

March 2004
Response to request from BBC

The following comments relate mostly to Radio 4.

Although I live within the M25 belt, this was not always the case and I miss hearing of other regions in Britain. Occasionally, I manage to tune in to Scotland etc. but the reception is not good and I feel deprived by being limited to a Southern London-centric view of Britain. I also feel deprived of news and views of Europe. The BBC seems to be in thrall to the U.S. and biassed against Europe and countries east.

Russia, India, Japan, etc. How do their people live, work, play etc. 2 minutes of what the papers say at 6-45 a.m. is not enough.

The world service has

deteriorated to such an extent that it seems to be endless repetitions of news, sport which has already been stated ad nauseam on R. 4. What happened to the O.U. courses which were so interesting to the insomniacs?

Some years ago I joined the "voice of the listener and viewer" although I am not a viewer. I was disappointed in the lack of rigorous appraisal shown by the group and by the very low membership numbers. But how else can one make one's views known? However, I found the attitudes to be conciliatory and mutually self-congratulatory.

Feedback was another hope but it seemed one of those outlets designed to let the public let off steam but with no intention of changing anything.

And why on Radio 4 did we have to listen to complaints about T.V? Don't they have their own outlets for complaints?

Perhaps now there is a glimmer of hope that listeners will be heard.

Listening to the radio is not the poor man's alternative to looking at T.V.

Some of your presenters don't seem to make a distinction.

I don't want this over-dramatic exaggeration, this talking over others, this "music" which drowns out what is being said, this macho yelling and interruption, this impatience for one person to stop talking so that the all-important "I" can state "my" views.

The chief culprits of this self-regarding egotism are the men.

The interviewee often seems to be a peg on which the interviewer can hang his views, his prejudices which in his opinion are so much more important.

The stronghold which these old gentlemen seem to have over the BBC. ~~it~~ belongs to the time when newsreaders on the RADIO were expected to turn up in evening dress. When are you going to move into the 21st?

Nicholas Parsons, Gerry Northam, Ned Sherrin, Michael Buerk, Roger Bolton, Eric Robinson, Laurie Taylor, Richard Mudge, John Peel, Robin Lustig, Mick Clark, Andrew Rawnsley. The list goes on and on.

Yet there are at least as many women in the country as men. Why don't/won't you cater for all your listeners?

I have omitted the chief culprits

of the patriarchal smugness namely John Humphries and Jonathan Dimbleby.

When Sue McGregor interviewed on the Today programme she was able to discover / uncover as much if not more by her subtlety and quiet manner than all the bluster and hectoring manner of a John Humphries.

As for Jonathan Dimbleby he obviously finds equality a difficult concept. I think I can count on my fingers the times he has had 2 women on to match 2 men on any questions.

There is no doubt this programme should certainly be renamed "The Jonathan Dimbleby Show".

Please try to establish an Equal Opportunities Charter as part of your much-needed reform.

Finally, Please, please, leave Radio 3 alone but get some of your more obnoxious "front" "men" to listen to the likes of Fiona T., Sean R et. al.

I look forward to hearing more of progressive reforms.

M Halsall