

September 9, 1993

Carl Cannon, The Baltimore Sun  
Margaret Carlson, Time Magazine  
Adam Clymer, The New York Times  
Brian Lamb, C-Span Network Host ✓

SUBJECT: Program of September 9, 1993

When questioned about the bashing of President Clinton, most of the reporters on C-Span programs all deny that this is the case and add that all presidents more or less have had the same treatment. This is not true!

Press coverage of President Clinton has been sniping from the very beginning. White House reporters invariably end their stories with a snide comment, even when the content of the report is favorable to the president.

It has been gotcha journalism, wolfpack style. This was also true of the coverage of Bush in the latter days of his presidency, but it was certainly not true from day one, as it has been with Clinton.

The press seems totally unaware of its own responsibility for the public's sense that government has betrayed them.

The press also fails to explain what government is accomplishing. Some of the programs provided:

- Safe Food & Water
- Safe Housing & Transit
- Medical Services for the Elderly & Indigent
- Protection from Communicable Diseases
- Equal Protection of the Law for all Citizens
- Protection of our Civil Liberties

The public does not understand about the use of its tax dollars, because the press has done a lousy job of telling us about it.

A Regular C-Span Listener

cc: Brian Lamb, C-Span Network , 400 Capitol St-Suite #650, Washington D.C.20001  
Carl Cannon, Baltimore Sun, 1627 K St - #1100, Washington, D.C. 20006  
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Steve Scully  
Lew Ketcham  
C-Span Network  
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August 24, 1993

Dear Steve & Lew:

SUBJECT: GUN CONTROL

Today Steve had a program on this subject and Lew had one last week.

Americans use the phrase "It's our Constitutional Right to Bear Arms" whenever they are questioned about their ownership of guns. There's never any explanation given on the origin of this amendment, or how it came about by the people who are opposed to this view.

Countries, such as England, where murder by gun rates were below 10 for the whole year, and other countries also have lower rates compared to the U.S. which has thousands annually.

The waiting period of 5 days is really nothing. If you place an order through a catalog or a credit-card order by phone, you are going to have to wait at least 5 days before you get your merchandise.

In discussing criminal discussions, the use of the 2nd Amendment is given as the right for assault weapons. This is just an excuse for American self-indulgence. If the 2nd Amendment didn't exist, these people would invent it or something similar.

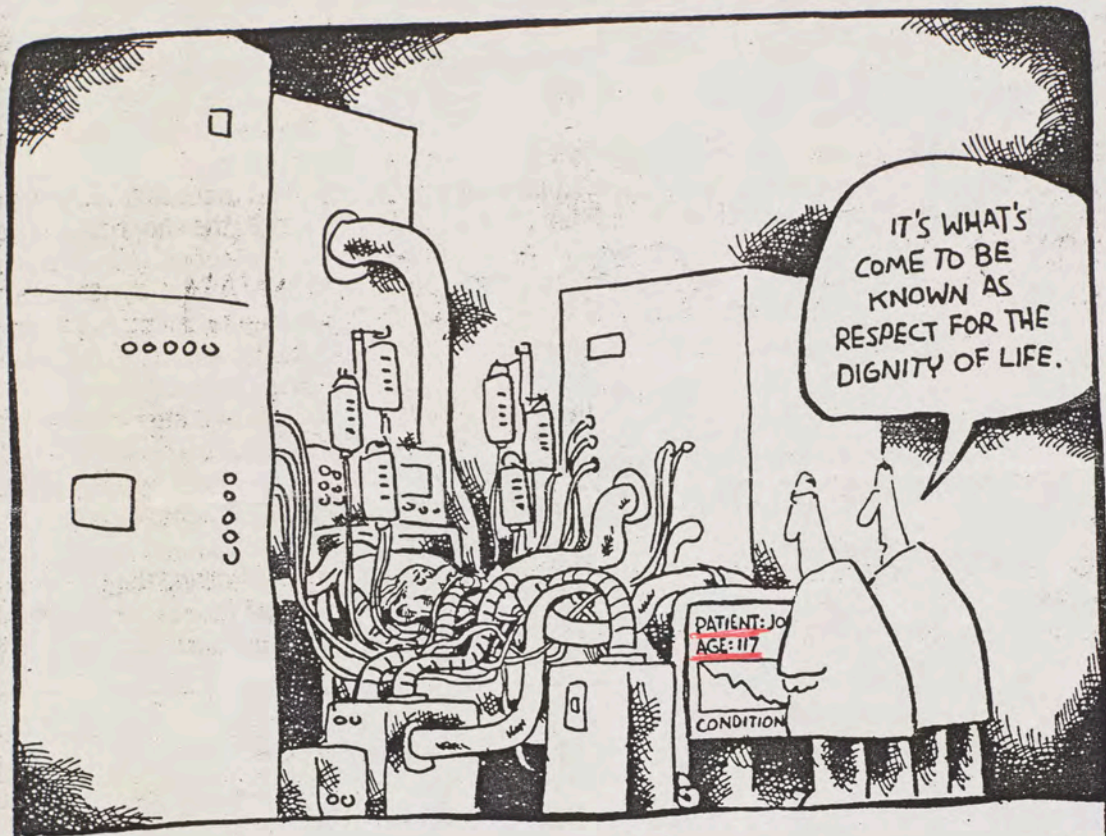
As Senator Barry Goldwater stated about assault weapons, "If a hunter needs an assault weapon to go hunting, then he has no bleep/bleep business going hunting." In other words, he must be a lousy shot!

