



Peter Burgess LinkedIn Blogs

Candy Crowley had Woodward and Bernstein on her Show

June 22, 2014

This morning (Sunday June 22, 2014) Candy Crowley had Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein on her CNN show 'State of the Union'. The following are two clips from the conversation, but as I remember the conversation this is not the whole of the conversation. An important component of the conversation is missing.

Watergate legends on today's scandals ... Watergate reporters Woodward and Bernstein on how reporters should cover Benghazi and the IRS.

<http://www.cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/bestoftv/2014/06/22/exp-sotu-woodward-bernstein-on-benghazi-and-irs.cnn.html>

Two legendary reporters' take on Iraq ... On Iraq: Woodward and Bernstein say between Bush and Obama there is enough blame to go all around.

<http://www.cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/bestoftv/2014/06/22/exp-sotu-woodward-and-bernstein.cnn.html>

What is missing from these clips is the elements of the conversation where Woodward and Bernstein made it very clear that a big part of the problem was the performance of the media ... essentially in everything. What they said was a powerful indictment of the way the modern media does a lot of talking (commentary and image projection) without much real journalism and digging into the story. Candy used budget pressure as a justification for shallow reporting, but it was pointed out that in the mainstream media profits from entertainment could easily fund really good journalism, but getting news to be as profitable as entertainment was neither realistic nor necessary.

The fact that this part of the conversation went missing speaks volumes for CNN in particular and the media in general.

I have had a strong position on the failure of the media to report on many if not most of the important issues of our time for a very long time ... going back to the 1970s. I was in Lagos Nigeria soon after the Biafra war and was shocked at the expatriate jokes about how the war was covered by the journalists ... from around the swimming pool at the Federal Palace Hotel. While some of this was humor ... it was clear that there was a good part of reality in what was being described.

I am constantly disappointed by the lack of understanding of subjects where I have some expertise. This is partly caused by lack of budget for in-depth reporting, but it is more the choice

media companies make in their allocation of available money. Big and growing profits are more important than better journalism and a better informed public.

There may be a place for optimism. Big changes are taking place in almost everything, and one has to hope that there will be major changes for the better built on top of great technology and a huge new population that is better educated than at any time in the past. At some point, the media moguls and business planners are going to 'get it'!

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