

MR. G. LANHAM,

B.B.C. CHARTER REVIEW,

DCMS,

COXSPUR ST.,

LONDON, SW1Y 5DH.

MARCH 4 ~ '04.

Dear Sir, or dear Madam,

Would you please appraise the following points for consideration within the BBC Charter Review.

- (i) My first concern is with the issue of postponed programmes. Invariably, — unless one is in the habit of regularly checking via Ceefax, — the first that a viewer learns of a postponed programme is immediately prior to its hitherto scheduled slot. However, what I find more annoying is that a reason is rarely if ever given, or indeed any apology. I interpret this as a lack of respect for viewers who, of course, contribute to the financing of programmes.
- (ii) The time-clashing of popular programmes with those on other channels has been a long-standing problem for viewers, — the latter once again being overlooked for the sake of 'ratings'. Why such fierce competition; does the BBC not realise that if a programme is well-produced and of a popular format, be it drama or factual reporting, it will on its own merit be watched at any time? Pitting such a programme against other 'good' programmes surely runs the risk of less viewers watching the former? This annoying practise is not in the true spirit of providing freedom of choice, especially when, for example, five channels are competing for say, the 9 pm slot.
- (iii) I find that the after-programme credits are rolled off too rapidly to be able to read, and or, are too small to be discerned. In addition, the new format of split-screen condensing of the latter in order to include next programme(s) caption, makes the credits impossible to read. I feel this is unfair on both the viewers and those listed in the credits.

Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,  
G. Lanham.

(PTO)

(iv) A postscript in the shape of a question asking about the 'art' of weather forecasting. While I accept that meteorology is not an exact science, I can think of no other profession where those on contract can continually make mistakes without having their employment terminated. Moreover, - and picking up on a point raised in (i), it seems quite acceptable to forego any explanation/apology when forecasters frequently get it wrong!