

Sunday, 22/1/05.

Dear Sirs,

As a member of "Medicwatch-UK", I have promised to write to you regarding the television programmes broadcast by yourselves.

First of all, I have to confess that, owing to various commitments (including full-time employment) I do not watch a great deal of television, and the little I do watch is carefully selected to fit in with my time-table. From the point of view of "Medicwatch-UK" I am, on the whole, happy with these. I always enjoy "Songs of Praise", and I have been enjoying the present series of programmes entitled "Machostory" on BBC2. I have also been impressed with both the 'News coverage and (very recently) the Election coverage (the latter has always been good, in my opinion, and I have always looked forward to it in the past, as well as more recently). Occasionally, when I have switched on the television at random - usually late in the

viewing - I have been surprised by a British film with a good story, or by the broadcast of a really good football match (I do enjoy "Match of the Day" by the way!).

While I enjoy my viewing in general, however, I have to say that there are moments which I enjoy rather less! In some cases these involve the behaviour of some of the characters in the "soaps" I sometimes watch during my leisure viewing. I find a few of these a bit "rough and ready" (especially in "Eastenders"!) and the same goes for one or two of the characters in "Neighbours" (Joanie has never been a favourite of mine, and I'm not enjoying Boyd very much at present, either!). It must be difficult to write a soap opera, as it takes all sorts to make a world, and I suppose the stars would appear unreal if all the people involved were paragons of virtue! On the other hand, it are hopes that your younger viewers don't adopt Joanie, Boyd, and the like as role models! Again, in "Doctors" (which I really enjoy!) there are a few unseemly moments, at times, but the behaviour is, on the whole, more civilized, and one or two of the characters have become real favourites of mine (especially the chatty and generally amusing Sarah, and the gentle and sympathetic disposition of Greg). I would likewise pick out Susan Kennedy, Abby, and Steph as good role models in "Neighbours".

th programmes & each positive values through their story-lines and are, I feel, to be commended, generally speaking.

However, there is an area of viewing which I find quite disturbing, and this is the area in which we were warned that "the following film contains foul language".

If I am thus warned, I simply don't watch the film; but there are, I am sure, many who do, and I honestly wonder what kind of impact such things have on them - especially if they happen to be younger people "staying up late to watch a movie". I am also disturbed by some of the "trailer" shown between programmes; & while I am waiting for a programme I do wish to see begin. I really wonder what anyone can gain morally by watching successive scenarios of sex and violence? Indeed, there is almost an obsession with male/female relationships - almost as though there is nothing else in the world to do, or to enjoy! - and I have to admit that there are times when I would almost rather watch two gay people enjoying a really good relationship than the "same old thing" of "the boy meets girl" - then they fall out - then

the "triangle" - and so on! One of the most satisfying scenes I ever watched was an "Doctors", when (quite a while ago) Greg, & his close friend (Tom?) were enjoying each other's company over a meal, against a backdrop of the real stereotypicals going on elsewhere (the latter, of course, made the "Greg and Tom" scenario appear even more desirable!). While I am not myself gay, I would be perfectly happy to view more scenarios in which there are good gay relationships - just as I am happy to view the best of the heterosexual ones!

This is a letter I have meaning to write for some time. Having written it, I would like to conclude by saying that, in the television programmes I do watch, I feel that the BBC gives us real value for money, and I very much appreciate this fact; and I am sorry to have felt it necessary to make the reservations I have in fact made.

Thank you,
anyway, for allowing me to "have my say"!

Yours faithfully,
D. A. F. Crocker.

(MR) D. A. F. Crocker.

PS: I would appreciate it very much if you would send me a copy of the "Green Paper". Thank you.