

Public Television

Cooking the Books on Your Dime

by G. Murphy Donovan



“All issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia.” – Orwell

I am an equal opportunity political observer.

I watched or listened to both the Democrat and Republican national nominating conventions from gavel-to-gavel. Call me a masochist if you will, but truth today is a lot like tilling a vacant lot. You have to clear a lot of garbage and pull a lot of weeds before you can expect to see a turnip or a tomato.

If you followed the recent American political conventions, several things should be obvious. First, in spite of all the media posturing about the epic significance of 2020, mainstream convention coverage was AWOL. No matter. After-the-fact, commercial network “coverage” is all opinion and

spin anyway.

The only honest or true, gavel-to-gavel, coverage appeared at C-Span where all speakers spoke for themselves without interruption. C-Span, unlike PBS, has enough respect for voters to allow listeners and viewers to make their own judgements.

The other broadcast network which "claims" gavel-to-gavel coverage is Public Television. The contrast between PBS and C-Span is the perfect illustration of the difference between facts and political propaganda, real reporting and selective editing. Apparently, PBS doesn't believe consumers can watch or listen without a WETA interpreter. With 2020, American public radio and television, like BBC, has become a government subsidized outlet for left-wing, if not extremist agit-prop and disinformation.

PBS, however, is still a true non-profit. Surely there is little to profit viewers or voters looking for impartial coverage or fair commentary.

My quadrennial torture began with the Democrats in mid-August watching Judy Woodruff and the big fail at WETA and *Newshour*.

Hot mess is the only fair assessment of WETA's virtual performance with team DNC. Not only did Woodruff shred and butcher convention speakers, but she seemed to be channeling Sleepy Joe.

Judy didn't seem to know where she was, what was on her screen or who was at the convention dais. She was confused and flummoxed throughout, not knowing who had spoken or about to speak, cutting in and out of presentations incoherently.

Absent production values, the supporting cast for Woodruff's PBS fiasco was all opinion, a gaggle of the usual suspects; mainly three feminist lieutenants, and an editorial panel of effete Beltway *castrati* including Michael Beschloss.

Surely we can't judge a book by its cover, but Woodruff's contrived visual diversity, even after a face lift, is noteworthy. Her Me-Too girl power team now includes; a geriatric, a plus sized black, an anorexic millennial white snowflake right out of the *Wizard of OZ*, and a Rachel Maddow wannabe.

Television is still a visual medium. The look of hosts and reporters matters.

Woodruff, nearly 75, comes across as a confused vintage hippie harpy. To be sure, Judy's left or liberal credentials are impeccable, a lifetime at CNN then CPB.

Would that news anchors on the left had term limits.



Yamiche Alcindor covers five demographics; plus sized, inexperienced, angry, rude, and black. An MSNBC veteran, Yamiche couldn't be more of a stereotype for BLM or the angry anarchic left.

Surely Yamiche, however, fills the affirmative action box.



Lisa Desjardins, another acerbic CNN alumnus, looks and acts as she ought to be led by a host of flying monkeys, with a profile that comes into the view long before she does. If Judy needed a face lift, Lisa might consider a nose job. Desjardins comes across like a bird of prey. Unfair as it may be to notice, but TV is still a visual experience.



And finally, there's desk deputy Amy Walter whose liberal *bona fides* include ABC, MSNBC, and a much publicized 2013 same sex

marriage. Even with genital solidarity, team Woodruff has the kind of political and intellectual diversity you might expect to see at a distaff politburo meeting.

The male afterthoughts are worse, a cast of spinners that would make a yo-yo proud. Two regulars, Mark Shields and David Brooks are supposed to represent liberal and conservative viewpoints. Shields is yet another geriatric Democrat Party political hack who has become a liberal media fixture, having done time with CNN, the *Washington Post*, and now PBS.

David Brooks writes for the *New York Times*, doyen of 2020's fake news and never-Trump polemics.

Brooks' personal *vitae* is something short of a profile in courage. On the road to Anti-Trump Neocon, David dumped his party, religion of birth, and wife of 27 years for a research assistant young enough to be his daughter. Brooks is not in the Roman, Woody, Harvey, or Jeffery league, but he seems to have many of the same peculiar peccadillos.

If your wife and your Party can't trust you, why should we? Brooks and Shields at PBS represent different perspectives at PBS in the same sense that potato and spud are different tubers.

As I watched the PBS circus mangle, interrupt, and try to spin the Democrat convention, I looked for another way, without cable, to see how the Republicans would fare.

My wife offered a genius solution; **listen to C-Span and watch a muted WETA**. The results were astounding.

PBS blacked out or talked over some of the most interesting and engaging Republican speakers. In one session, Woodruff overrode two prominent Congress women and two distinguished veterans for 30 minutes of banal and biased commentary. Throughout, it was clear that WETA was going to limit, censor, or spin any Republican segments that might touch on

inconvenient truths like abortion, Republican women, Trump Democrats, veterans, or Biden family shenanigans in Ukraine and China.

The arrogance of PBS condescending and patronizing spin is a hallmark of “non-profits” feeding at the taxpayer trough. Alas, the price to be paid for overkill is blowback.

After one Republican session I listened to the usual C-Span telephone post-show which features Democrat, Republican, and Independent call-in phone lines. **The C-Span host took about 50 calls on all lines and only one caller was vaguely critical of the Republicans or President Trump.**

Trump support among C-Span callers that night was virtually unanimous.

Omens matter. With allies like PBS, Biden and Harris do not need enemies.

G. Murphy Donovan writes about the politics of national security.