



16th March 2004

Sirs,

As I am 88 years old you can imagine how much I regret the falling in standards since Lord Reith's days, although I accept that it is necessary, in some ways to move with the times.

My main complaint is of the way in which ill manners and bad language have been accepted as norm, and are gradually creeping into the earlier programmes - not only those often seen by children but those intended for them.

My equally strong objection is to the intensely irritating so-called 'background music', not only unsuitable in many cases, but so frequently with a thumping beat especially when someone is speaking. Although, fortunately, I am not (yet) hard of hearing, I know this makes it difficult for those who are and causes them to switch off the sound altogether. Surely it must affect people's health, and I'm surprised this matter has not been considered medically.

What I value most on the BBC are News, Arts, (good) music, Natural History, Travel programmes, and some of the word games, etc. Historical programmes are good, too, except that we get too much war - real and otherwise - and what I don't enjoy is the practice of digging up people's murky past for the fun of it!

I don't think the BBC should run commercial services - there is enough of that on other channels.

I used to enjoy the Radio Times, with interesting articles by people like Polly Toynbee, but now it is almost entirely given over to stories of celebrities and their sex lives etc. with pictures of them posing suggestively in semi-nude, etc.

I suppose that as I am excused from paying the Licence Fee, for me this would seem to be the best way of financing, but I'm not commercially competent to judge. The difficulty of how to run the BBC seems to be in choosing the right people. I would be very wary of letting the general public do this.

P.T.O.

Lest anyone should think that the opinions of my age group do not matter, I would like to point out that we are slowly becoming the majority in this country.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Miss M. A. Bentley".

(Miss M. A. BENTLEY)

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