

Ms Tessa Jowell MP,
Culture Secretary,
House of Commons,
London.

12th December 2003.

Dear Ms Jowell,

I understand from the TV that you seek viewer's responses to the BBC's future.

For many years I thought the BBC could do little wrong, but am now convinced that it has, in its determination to secure a very young viewing audience, cast aside almost all pretensions to "quality programmes."

In short, Ms Jowell, older viewers, and we are not all geriatrics or even ancient relics, feel increasingly disenfranchised by the BBC's programme makers. It is time the corporation was part privatised ; and by this I mean that "quality" programmes such as natural history, historical programmes, costume dramas and documentaries, at which the BBC is still an exemplar –but for how long ? - should be free to air.

The vast majority should be "pay per view". Amongst these are BBC programmes made by young – sometimes seemingly very young - graduates of skools (the spelling is deliberate) of rave and disco for the young who relish programmes chock full of highly intrusive electronically generated clanging and banging, ticking and tocking, along eye-boggling visual effects.

For those of us, and we are not all miserable old codgers, who like to actually watch, listen, and understand the programme's contents, such effects are unacceptable. Sadly, even the "quality" programmes are now infested by the mindless, highly intrusive clanging and banging, ticking and tocking.

How do the flea-brained producers think sentient viewers can understand the raison d'être of the programme with all these ghastly noises almost drowning the presenter, and constantly moving images making the viewer feel ill ?

Then there is the endless advertising of future programmes, almost always in a vulgar, yobbish manner. Flea-brains seeking more flea brains, perchance ?

With its satellite channels, the BBC offers viewers a great many "choices" via the magic red button. Why cannot this technology be extended to allow viewer's to switch off these dreadful noises ? And, hopefully, even the constantly moving images. In short, Ms Jewell please stop the BBC disenfranchising sentient viewers even more !

What is the point in child education when young BBC presenters haven't the faintest idea of basic English ? They can certainly gabble, but speak English ? Is it any wonder that the conversation of many young teenagers hardly goes beyond : "*Hiya, gabble gabble, Anglo-Saxon, gabble gabble, know what I mean, gabble, Seeya.*"

In one respect Mr Blair's edict of "education, education, education" is working well. Never in my 69 years have I heard *young children* so fluent in Anglo-Saxon, and so eager in public to shout it around.

BBC 3 and BBC 4, from what I have seen, are dedicated to younger viewers and to repeats of East enders, etc. Prime channels for pay per view, or subscription.

For what it is worth I find the Independent channels equally guilty ; but as I don't have to pay to watch these I cannot complain.

Radio 3 has been prostituted in an attempt to make it a channel for all tastes. Yet, so far as I understand matters, the new DAB channels are for younger listeners. Why no channel to compete with Classic FM ?

Yours Sincerely,

Harry T. Kitchen.