



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on January 15, 2011

Homosexual Group Attacks CNN for Airing Anti-gay Guests

The group launched its petition drive after the CNN program *John King USA* included a segment on the repeal of the “don’t ask don’t tell” policy that prohibits homosexuals from serving in the military. The program featured an appearance by Alex Nicholson, whom GLAAD described as an “an openly gay, former Army intelligence officer [who] gave firsthand accounts of how the policy played out in the day-to-day lives of gay and lesbian service members.”



To offer a counterbalance to Nicholson’s comments, CNN also invited Peter Sprigg, a senior policy analyst at the [Family Research Council](#) (FRC), whom GLAAD argued “has worked to advance some of the most hurtful, dangerous, and demonstrably false notions about the lives of LGBT [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender] people that our country has seen in recent years.”

The homosexual lobby group complained that out of a “desire for ‘balance’ on these issues,” CNN too often turns to the “anti-gay industry” for opposing opinions. “Except all too frequently,” it continued, “the network doesn’t book these people because they provide any actual expertise or experience on issues that impact LGBT people; their only qualification is that they are anti-gay.”

Maintaining that Sprigg’s sole “claim to fame is arguing that being gay should be outlawed,” GLAAD charged that “CNN and the rest of the media are doing nothing but exposing their viewers to dangerous anti-gay rhetoric when they invite members of these anti-gay groups onto their programming.”

“Starting in 2011, this needs to stop,” GLAAD declared.

Advising that networks like CNN need “to do a little housecleaning” by dropping “several hundred pounds of unhealthy weight ... in the form of anti-gay activists,” GLAAD invited its supporters to sign its online petition asking the network to “make a resolution to keep anti-gay groups” off its programs.

“If you were running a story about education, would you seek out the opinion of someone who hates teachers?” the petition asks CNN. “If you were running a story about agriculture, would you invite a guest who believes farming is a sin? Of course not, yet the anti-gay point of view is one you seek out regularly.”

The petition charges that the only qualification of groups like the Family Research Council is “their animosity towards LGBT equality,” and that by counter-balancing the pro-homosexual viewpoint with those promoting traditional morality and family values, CNN is “lending them your credibility and elevating their messages. If you are seeking a second opinion on issues of LGBT rights, I ask you to stay away from members of the anti-gay industry, and instead consult actual experts.”



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Advising CNN's bookers and producers that whatever the topic, "you should always be able to find a professional who can offer something beyond animus," the GLAAD petition pleads with the network to "stop giving these anti-gay activists a platform for their false and dangerous messages...."

Reacting to the petition, the Family Research Council's Peter Sprigg told the Christian Broadcasting Network that GLAAD's campaign is "a shocking attack on freedom of speech and democracy — an attack upon our political system in which we have lively, vigorous, and respectful debate about public policy issues that are in dispute and that have not been settled yet."

For its part, CNN responded to the attack by saying that it "appreciates GLAAD's concern for objective and fair reporting," and that it would "continue to strive for the best bookings of experts who have opinions that reflect different points of view across the country."



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