

Ann Arbor MI 48104

7/26/1999

o.cable

Mr. Brian Lamb, Director
C-Span Cable Station

Dear Mr. Lamb:

Some of us regular listeners to C-Span 2 (as well as C-Span) are very disturbed by recent decisions of Media One, that holds monopoly control over TV-viewing in the Ann Arbor-Detroit area, which adversely affect C-Span 2.

As you probably already know, C-Span 2 here is obliged to share a single channel (no. 8) with the Eternal Word TV network, which was awarded the daylight hours (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.) with C-Span 2 relegated to nighttime viewing. Viewers interested in U.S. Senate deliberations cannot see the live broadcasts.

Applied to weekend broadcasts regular viewers of C-Span 2's estimable "48 Hours of Books" are deprived of half those broadcasts. An odd irregularity arose this past weekend (July 24-25), when the nighttime broadcasts, usually assigned to C-Span 2 exclusively, had visuals by the Eternal Word and audials by C-Span 2 book discussions. Panel on Ernest Hemingway, for examples, were mixed in with Catholic rituals on the screen.

(over)

What can we members do? Some of us have written the manager of Media One, but he chooses not to reply to any protesting letters. Some of us have appealed to the Ann Arbor News for an investigative article on Media One decisions (see enclosure). Would it help to write the FCC in Washington; if so, please provide the appropriate address.

We need your help, Brian.

Sincerely yours,

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COPY TO BRIAN LAMB

Ann Arbor MI 48104
7/26/99

Radio and TV Editor
Ann Arbor News

Dear Editor:

Would it be possible for the News to provide its readers with background on recent important decisions by Media One here in Ann Arbor regarding Cable Channel 8?

Initially C-Span 2 was granted a full channel for its public service broadcasts of deliberations in the U.S. Senate, matching the broadcasts of debates in the U.S. House of Representatives on its sister network C-Span 1. Some weeks ago Media One decided to split the broadcast time of Channel 8, assigning the daylight hours to Eternal Word TV network and the nighttime hours to C-Span 2. This decision vitiated the live daily broadcasts of the U.S. Senate deliberations by C-Span 2.

A peculiar twist in this time distribution occurred Saturday evening July 24. For a period of time that evening the visual segment was a Catholic church musical program whereas the audial segment was a discussion of Dick Morris' recent book on the Clinton administration, part of C-Span's 48 hour weekend program regularly devoted to non-fiction books, presenting a confusing challenge to Channel 8 viewers.

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According to the July 25-31 TV Week, distributed by the News, Channel 8 is still being shared by the two cable channels, though the July 24th incident suggests that the Eternal Word TV network may now have a full 24-hour allocation.

The larger issue remains: the very considerable power Media One exerts, when it divides the broadcast time on a single cable channel between two separate, radically different types of broadcast programs. Does such a time distribution require the prior approval of the FCC, or is it a unilateral decision of the local Media One? If the latter, that is truly an extraordinary power in the hands of Media One. To the best of my knowledge Media One has not as yet made a public announcement of this series of important decisions by its management.

Any enlightenment your department could supply News readers would be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

[Redacted Signature]

P.S. Please do not "run" this letter in the News "Letters to the Editor" columns. I am only interested in an investigative report by your department.

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