

Dear Sir / Madam,

I have read in the Observer that the government is consulting the public about the B.B.C., so I am sending my opinions. I think the present arrangement, with a licence fee, works well, & should be continued unchanged. Turning the BBC into an expensive subscription service, for the rich would be disastrous for poor people, such as myself.

It is often said that: "News is central to the BBC's output." This seems to me utterly untrue. Nor should the BBC be distinctive, & complementary to the commercial channels. The purpose of the BBC is to provide good programmes without the adverts. (By "good programmes" I mean education, art, entertainment & music. The art to which TV is suited is stories - i.e. films & serieses, which should also form the main entertainment. The main purpose of radio should be providing music, with as little talk as possible. The educational aspect should be documentaries about science & history, plus book & film reviews)

Adverts make the commercial stations almost unwatchable. They prevent suspension of disbelief, they ruin the mood of a programme. They are offensively, tactless, & very dogmatic. The BBC's programme trailers are almost exactly like adverts, & should be reduced to simple information, not, as at present, persuasion & high pressure salesmanship.

A balance of good programmes is more important than news or current affairs. News is selected to entertain & attract an audience. It distorts our view of life. It causes excessive fear, by overemphasising murder. It is about a very narrow slice of time, & soon loses its importance. The long past & future are more important than ephemeral events. News is bound to be sensational. It should be minimised, rather than reformed. It is like the very thin layer of oil pollution that covers the oceans nowadays, whereas the long past is analogous to the depths of ocean.

The BBC does not provide enough films, perhaps, and 90% of the films are recent, drawn from the last ten years, not from the whole history of cinema, which means there are many mediocre and few great films available. The BBC does not repeat its great classic documentaries, such as "Blue Planet," for analogue viewers. All the best is on digital channels; it does not provide enough old or American comedy and thriller serieses.

Yours Sincerely,

C. Gillett