

30/3/04

Dear Sir,

You want to know what I think of the BBC, so here goes. Concentrate on your CONTENT, not on the technology. There is no point in using hi-tech, if what you broadcast is not worth watching.

The content and quality of your programmes has consistently fallen over the past 10 - 20 years.

### Sport

Cricket : You no longer broadcast any cricket. No Test Cricket !

No Sunday League Cricket.

No one day cup cricket.

20 years ago you had all of these.

Football : No match of the day.

No live league games.

Again we were better off 20 years ago. OK, so you don't have the rights to premiership games, why don't you broadcast matches from Divisions 1 to 3 ? Even Channel 5 broadcast more live matches than you do.

Athletics : You ignore most of the European Grand Prix. When did you last show the Bislett Games live ?

Golf : You don't even broadcast the Ryder Cup.

So, to sum up, the quality and breadth of your sports coverage is much worse than it was 20 years ago.

## Drama

Play for Today. Out of the Unknown. Black and Blue. 1984. Cathy Come Home. The Year of the Sex Olympics. Threads. The War Game.

Once the BBC broadcast challenging, provocative drama. Sometimes the result was abysmal, and sometimes it was brilliant.

But it wasn't predictable, formulaic drivel.

Tea-time on Sundays. Every autumn you would broadcast a serialisation of a Dickens novel, or another classic.

Not now.

What we have now is soaps, and an omnibus (ie a repeat) of Eastenders every Sunday. You must be very proud.

## Documentaries

Well, Horizon has survived. Panorama has survived, but has been moved to Sundays, and is after 10.00 pm.

But we don't have an equivalent to Man Alive do we?

And you don't make anything like Jacob Bronowski's The Ascent of Man, or Kenneth Clarke's Civilisation, do you?

I think you have lost the courage to make programmes like that.

## Comedy

Only Fools and Horses is not funny when it is repeated for the 10th time. You repeat Dad's Army, The Good Life, and even Open All Hours.

The funniest radio programme is I'm sorry I haven't a clue. The panellists are all over 60.

Where is the new talent? Find it. Nurture it. Whatever you do, don't make a new series of My Family.

To sum up, the BBC has got worse in every area of programming. By broadcasting on more channels, you are spreading yourselves so thin, you end up with low quality programmes on every channel.

We don't need more programmes on cooking, gardening, or decorating. We don't need Fame Academy to groom people into pop star clones, who perform bad cover versions of old songs. Why is my licence fee paying for this?

The BBC is not synonymous with excellence, it is a byword for mediocrity.

Yours faithfully,  
A. J. Spence