

From: [REDACTED]
Date sent: Mon, 16 Nov 1998 07:55:06 EST
To: journal@c-span.org
Subject: Go ahead DON'T answer, AGAIN!

Brian Lamb,

Regarding your 11/9/98 plea that those who claim bias should provide documentation.

I gave up writing letters, and sending Faxes documenting my claims of unfairness\bias, because I never got any response, they were nothing more than waste of my intellectual energy, and time. But in spite of this unrewarding history I'll give it one more shot.

As I would hope you would already know, it is discrimination that gives bias visibility and meaning -- So, I will narrow my remarks to the facts, concerning you're programming that are, I believe, undeniable evidence of reckless, if not malicious discrimination.

1. Callers are discriminatly "selected" based on income and job description, (disproportionately slanted toward rich and retired) and their willingness to engage in sound-bite debate. Solution: get an 800 number, have call-in programs only after 7 p.m., or better still, stop having the mud throwing call-in programs altogether.(only take calls concerning C-span policy.)
2. Subjects are discriminatly confined by show host to what some newspaper thinks is news or relevant. Is it really your contention that newspapers are a good source of original, insightful or representative perspective? Solution: Stop confining realm of debate.
3. Guests on programs are discriminatly "selected" based on professional credentials. Professional journalists are designed, or unnaturally "selected" and evolved by the superficial money industry that provides them employment. Why should I care what someone has to say merely because they look good on TV, or because some elitist publisher thinks he/she has a way with words, or popular appeal? Solution: Choose guests by a open, random lottery. (Logistical details

available upon request.)

I won't go any farther as it is likely there is no point. I've included below the text of some past unanswered correspondence that was still on my computer hard drive. If you'd like to better understand where I'm coming from, and why I have such contempt for your policies (that so squander opportunity) see my WebSite at: http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Gallery/6901/

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Mendham, NJ 07945
[REDACTED]

If Big Bird and Barney should have to earn their keep why shouldn't

C-span?

(Written 1995)

The republican wave that swept the nation in November has created a swamp of duplicity where the stench of hypocrisy lies thick in the air. From sleazy book deals to the rotten logic of "tax relief for the rich," waste and decomposition have come to define the American political landscape.

Recently trapped in this bog that is the Republican's "promised land", is the ark of PBS. Apparently receiving a 15% taxpayer subsidy makes it too much of a ship to traverse King Newt's shallow swamp. So swamp logic demands that we dismantle it, and cast programs like Sesame Street and Barney, McNeil/Lehrer and Nova adrift on rafts to be blown by the winds of popular whim and commercial interest. I guess that's how you define progress in an unevolving world.

What adds irony to this tragedy, and makes the hypocrisy visibly thick, is the roll C-span has played in helping Newt "renew" what is his definition of civilization. Wholly financed by the involuntary contributions of cable subscribers, C-span is by any objective standard the most illegitimately financed of all the cable channels,

yet it remains afloat. Why hasn't King Newt and his Newtlett army thrown the corrosive slime of their unyielding capitalist principles at C-span? Doesn't a tax by any name steal the same? The answer is that like other welfare programs for the rich, including most of the military budget, C-span is part of Newts playground, a "sandbox" (to use Newty's own words) where he and his elitist friends can shut out the poor and disenfranchised, and plot their rule - without having to obey the laws of swamp life they are trying to impose on everyone else.

June 11, 1994
Brian Lamb
c/o C-Span
400 North Capitol St., NW #650
Washington, DC. 20001

Mr. Lamb:

For the longest time I have intended to write to you to let you know what I think of "your" network. Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on your perspective, a recent experience with the on-line service America On Line and concern over your association with it has turned that intention into necessity. But, more about that later.

First, I'd like to get some old gripes off my chest. I've heard your on-air answer to callers who question C-Span's policy of not providing a 1-800 number for call-in programs, and frankly, find it wanting. To cry poverty when you can afford to waste resources on yellow elephants like the C-Span School Bus strikes me as insincere at best. I don't think it's C-Span's job to attempt to "inspire" this nation's youth--that's the responsibility of parents, teachers, and yes, even the government. As I see it, C-Span's primary responsibility is to attempt to make its programming as unbiased as possible. As you well know, an individual's ability to afford cable television, and in turn involuntarily subsidize your existence, is not synonymous with their ability to express an opinion at the rate of \$10 or \$15 per on-air minute, or, for that matter, with their ability to afford a FAX machine or computer. I say, if you can't make it fair, then stop taking calls, but I don't think it has to come to that. You could, if "money" really is the problem, allow limited commercial advertising, any "corruption" of your "independence" could easily be avoided with a simple on-screen message describing what the commercial is paying for. As an added bonus, you could run these commercials during the

dead-air time you now incomprehensibly waste broadcasting the censored audio and useless images of congressional votes.

Another of my long-held gripes is with the choices you make concerning on-air guest "commentators." As I see it, C-Span has become just another platform for the same old industry "journalists" that already have too loud a voice. Like our nation's government, C-Span is apparently not too devoted to the principle of "true representation." While the government bestows the power of representation based on irrelevancies like geography, you bestow the power of air time based on irrelevancies like profession. I think you should provide callers (or watchers) who often seem better informed and more intelligent than your usual guests, some opportunity to appear on camera, or at least the opportunity to expand on their opinions beyond the usual minute you allow them. All points of view and opinions deserve representation--not only those held by "professionals" who are required by capitalist interests to be appealing to the largest possible audience. In the realm of ideas, popularity doesn't have much to do with credibility.

Finally, getting to the issue that is responsible for this letter, the on-line service AOL is, as far as I am concerned, a despicable fraud and very much un-American, that is, if you believe in such American principles as free speech and due process. The short of it is they terminated my account without discussion or notice because I E-mailed the attached letter about CBS. I sent the mail only to members with an optional member's profile and, as you might know, unwanted E-Mail can easily be "ignored." As of now, three weeks after termination, I have yet to receive any kind of explanation concerning what rule (TOS) I violated. Anyway, I am quite disturbed by this censorship and will not passively accept that I must subsidize any entity that enhances the marketability of AOL as an on-line service. In other words, I believe your association with AOL enhances it and I will not accept financing that enhancement. So, I am requesting that you dump them or I am going to have to request that my cable company dump you, or, if I must, I'll dump you both.

With sincere admiration (despite the tone of this letter),

