

From: Gardiner Roy
Sent: 16 December 2003 18:52
To: BBC Charter Review
Subject: BBC Charter Review

Hello,

My name is Roy Gardiner, I am 59 years old, British and have been residing in the USA since 1997.

I have not read your document in full and my comments and opinions expressed here are therefore unfettered by any others' constructs and themes. My comments are limited to the broadcast programme content because I consider the funding of the services provided to be the responsibility of BBC management.

However,

on the issue of funding I do think it would be easy for the BBC to get locked into dogma and panaceas e.g. "advertisements generate revenue, revenue generates better programmes". My suggestion is that the ultimate goals of the BBC

should never be forgotten. The whole country knows what those goals have been during the past decades, to provide yardsticks of excellence unmatched in the World.

In brief summary, it seems to me that there HAS been a "dumbing down" in the BBC. I also feel that the BBC now appears to be driven too much by public attitudes and tastes: dramatic productions have become increasingly vulgar, violent

and trivial, reflecting modern life. There are not enough programmes to provoke thought, to inspire or to remind us as a nation of our traditions and our

great characteristics of fair play and humanity. As a case in point, I have recently viewed again, on video cassette, the "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy" series. Its quality in almost every respect far surpasses that of "Spooks", albeit

it if this is not strictly an "apples with apples" comparison. I feel that an instance like this illustrates my feelings about a certain deterioration in the depth, significance and overall worth of BBC programmes as a whole.

Fortunately, there have been notable exceptions to this but lamentably few: "Cambridge Spies" is, in my view, a case in point, an excellent series.

I would, therefore, argue that the first thing to be borne in mind by the BBC planners is that there may be many people like myself who consider that there HAS been an overall deterioration in perceived programme quality. The duty of the BBC Governors, programme planners and producers should be, in my view, to accept that things are not as they should be and to analyse why this is so.

One prime motivation may be to accept that, although society has very many problems and ugly characteristics, merely to reflect these is not the action that

has in the past allowed the BBC to excell.

I know that these brief comments do not provide a solution to what I consider to be a problem. However, I reassert that the first premise that the BBC planners should accept that there IS a problem, that the the BBC "must do better",

and in ways that better emulate the successes of past times. If this is accepted then I believe that the ways and means to achieve the goal, a better product, are readily available. People WILL be willing to pay for the excellence we

one knew!

Thank you,

Roy Gardiner.