

### **“Public Interest” Writing Assignment**

Former CBS president Frank Stanton once stated that “a program in which a large part of the audience is interested is by that very fact a program in the public interest.” Stanton might also argue that whether a show is in the public interest or not depends on whether it’s popular—that the most popular shows are those that best meet the public interest. Like Michael Powell, Stanton believes that the best judges of the public interest are media companies, not governments.

Think about how Stanton (and/or Michael Powell’s) concept of the public interest differs from that of social critics—i.e. the educators, parents, and activists who have advocated the public interest standard. If the first letter of your last name is A-G, write an essay disagreeing with Stanton’s (and/or Michael Powell’s) definition and arguing from the perspective of the social critics. Those of you whose last name begins with M-P should do the opposite: write an essay disagreeing with the social critics and arguing from the perspective of Stanton (and/or Powell). Use any outside examples or points that you can think of to bolster your case.

To do a good job on this essay, you should familiarize yourself with the point-of-views of both parties. (Being able to anticipate arguments of the other side is key in winning debates of all kinds.)

### **“Public Interest” Writing Assignment Due Friday, November 8th**

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