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07-23-97 (Erratic author)
Brian Lamb/C-SPAN
Dear Brian,

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Responding to your question about what kind of series would be interesting, the callers who mentioned the Lewis & Clark Expedition are right on. Please consider also the trails west to settle America, starting with Cumberland in Virginia & Kentucky, etc., leading to jumping off at Independence, MO onto the Santa Fe Trail, Oregon Trail & California Trail. Take a nostalgic trek from Sea to Shining Sea following old Route 66. Maybe do a chronological Founding of America tour, from Patrick Henry to Declaration of Independence & the American Revolution, Constitution, Bill of Rights, Washington as the General & President. Residents of Philadelphia, etc., might recreate the events, much as Illinois towns did the Lincoln-Douglass debates. Bringing the roots of the nation to life could help counteract attempts by the NEA to dumb down students knowledge of their history.

Next suggestion is about changing your quota system, which you will probably ignore, but Hope (or Holt) springs eternal. C-Span tolerates that ----- (it rhymes with witch) Mrs Cox, Dem. from New Haven, CT & cities in NJ, NY, TN, etc. as she hysterically accuses guests, especially rare conservatives, of defaming "Her President". It became a game & I marked down every time Cox got on the Journal. From June '96 thru July '97 she got on a minimum of 35 times (long times) & I have her on tape, ad nauseum! She beat out the LA Lady. Joys score is 2 Tel. & 0 FAX in 4 years, while C-Span worries about Cox Democrats being shut out. Both Dems. & Reps. must cheat a lot, since very few "Others" seem to talk. Still I would'nt trade C-Span for any or all of the fluff & nonsense, scripted propaganda networks!

The fairest way would allow everyone an Equal Opportunity to air their ideas by permitting Equal Access to dialing in, with a system to minimize cheating. Caller ID was not practical early on, but believe it has now developed to the point where you could get great use on local calls & many long distance calls. Over time the rest of the dial network will continue to add more & more IDs.

Here's an approach you might consider to mechanize the process & reduce the workload & stress of C-Span screener to control repeat callers.

O.WJ R

1. Assign one telephone number for all C-Span callers to dial nationwide.
2. Bring all calls into Personal Computers with internal Call ID receiving both the Listing Name & Tel. No. of the originating caller.
3. Develop program to record Listing Name & Tel. No. in 30 day work files. (Caller ID will display this on all local calls from D.C., No. VA. & MD. in the metro area & a large number of other MD. & VA. calls. C-Span can satisfy most complaints by Dems. & Reps. that calls are put up by RNC or DNC switchboards or that you are lobbied by government workers.)
4. Program compares the Listing Name & Tel. No. with files. If a match is found in either file, give recorded message to "Please observe the 30-day interval before making calls", disconnect & make line available.
5. Reject ID calls showing ANONYMOUS (or ANONIMO) since caller has elected to withhold the ID. Give an "Anonymous calls not accepted" recording.
6. All other calls should have an ID of OUT OF AREA (or FUERA DEL AREA) & be answered verbally. These calls could be coming from a telephone in any state or province or from a cellular phone or an overseas location. (The ideal means of identification would be a voice scan. With audio-card, etc., this may be possible now or available soon on the horizon. Might be interesting to develop a file of callers voices & experiment.)
7. At this point, all local or long distance calls would be managed by the C-Span screener exactly the same.
8. Screener asks for name of caller, originating Tel. No., City/State & Zip & enters data into current 30 day files for program checks.
9. Program compares data with files & if no match is found, ask caller to hold & complete as usual. If match is found, reject caller as in # 4.

Didn't mean to go on this long. One caller asked Susan if C-Span planned to have a contest for Campaign Finance Reform Plans. Sounds like a good idea. Sorry I don't have room to tell story about C-Span 2 coming soon to KC, KS.

Regards from the Heartland and stay well,

[REDACTED] Kansas City, KS 66106; [REDACTED]