

October 13, 1998

[REDACTED]
Los Angeles, CA 90025
[REDACTED]

Mr. Brian Lamb
C-SPAN
400 N. Capital Street NW #650
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Guests & Host
Washington Journal

Dear Mr. Lamb:

Before I get to what I think is wrong, let me first state what is right. I think that you do your utmost to make Washington Journal, and C-SPAN in general as fair even handed and impartial as you possibly can. You hide well your own views, and I assume the policy expressed to other hosts is the same. Unfortunately you do not always succeed.

Let me first deal with your October 9 guest, Jonah Goldberg. He is not just someone who is partisan. He is someone with a conflict of interest. With his mother an active participant in the taping, and casting President Clinton in the worst image possible, I think you used poor judgment in scheduling him at this time. It would be like having Rep. DeLay discuss the pending impeachment. Or worse still, it would be like having George Will comment on the effectiveness of candidate Reagan after prepping him for his debate with Carter, and using purloined Carter talking papers in the task. I consider this one of the worst of dirty tricks, and Will one of the worst tricksters. Goldberg had no place on your show, not because I disagree with him (there are many of those, but to that later), but because he is more than just slanted-he has his mother to protect.

By my count, the number of conservatives has been running about three to two. You always say it will even up when callers complain, but it doesn't. Furthermore, on a scale of one to ten with ten the most extreme conservative, your conservatives run six up to nine or nine and one half. On the other hand the so called liberals run from three to six, which is even past the middle. Get some extremist liberals, or nock them out on the conservative side.

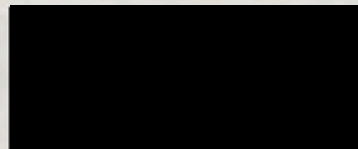
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Mr. Brian Lamb
October 13, 1998
Page Two

Finally, there is Steve Scully, about whom I have written before. He still raises only anti-Clinton matters, reads only anti-Clinton articles, and asks only anti-Clinton questions. Believe it or not, when he did not get the answer he wanted, he asked the guest the same question three times, and then closed the hour repeating the same question again. That is intolerable, and you should not accept it. Instead you put him on three times in one week a few weeks ago, and two times in a following week. That is adding insult to injury. In spite of this, I have no reason to believe that you have ever done anything to reign in this baby-faced loose cannon.

As I think about the subject matter of this letter, and what I have written, I am beginning to think that you are not as fair minded as you are thought to be and as you believe you are. You are the man. You are the one who sets policy and guides the ship. I am beginning to rethink my opening paragraph. I know that when you get criticism from both sides, the common wisdom is that you must be doing something right. But there is also the possibility that you are doing things wrong from both ends of the spectrum. I know you will not respond to this letter, because I have never gotten a response before (other than some of your promotional material), and I also suspect that no changes will come of this. I am coming to the conclusion that you and your staff believe you have all the right answers on how to run Washington Journal, and your network in general. You will allow viewers, listeners, callers, writers, etc. to make their comments, but I think we are just going through the motions. Let's see if any changes occur.

Sincerely,



P.S. You once asked your callers for an hour, "Why do you listen to this program?" My answer used to be the same as when I complained about certain conservative talk show hosts in California (Larry Elder, Dennis Prager, et al.), and my brother asked why I listen. The answer was that I wanted to hear what the other side had to say. But I have come to realize that the reason is to test my own arguments and beliefs. If I have no good response to what I hear, maybe I should change my mind.