

Written evidence submitted by Jack Thorne

Public Service Broadcasting is integral to how stories are told in this country. People always say look to the example of the US – they make great television – and they do – but it's a vast country where subscription channels like HBO have managed to build a niche for themselves as purveyors of quality content. In this country we wouldn't be able to replicate that. Instead, what would replace the incredible quality of our television work, is the bland and the expected.

I'm a writer who has benefited enormously from PSB broadcasters so I clearly have a vested interest. In fact, until recently I hadn't worked anywhere other than the BBC and Channel 4. My experience of them is fraught with frustration, as indeed all writers will tell you about all commissioning structures, there's shows of mine I wish they'd made, and notes on shows they did make that I wish they hadn't given.

But I've found them to be the most glorious place to work and make work. Places where incredible talents like Shane Meadows are given space to be themselves within. Places where disability is treated seriously, not as seriously as I'd like, we're going through a process right now, but at least it's engaged with. I cannot tell you the horror stories I've encountered in the American model where such ideas are discounted. Channel 4 and the BBC are not just about the quality, they are also about engagement with the world, they are about local stories told well, they are about true diversity, and I've loved working for them both.

However, it's as a viewer that I've really felt the benefit. People always talk about the golden age of television that we're living in like it's some kind of bubble that was gifted us by streaming. The truth is that we've been living in a golden age for a long time now because of the PSB tv. When America was making substandard stuff, we were making gold, when America was making gold, we made it too. If we leave it to streaming we will lose that quality and it will cost us so much.

It is a privilege to live in this country because of the way we tell stories, this country takes in huge tax revenues from the creative sector because we are venerated for the way we tell stories. I grew up immersed in television, I pay a lot of tax because of television, I love television, it made me who I am.

The BBC and Channel 4 are dependent on support because they hold things to an incredibly high standard. Please do not risk that.