

26th February, 2004.

Dear Sirs,

I refer to your leaflet "BBC Charter Review Public Consultation Your BBC Your say". I wish to respond as follows :

What do I value most ? The BBC's independence.

I adamantly do not wish to see any change which will give this or any Government control or the ability to interfere or meddle. I found this Government's reported attempts to meddle during the invasion of Iraq deeply disturbing. Nor do I think the Hutton report should have been quite so critical, and I do not wish to see any more Hutton-type fiascos.

Its independence is the BBC's strongest and most valuable asset.

Yes, keep the Licence fee - thats one way to keep the purse-strings free from Government control.

Also, viewers could possibly have some say in the way the BBC is run, and I really would not like it run on commercial lines such as, for example, Channel 4. The constant interruptions for advertising would demean the BBC's world-wide reputation and prestige for news reporting etc.

As a lay person I would find it difficult or impossible to make suggestion on the way the BBC is run etc., but independent Governors free from any Government interference seems to be best.

Other comments I wish to make are as follows :

I think the BBC should pay greater attention to public concerns, e.g. :

1. Unacceptable levels of violence, sex and bad language at any time, but especially early evening before 9.p.m.

2. I frequently see, but do not have time to watch, programmes of great interest during the day. Many of those programmes could/should be used for family, early-evening viewing instead of the soaps, especially East Enders which are not at all suitable for children. (Yes I know the daytime programmes can be videod but imagine the family friction of who wants to watch what! Reverse the order of unsuitable programmes so that unsuitable programmes are videod to be watched by adults only).

3. The unacceptable levels of background "noise/music". This is often irrelevant and/or inappropriate and is a distraction to the programme. As someone who is partially deaf I have written or phoned (or both) innumerable times to the BBC (and to ITV) to complain and have frequently

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received very curt and dismissive replies or letters are often not answered.

I have also had correspondence with the Charity "Defeating Deafness" who tells me that this is a HUGE and growing problem and that the BBC is most unco-operative.

Deafness is a form of disability and this year the Disability Discrimination Act comes into force when we hope that all forms of disability will be recognised and addressed. Hopefully, therefore, the BBC will HAVE to take this complaint seriously.

I am fully aware that there are sub-titles to some programmes, but these are a very poor substitute for the spoken word and the various nuances. The sub-titles are often poorly spelt and frequently "scrambled" when in fact the spoken word without unnecessary background noise would be adequate (e.g. what is the point of having some reporter making a "live" report from somewhere noisy, perhaps with a lot of traffic, or at a railway station etc.etc. when he/she has to shout to make their report and even those of normal hearing have to struggle to hear it? Isn't this taking "reality" and "atmosphere" far too far?

When there are spelling mistakes or "scrambling" I can understand this if the programme is genuinely "live", but not when sub-titles are added to recorded programmes. The poor spelling is more often an indication of the low educational standards used by the sub-titler than anything else.

It is this refusal by the BBC to co-operate with the genuine criticisms of viewers and listeners which gives the BBC its reputation of arrogance and determination not to improve some of the smaller things which matter to people.

4. I would appreciate a return to clear, plain English, not imported American slang - e.g. "under way" instead of using normal "begin", "in progress" or other appropriate English terminology. I find the expression "under way" most unpleasant and much over used. It sounds very ugly and I believe it is possibly grammatically incorrect.

In any case, why use 3 words "got/getting/under way" when one would be adequate/acceptable?

The BBC was once known world wide for the clarity of the spoken word in grammatical English. How I do abhor American slang being used in world-wide broadcasts by The BRITISH Broadcasting Corporation.

5. Another thing I find deeply irritating is whenever there are any "period" (not necessarily literary classics) dramas, even recent 20th century dramas, much care is taken with locations, dress, transport etc. etc., but the one thing which ruins the atmosphere/impression in seconds is

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that modern slang or expressions creep in - phrases which would not have been heard at the time of the drama. Please give as much care to the phraseology as to the rest of the detail.

I do realise, of course, that some of these faults are not exclusive to the BBC, but where the BBC leads often others follow! It would be very welcome if the BBC were to regain its reputation for excellence and be a beacon for others to follow instead of slavishly following modern trends! Be REALLY independent!

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jillian L. Chave".

Jillian L. Chave (Mrs)

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