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March 19, 1999

Mr. Brian Lamb
Chairman and CEO
C-SPAN
400 North Capitol Street, NW, #650
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

Regarding your upcoming Thomas Jefferson programs, recently I was reviewing a C-SPAN show of Willard Sterne Randall at Champlain College taped on Veterans Day, November 11, 1998 discussing his book, George Washington: A Life, which was aired in December. Randall quoted Washington words on the press:

"When one side only of a story is heard and often repeated, a clear and comprehensive view of the facts cannot become known."

Washington also described the press as *"malignant industry"* and *"perservering falsehoods"*, a position somewhat different than the faith in the press that Diane Rehm described you as possessing on this week's program with you on WAMU-FM.

On that C-SPAN aired program, the first question Professor Randall was asked after his talk on Washington was about the Thomas Jefferson DNA fraud story that was less than two weeks old at the time. He gave a compelling rejection of the rampant media bias reflected in the blind acceptance of the DNA study as "conclusive proof".

"Conclusive Proof" is a level of certainty that the DNA science CANNOT provide, especially when Dr. Foster used only 19 DNA markers and according to Dr. Henry Lee, DNA expert witness at the O. J. Simpson trial tells us that a paternity suit DNA test would involve 200 markers. Further, Dr. Foster used 20 keys to match against those 19 markers, giving 380 combinations, whereas a paternity suit DNA test would have 200 keys matched against 200 markers giving 40,000 combinations; thus Dr. Foster's study was 380 versus a legitimate (no pun intended) paternity suit DNA study was 40,000. Other numbers, I believe I have heard that the Clinton DNA test provided a 7.87 trillion to 1 assurance of matching, the O J Simpson test provided a 30 million to 1 assurance, whereas the Nature magazine article said that only 1.5% of the population would have a matching DNA Y chromosome pattern to that of the Jefferson family. That translates to 3 men in every 200.

Of course, Nature magazine has recanted their previous headline as false.

My concern is along with his quote above, and C-SPAN's repeated broadcast of programs with Annette Gordon-Reed as the purported expert on Thomas Jefferson and his life and family (or supposed families). Her book's index shows she is no expert. A simple

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test is to go to her index to see that she knows nothing or discusses nothing in her book about other likely fathers of Eston Hemings, namely younger brother Randolph Jefferson, five of his six sons, Thomas' nephews George Jefferson, Jr. and John Garland Jefferson, both who studied at Monticello, and a careful (expert) historian can un-earth revealing information concerning their lives and character.

Mrs. Reed and Mr. Julian Bond, moderator of a March 6 panel session at the University of Virginia refuse to allow discussion of these other likely prospects, as was the same posture of the moderator on the C-SPAN broadcast of the February 1st panel session at the Randolph-Macon Womens' College where Mrs. Reed also appeared. It seems to be a closed minded attitude. Remember what Washington said,

*"When one side only of a story is heard and often repeated,
a clear and comprehensive view of the facts cannot become known."*

Also remember that the original issue raised by James Callender was Thomas Jefferson's paternity of Sally's first child, allegedly in France, a child later believed to be Thomas Woodson. The Nature/Foster DNA study, while admittedly inconclusive, does tend to point away from President Jefferson for that slave child. Yet that positive news has been submerged in the media coverage of a Jefferson family linkage to the youngest.

Because the DNA study revealed a Jefferson family linkage for the youngest child, Thomas Eston Hemings (named for Thomas Eston Randolph, not Thomas Jefferson); a "bait and switch" has been done by zealous proponents of Jefferson's paternity of children with slave Sally Hemings. Except for the interview of Madison Hemings by an Ohio newspaperman Mr. Wetmore in 1873, almost fifty years after Jefferson's death, paternity of other children by President Jefferson with Sally Hemings was never or rarely alleged.

Given that Mrs. Reed and her colleagues have as the core of their "proof" the child Eston, as the "bait and switch" candidate, why is it not equally logical and fair for defenders of Jefferson and "Self Evident Truths" to "switch" focus from nephews Samuel and Peter Carr, to nephews George Jefferson, Jr., John Garland Jefferson, Isham Jefferson, and others, or brother Randolph; all of whom had greater access for most of the year than did President Jefferson who was away from Monticello serving our nation?

Beside the revealed deficiency of her scholarship as revealed by her own index, also notice that Mrs. Reed criticizes white historians for ignoring black oral history in their writings. Yet Mrs. Reed ignores two significant black oral histories about Thomas Jefferson. Why? Maybe because they would undermine her case against Jefferson!

Please Mr. Lamb, on your upcoming program on President Jefferson, please have someone else along with your interview of Annette Gordon-Reed. I am writing a book on the subject, or Professors Forrest McDonald, who you interviewed, or Professor Randall; any of us or possibly others could provide a proper balance to Mrs. Reed's strong bias.


P. S. This Sunday, I will be reviewing Mrs. Reed's book on "Bookman's Corner" on Arlington Cable TV.