entitled "Media Coverage of Gay & Lesbian Issues" that was produced by a group named *Accuracy in the Media* (on Monday, May 17, I believe). It was repeated the following weekend.

During the telecast a number of "experts" presented a wide array of supposed facts about the Gay and Lesbian Community, all of which were clearly intended to convey the position that such persons are lacking in morals, good hygiene, common sense, reverence for God, etc. While C-SPAN certainly cannot be held accountable for the accuracy of programming such as this seminar, I would very much like to understand what criteria C-SPAN employs to determine if a particular event is to be granted air time in the first place.

For example, would you have aired an American Nazi Party conference espousing the position that the Holocaust is a myth to provide "balance" for the coverage of the opening of the new Holocaust Museum? Or perhaps, if C-SPAN were in existence during the 1960's, would a "Colored People are Inferior" seminar sponsored by the KKK be an appropriate telecast to present an alternate position to that of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech?

Does the "equal time" rule that is often cited by broadcast stations pertaining to editorials have some application to C-SPAN? Do you maintain a log of the hours devoted to major topics, pro and con, to ensure equal coverage? What credentials are necessary for an organization (or an individual) that would qualify for a certain number of hours of air time?

Do you have a written policy that your staff references when a request for air time is made? In the specific reference to events that are clearly against gay rights, are you waiting for the passage of federal legislation or perhaps a court ruling that gay and lesbian persons are to be afforded equal protection under the law before such events are to be dropped from consideration?

Finally, have you ever considered asking callers who present an anti-gay rights opinion if they *personally* know anyone who is gay? This question is vital to understand the basis for a person's point of view. Of course, whether someone vehemently opposed to homosexuals would answer truthfully is questionable.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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