

[REDACTED]  
Houston, Texas 77057  
April 15, 1984

C-Span  
Suite 155, 400 N. Capitol St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Gentlemen:

I LIKE C-SPAN BECAUSE...

Since the beginning of the year I have been watching the C-Span cable station with great regularity. Among the several programs offered, I find the congressional programs the most absorbing and interesting.

The station brings the pomp, protocol and the personalities and issues of the moment into focus much better than the print media, because one is seeing the policy being made - or at least debated, by the leaders of the country who effect such matters. It has an immediacy that I never experience on TV before.

So, as a public service, I think that C-Span brings the government much closer to the people than any TV commentary does. The short news clips of news conferences, plane arrivals, ceremonial or entertainment events don't have the content of the sustained questioning, the clash of opinions, the establishment of various positions and platforms that take place in the congressional hearing rooms.

On a related political event that the station covers with tremendous verve - the election campaign, the Democratic primary, C-Span also does an excellent job and a great public service. It truly brings the country together in the various forums in which the candidates are, to listen to their views and absorb their personalities first-hand. I think that it is one of the best uses of TV.

The nuance of the moment, the voice, presence and projection of the candidate which are so important to campaigning are like a "whistle-stop" campaign, with the C-Span. Of course, those type of train-rides are now out of style, but with TV, I think that we have what it must have been like in times past, when the candidates went to the towns and hamlets across America on the train.

Running the entire speech, the entire hearing, for hours, has a tremendous impact and is the major difference between C-Span and the regular, segmented news program, with only a few seconds being devoted to a large number of events.

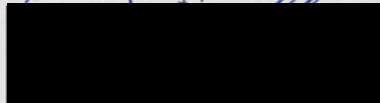
The other type of programing that is very interesting are the call-in programs and the newspaper, editorial visits. Your host on these is outstanding - or rather the several men and women who host these meetings. They are relaxed, patient and good natured - qualities which don't come out on the faster-paced news and entertainment features. Dan Rather, for example, has always impressed me as a person who is so uptight that he can hardly move, that he can barely contain his nervousness.

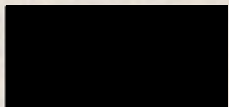
Since this is an essay to win a prize, it is expected to be complimentary, say good things and win the trip. But for the life of me, I cannot think of anything bad to say about the C-Span station. Not all of the programs or events are of equal interest to me. But more often than not, the topic, the speaker, the locale, is of interest and I will stay with the program - even when tempted by some of the heavy-calibre network features.

So, to sum it all up, " I like C-Span because it deals with pertinent topics that effect contemporary American life, it does not deal in frivolity, bad taste, vulgarity, it does its job with verve, honesty and dignity - letting the events and speakers come through. It makes us feel more American and brings more of America into our perception. I always feel that the country is in better shape than many people give us credit for, because so many of the people, your people and others on the programs, project hope and optimism."

It is a very different type of television that is doing an outstanding job of public service, for which I extend thanks.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area. To the right of the word "Sincerely," there is a handwritten signature in blue ink that is partially obscured by the redaction.



C --SPAN  
Suite 155,  
400 N. Caritol St. N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20001