

[REDACTED]
Eureka, CA 95501

25 April, 1984

C-SPAN

Suite 155

400 N. Capitol St. N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20001

Attached please find my entry in your
essay contest. Thanks for bringing
intelligent conversation into my livingroom.
Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

I watch C-SPAN because it is the television network of record for national affairs. As a citizen who cares about the many important issues facing our country I need extensive information in order to evaluate events and form intelligent opinions. C-SPAN fills this need. The comprehensive coverage of the floor debate of the House of Representatives, committees, seminars and public meetings in the nation's capital provide me with a range of facts and views I had not imagined to be possibly available before my first exposure to C-SPAN. The call-in shows serve to indicate the concerns of fellow citizens while frequently taxing public figures with pertinent and insightful questions. The regular review of how the news is treated in print allows me to better evaluate the news and the newspapers. This type of examination of the press is sorely needed and is unavailable other than to the viewers of C-SPAN.

The aspect of C-SPAN I find most compelling is the unedited full length coverage of events. I do not expect a lack of bias, but I prefer it to surface in an open forum from government officials, commentators and authorities rather than from editors and reporters who claim an objectivity that is both false and humanly impossible. C-SPAN lets me hear all sides of issues from people who are often the most knowledgeable and frequently those responsible for the actual decision making. C-SPAN also allows the demagogues, fools and knaves to expose themselves. But more importantly it shows that these individuals are few in number and never limited to any particular group. C-SPAN has let me see that issues that are important are never simple, that no faction has a monopoly on wisdom or patriotism and that good men and women may disagree.

Following a decade of pervasive low esteem for all branches of government, regular viewing of C-SPAN has increased my respect for both the institutions and people of government.

I believe that all of us have had the desire to watch the working of government first hand. C-SPAN has made this possible. I find that I watch C-SPAN more than any other single television channel. When the day comes that the Senate and Supreme Court permit television cameras in their public sessions I may watch little else. I feel that if Thomas Jefferson was alive today he would approve wholeheartedly of the purpose and performance of C-SPAN. Our government not only administers the republic for the people but does so under their watchful supervision. The system can only work effectively when the public stays informed. I for one would be less capable of keeping a vigilant eye on Washington if I didn't frequently watch C-SPAN.