THE SECOND AMENDMENT - THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS

A HANDFUL OF FARMERS WROTE THAT STUFF OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TODAY. IT WAS 1787! THEY HAD JUST FOUGHT A WAR WITH A CITIZEN'S ARMY! THEY HAD NO MONEY, EXCEPT WHAT THEY PRINTED! THEY HAD NO POLICE FORCE. THEY WERE SURROUNDED BY INDIANS! SO, IN A WILDERNESS COUNTRY, THEY NEEDED TO HAVE EVERY HOUSEHOLD ARMED, BECAUSE EVERY FAMILY HAD TO PROTECT ITSELF.

A Regular C-Span Listener

cc: Richard Aborn, Handgun Control  
John Synder, Committee/Right to Bear Arms



IT'S WHAT'S  
COME TO BE  
KNOWN AS  
RESPECT FOR THE  
DIGNITY OF LIFE.

PATIENT: JOE  
AGE: 117  
CONDITION

TUES

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AND THE WORST THINGS  
IN LIFE AREN'T FREE.



# New Study Exposes Senate Blather on Public TV

Some politicians love to denounce public television as a bastion of anti-establishment bias. But a new study of public TV, to be released in late August, shows the absurdity—and inaccuracy—of much of the standard political rhetoric.

Last year, Senate Republican leader Robert Dole attacked what he called public TV's "unrelenting liberal cheerleading."

He charged that "broadcasting apologists are hiding behind Big Bird, Mr. Rogers and 'Masterpiece Theatre,' laying down their quality smoke screen while they shovel out funding for gay and lesbian shows."

Other conservative senators targeted specific documentaries. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) criticized "Maria's Story," which favorably depicted a Salvadoran peasant who joined the guerrilla movement. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) crusaded against "Tongues Untied," a film exploring the lives of African American gay males—a minority within minority.

To hear these senators tell it, public TV regularly "shovels out" programming for and about gays, guerrillas and rabble-rousers.

Are the claims true? Not according to the new study—the first ever to take a serious look at the full schedule aired on PBS stations across the country. It scrutinized the evening lineup for six randomly

selected weeks spanning the first half of 1992.

The study focused on who gets to speak—in studio or on tape—on public affairs shows, analyzing 1,644 sources or "experts" appearing on 114 separate programs.

How many of the 1,644 sources were gay or lesbian advocates? Zero.

How many were leftist guerrillas? Zero.

Did progressive activists dominate public tele-

vision? Hardly. Representatives of racial or ethnic groups accounted for a mere 1.6 percent of total sources. Labor union representatives were 0.9 percent of the total, environmental advocates 0.6 percent and feminist spokespersons 0.2 percent.

Certainly a network accused by Sen. Dole of "unrelenting liberal cheerleading" must feature more Democrats than Republicans? Wrong again. During the period studied, both major parties were well-represented, but Republican sources outnumbered Democrats 53 percent to 43 percent. The rest were mostly Perot backers.

So who dominates the public affairs programs on PBS? Mainly we hear from government officials (23 percent of all sources), corporate representatives (19 percent), journalists from generally mainstream publications (12 percent) and academics from establishment or conservative institutions (6 percent).

Given this data, how did the vocal Senate critics of public television get it so wrong? The problem is that they responded more like censors than scholars, seizing upon particular programs that offended them.

For example, instead of recognizing that plenty of conservative foreign policy analysts regularly appear on PBS shows to balance the one documentary sympathetic to a Salvadoran guerrilla, Sen. McCain teed off on that one documentary.

The academics who conducted the public TV study—sociologist David Croteau, Vassar College professor William Hoynes and Fulbright scholar Kevin Carragee—didn't make the error of "anecdotalism." Analyzing the national evening lineup as a whole, they found that public affairs documentaries make up only 8 percent of the schedule—and that these occasional programs, so pilloried on Capitol Hill, "are not characterized by a consistent liberal bias."

Documentaries comprise about one-third of the public affairs lineup—which is made up mostly of news, business and political talk shows. These daily and weekly programs—which include "The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," "Nightly Business Report," "Wall Street Week," "Adam Smith's Moneyworld," Bill Buckley's "Firing Line," John McLaughlin's two shows and "Washington Week In Review"—run the spectrum from establishment

center to the right.

Perhaps more important than the right-left spectrum is the top-down spectrum. The powerful voices of corporate and political elites are booming on public TV, while citizen activists are barely audible—just like in commercial broadcasting. In this regard, public TV has failed miserably in fulfilling its original mandate to "provide a voice for groups in the community that may otherwise be unheard."

The new public TV study is endorsed by Ralph Nader and an array of consumer, civil rights and public interest groups (including FAIR, the media watch group with which we are associated).

Ironically, the study is set for release the day before a Corporation for Public Broadcasting hearing on public TV bias in South Carolina. CPB's probe—which has the feel of a kangaroo court—was instigated by conservative senators wanting to expose "liberal bias."

The CPB board members—all of whom were appointed by Ronald Reagan or George Bush will receive a copy of the new study. So will public TV programmers across the country.

But there's another group that should take the time to read it: senators who presume to judge a whole TV network based on a few documentaries they dislike.

## MEDIA BEAT





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