

BBC drama has become pure liberal-elite poison

The rot set in with *The Village* but has reached its nadir with the new *Doctor Who*. We must take a radical solution – axe the licence fee

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Recently, I had an interesting conversation with a Labour Party stalwart. He told me that “our people”, as he put it, were increasingly hostile to the BBC licence fee: not just because it took a chunk out of these voters’ disposable income, but because they rarely consumed the BBC’s services at all.

[The Corporation’s charter](#) is due to be renewed in December 2027. Whether the Government will renew it on the same terms is unclear, which should trouble BBC executives profoundly. Dr Samir Shah, the present chairman of the BBC board, called last November for the renewal process to be ended, arguing for a permanent establishment in the manner of the Bank of England and the British Council. In that case, the BBC should be funded out of taxation and subject to intense parliamentary scrutiny. Such scrutiny would almost certainly result in a contraction of its functions, as ways were sought to cut costs: I suspect Dr Shah and BBC executives would not approve.

It has been apparent for years that the quality of the BBC’s original content is sinking fast. A comparison between television dramas produced in the first quarter of this century in America and those produced here makes the point: we haven’t managed a *Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *Mad Men*, *Breaking Bad*, *Billions* or *Succession*. Several of those gave [a showcase to British acting talent](#), and their stories were both gripping and intelligently told.

Much of what one has seen on the BBC, by contrast, seeks to “educate” viewers about race, multiculturalism, gender, sexual orientation and [much else on the woke agenda](#). No wonder fewer and fewer people watch the Corporation’s output. These are not the obsessions of the British public, but of a tiny minority who dominate senior roles at the BBC, talk mainly to each other and seek to impose their contemporary liberal-elite doctrines on others.



This is a primary reason for the BBC’s failure with its original content: millions of us simply don’t share such thinking, and don’t want our televisions to pump it out. Indeed, such a patronising view of the preferences of the culture of the masses has helped to drive many Britons away from Labour and the Conservatives, and into the arms of the Reform Party.

Historical drama is a particular casualty. I first registered this in 2017 in the BBC’s dramatisation of *Howards End*, in which two prominent characters, including Mrs Bast, were played by women of colour. Both were fine actresses, but this representation nonetheless distorted the social reality detailed in the book. (What is termed “colour-blind casting”, of course, does not cut both ways. By precisely the opposite logic, no one at the BBC today would cast a white actor as Othello.)

Worse yet, the BBC uses historical drama to right the wrongs of the past. I first saw that in *The Hour*, a 2011 BBC drama set in the BBC of the 1950s, during which the characters said all sorts of earnest things about the social iniquities of the time, in order to teach 21st-century viewers a lesson.



Historical accuracy was not a consideration; it rarely is. In 2013, the BBC launched a series called *The Village*, which was supposed to chart the life of a Midlands community from just before the Great War through the 20th century. I sensed it would not last long when men going off to war in 1914 were serenaded with *Jerusalem*, two years before it was, in fact, written. Happily, the series petered out in the 1920s, viewers presumably having tired of watching a factually incorrect, relentlessly socialist tract.

And while I haven't watched *Doctor Who* since about 1970, I read recently that the ratings went off the proverbial cliff because of its woke storylines and obsession with diversity, with London apparently being rescued from disaster because the saviour was trans, and the Doctor himself realising that he had a tendresse for Sir Isaac Newton. Apparently, some people still let their children watch this manipulative garbage, and those of us still insane enough to buy a licence pay for it.

BBC television has ceased to be relevant to its customers. If the licence fee is abolished in 2027, it will not be a second too soon.