

"I watch C-Span because" competition

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I watch C-Span because it is unique in its objectivity and depth. Its non-commercialized, censor-free, participatory format has a different kind of impact on the viewers. It is TV-journalism at its benevolent best. It has a vital role in the American democratic system. It is characterized by a fair and balanced analysis of various events making the citizenry more knowledgeable and involved in public affairs. Obviously, this prompts the people in the government to be more alert and responsible. It also contributes in strengthening the unity of these United States. One becomes proud of this nation when one hears voices from different states, towns and cities, men and women, young and old, whites and non-whites, the rich and the poor, the learned and the common folks. It looks as if a greater and greater number of people want to participate in this "TV-town meeting".

It appears that the production and the support staff put in a good amount of preparation behind every program. The interviewers are very skillful and provide ample opportunities to the audience and the guests, while themselves remaining neutral. Their style is non-abrasive and gentle; they don't look upon the guest as an adversary trying to avoid questions. They seem to have developed a kind of warm and "hi-there-how-are-you" kind of relationship with the public which, in turn, seems to reciprocate these sentiments. During the call-in program, some people tend to be rather long-winded but each of your staff handles it very patiently, tactfully, sincerely, and sensitively. One feels that they do care. All this may sound like an exaggeration but after thinking about it in more than one way, I still feel that they deserve this commendation.

It is heartening to note that the minorities-guest as well as the viewers-get their due share in the public debate. The live telecast of various seminars, the special program for students, the interviews of foreign visitors and the journalists representing the regional media add an extra dimension to the standard programs such as congressional proceedings, election coverage, and call-in programs. The reports of the National Press Club and the visits to various newspaper offices give a wonderful insight into the working of the media. Similarly, the live coverage of an Iowa caucus meeting was very educative.

The call-in program deserves special mention as it helps towards the goal of making our government a true participatory democracy. Eventually, this is bound to help in making our system of government more efficient, equitable, and just.

The programming pattern of C-Span allows every issue to be analyzed thoroughly and objectively and this makes it easier to understand the truth. Everyone should be grateful to C-Span for raising the profession of journalism to new heights and for helping to make our democratic system more responsive and viable.

