

January 9, 1997

Brian Lamb
C-SPAN
Suite 650 NW
400 N. Capitol Street
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb,

The letter I sent to you yesterday was garbled, toward the end. A corrected version is enclosed.

I apologize for any inconvenience ...

Sincerely,

B. Lamb
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[REDACTED]

January 8, 1997

Brian Lamb
C-SPAN
Suite 650 NW
400 N. Capitol Street
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb,

No, it's not the "dumb guy down the street that doesn't get it".

I refer to your recent remark, carried on C-SPAN, delivered to the National Press Club. It was in response to the question, "Why do you always ask such cream-puff questions during follow-up, in your interviews?" I thought the question was right on target and, in fact, I'm one of those who has written to you in the past with exactly that complaint. (April 25, 1995 letter, copy enclosed.)

Brian, for many of us 22 million C-SPAN viewers, you and your interviews of notable people are the only opportunity we will ever get to ask them all those burning questions we live with all of our lives. ("Why *did* you allow the Vietnam war to escalate, Mr. McNamara, when you knew early on that the war was both wrong and unwinnable?") And when you don't ask them, they never get asked.

Here's why I want you to ask the tough questions *and insist on real answers*: When I was a kid and I lied to my parents, I was punished. When I was in high school (in 1948) and plagiarized someone else's work on a take-home essay, my English teacher, Mr. Hoagland, dressed me down in front of the whole class in a fashion I remember clearly to this day. I believe that I learned my lessons from those two early experiences.

But some people didn't have the "benefit" of my early experiences. They learned to lie and obfuscate and do the wrong thing so skillfully that they got away with it. And they're *still* getting away with it.

Just yesterday, again on C-SPAN (bless your heart), I watched 216 adult, intelligent Republicans cast their vote for Newt Gingrich for Speaker, when they knew, in their heart of hearts, that he had cheated on the financing of his college course and then lied about it. Only Jim Leach and a handful of others had the integrity to do the right thing (enclosure).

And so it goes, on and on. As long as they get away with it, they will continue to do it (whatever "it" is). My attitude is to "call people on it", when I see them doing the wrong thing ... when I'm not too chicken or too lazy to do it.

And that's what many of us want you to do during your interviews. Not to try to publicly humiliate them for possible prior cheating or lying, but to get them to give straight answers to straightforward questions. If not you, who?

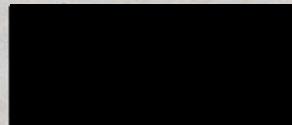
The only legitimate reason I can think of for you to *not* ask the tough questions is, if you develop a reputation for asking the tough questions and insisting on real answers, some people may refuse to come on your program.

I'll let you wrestle with that one.

In spite of my complaint, I *love* C-SPAN!

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

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dhm

Enclosures