

[REDACTED]  
Bloomington, IN 47403  
January 23, 1994

Mr. Brian Lamb  
C-SPAN  
400 North Capitol Street NW  
Suite 650  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Sir:

I tuned into Booknotes a week ago to see your interview with Carolyn Barta, author of Perot and His People: Disrupting the Balance of Political Power. I was astonished to find the title of the book displayed on the screen as "Perot And His People: Disrupting The Balance Of Political Power"--every single word capitalized, regardless of its grammatical function. I have seen this sort of illiteracy on other channels, but I don't recall it on C-SPAN. Then, again, I don't watch much C-SPAN.

I then cringed as y'all flashed the preview of Gary Hymel's book, All Politics Is Local and Other Rules of the Game, and wrote it "All Politics is Local and Other Rules of the Game"--thereby making the precise opposite mistake! The word Is, of course, is a verb and therefore should be capitalized.

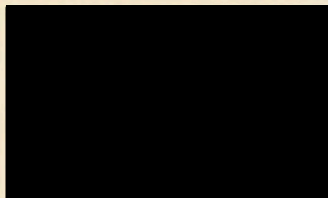
The first illiterate hadn't a clue, so he capitalized every word just to be on the safe side--after all, the guys selling song albums do it. The second guy wasn't smart enough to know that he wasn't smart: he didn't capitalize Is because he thought that the rule of capitalization had to do with a word's length, not its grammatical function.

In a city bursting with intelligent and educated persons, I see no reason why you folks cannot hire someone to run the character font who is actually qualified to do so--and who is sufficiently well schooled (and authorized) to overrule the ignorance of the producers, promotional writers, and others who generate the copy to be displayed on screen. C-SPAN is a role model for thinking people everywhere and should set an example. If that's not good enough reason, then do it for the sake of your own pride.

I was a television producer in the 1960s and '70s and know just how little thought is given to these things. Having written twelve books, I now own my own publishing company, [REDACTED] Publications, and I know how easy it is to find literate people who are desperate to take any job they can find. Word skills are so unprofitable these days. Give a kid with a love for the English language a break--and us too, while you're at it.

This is a serious plea for some kind--any kind--of literacy on TV. You seem to be a thoughtful and responsible fellow. You even read books. Surely you can respond positively to such a simple request.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

[REDACTED]  
Bloomington, IN 47403



Mr. Brian Lamb  
C-SPAN  
400 North Capitol Street NW  
Suite 650  
Washington, DC 20001

