

Watching TV: a brief history of
space, time and domestic
energy demand

Pre- TV, in the UK, upstairs is another world

One coal fire: unheated bedrooms, no TV



Eiderdowns and blankets, Pyjamas, no duvets, hot water bottles; plates heated in the oven to warm the bed, bed socks, electric blanket: **other technologies of keeping warm**

*Well we used to have blankets. I mean we could have four or five blankets and you had this weight on you, you know they were wool blankets, and sheets, so when the **duvets** came in it was really funny at first because you didn't think that you had anything on you. You know after having all this weight in bed, and then you didn't need all these electric blanket on because they were really nice and warm the duvets.*



Television and space heating: TV in front room

She had a fire like that, a plug in thing. Yeah she'd say 'I'm not putting the [coal] fire on for you to just watch telly for an hour'.

Well I mean everything happened in the kitchen in those days. You virtually lived in the kitchen. Rarely did you put a fire on in the living room, but there was an open fire in the living room as well. You really didn't live in the living room because there were no tellies ...

1953, that's when got our first telly, so that's when we started using the living room, you only used it for parties and Christmas if that.

Conjunctions of space, heat and TV

Previously separate rooms **knocked through** with the arrival of central heating

When we got central heating then they went knocking it through (Living rom) and I think they did some work in the kitchen as well, making that bigger.



<http://media.ofcom.org.uk/files/2013/07/1950s-Family-blank-lo-res.jpg>

Where is the TV?



Living room



Bedrooms



bathroom



Kitchen

What is a TV?

A TV
DVD player
Video player
'Smart'



Full central heating plus superfast broadband

What is watching TV?

From collective to personalised 'viewing'

Regrouping: same space, different 'channels'



A bedroom without wifi is cold

When is the TV on?



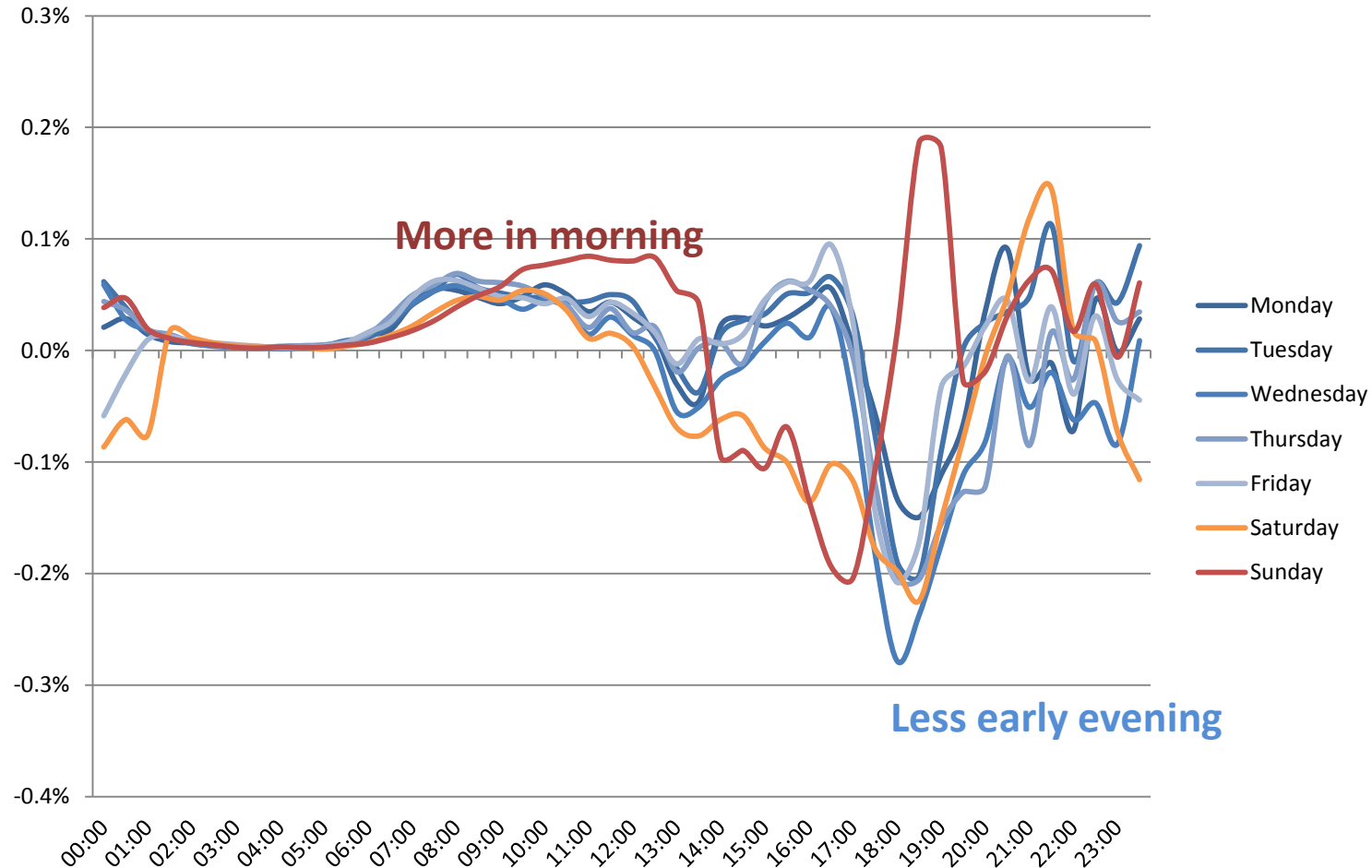
The test card was developed by a BBC engineer, George Hersee (1924–2001), father of the girl in the central image. It was frequently broadcast during downtime on BBC1 until that channel went fully 24 hours in November 1997

The TV was definitely not 'always' on.

There were fixed and limited hours of broadcasting.

The **Toddlers' Truce** was a piece of early British television scheduling policy that required transmissions to terminate for an hour each weekday between 6pm and 7pm. This was from the end of Children's TV to the start of the evening schedule, so that young children could be put to bed.

Shifting timings: away from early evening



Percentage point change in 'TV, media & games' reported in each half hour of each day (MTUS 1974-2005, weighted)
[Ben Anderson, 2015]

How space, time, power demand and 'TV' change together

TV
Electricity
One warm room

More TVs
More heated spaces
Electricity
Kitchen,
Bedroom
Bathroom?

Internet access
Heated spaces
Broadband
Electricity
Internet enabled
'smart' devices
Not only the TV

Fixed and limited schedules

Always on, watch on demand