

Brian Lamb
C-SPAN
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Dear Brian,

I have no idea what you have to do in order to keep C-SPAN on the air, so I am somewhat hesitant when it comes to critizizing your network. I saw you in a telecommunications hearing not long ago in which it was evident that C-SPAN is getting squeezed out in the struggle between the cable, telephone and broadcast interests, and it was manifestly evident that Congress is not listening to you. They like you, but they are listening to the big money. So the criticism that follows is necessarily couched on the premise that C-SPAN has a realistic choice in its coverage selection and programming, hiring practices and guest selection. I would prefer to think you are not doing this voluntarily.

For the purposes of this letter, I will assume that you had no choice in your pitiful, late-late show coverage of the congressional hearings of the House and Senate committees investigating various aspects of the Clinton Crimes. And as you will doubtless recall from my two letters to you over the last three decades, I am somewhat unhappy with C-SPAN's insistance in having an endless parade of journalists and other rabid liberals on its non-coverage broadcasts. Alas, in mindless fits of ethical blindness, you steadfastly refuse to heed my requests for guests who participate in the real world. Journalists who live lives of bouncing from the world of politics to the world of journalistic mendacity don't count.

The old C-SPAN cheer, 'thank God for C-SPAN' you used to hear at the beginning of every call is no more. When conservatives call C-SPAN you, Brian, bark angrily at them, often angrily hurling rhetorical questions at them and refusing them chances to answer. When they get an opportunity to ask a guest a significant question of a liberal guest you immediately hang up on them and either change the subject or rephrase their questions to a softball question that was not asked at all. Your fellow C-SPAN moderators simply hang up when a conservative calls - if they even take the call. More often, they take several calls in a row from the liberal line and only rarely activate the conservative. I know, I know: if more than two of ten calls you take

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are from the conservative line, the rabid liberals inundate you with complaints that you are bending over for conservatives and 'unfair' - whatever that might mean in their context - to liberals. Connie what's-her-name and Susan Swain appear to be sporting their Clinton pom-poms and proudly wearing their presidential knee-pads (yes, I'm sure that Clinton would even hit on Connie). Both Susan and Connie bitterly admonish callers on the liberal line who don't parrot every syllable of the Dem party line, while they never say a word to all the liberals who flood the conservative and moderate lines - but of course, all of your androgynous phenomena do that.

One final word: Thank God for C-SPAN. You see, although your non-coverage broadcasts are now worth a little less than a copy of the National Enquirer - and I really don't mean to slight Booknotes - your live coverage of House and Senate sessions and congressional hearings is still invaluable even though TCI took away C-SPAN2 and sends me the C-SPAN signal at half-power - I saw a lot of your coverage of the Whitewater congressional hearings and know for a fact about the massive abuse of power and obstruction of justice your little journalist guests are covering up. It's about time you figured it out, too, and exhibited a little more concern for the country than for your Marxist buddies in the press.


DeSoto, TX

PS: All bets are off if the survival of C-SPAN dictates your actions.