

The Future of The BBC

DiPs at *The Blue Mugge*, Monday 28 Sept at 19-45hrs

1. Our discussion on key points this evening will be summarised and sent as response to The BBC Trust's consultation process on the [government's green paper](#). This will be jointly presented with a summary on similar themes from *The Lazy Trout* DiPs, Monday 21st September.
Comment on this process...
Lord Reith summarised in the 1920s the BBC's purpose in these words: **inform, educate, entertain**. This remains central to the organisation's mission to this day.
2. Examples of the best BBC programmes - a quick list from our circle, and take *Dad's Army* asking why it's been such an enduring success. Also, a list of programme failures, things the BBC has got wrong. Discussion on any patterns or trends.
3. There has been debate for decades on the nature of the BBC's organisation and its role. Raymond Williams in his book *Communications* (1962) summarised and analysed systems of communication under four headings: **authoritarian, paternal, commercial** and **democratic**. Where do we place the BBC? Consider its contribution to culture and democracy.
4. A linked question: is the BBC biased in its news coverage?
<https://theconversation.com/hard-evidence-how-biased-is-the-bbc-17028>
Consider - [the 59% of Britons](#) who say the BBC is the source they are most likely to turn to for accurate news coverage and the 34% of Americans who told Pew last year they turn first to the BBC for their news...
5. Are the BBC's competitors winning their war against it?
<https://theconversation.com/bad-news-week-for-bbc-as-murdoch-press-sharpens-claws-44621>
6. American TV evidently is not good and it could be because it does not have a public broadcaster like the BBC to raise standards?
<https://theconversation.com/future-of-the-bbc-why-the-market-failure-model-is-a-flop-in-broadcasting-45022>
7. So, what kind of BBC do we want?
In one corner, we have the traditional view of public broadcasting, offered by the BBC and supporters, based on the principle of universality. This says the BBC should be for everyone, providing quality programmes for all audiences, including comedy and entertainment as well as drama, news and arts programming. Those supporting the BBC also underline its importance in radio: notably, the BBC World Service which is the world's largest international broadcaster.
In the other corner is a view, supported in the past by the Culture Secretary John Whittingdale, which rejects the notion of universality. It says in the digital age of plenty the BBC should no longer try to offer something to everyone. Instead, it should focus on market failure – offering only those programmes and services which the market will not provide.
<https://theconversation.com/now-is-the-time-to-decide-what-kind-of-bbc-do-you-want-44735>
8. Review and draft response, with minority views as appropriate, for submission to BBC Trust consultation process. No individual names mentioned, of course, (apart from signatories) as this is a *Mugge/Trout* DiPs brief statement, helping the democratic process we hope.

BF and DT