

As we enter the new ~~millenium~~millennium, it's difficult to avoid thinking about how the world is changing. In the 1980's, few people had even seen a computer, let alone owned one. Now they are on most children's' eChristmas wish lists. In the 1990's, ~~satelites~~satellite television was a new and wondrous thing – no less than sixteen channels through one ~~ariel~~aerial! Compare that figure with the hundreds available today. Digital broadcasting has changed our lives to such an extent that the question is no longer, 'TV or not TV?' (to misquote Shakespeare), but, 'Ccould we manage without it?' Can you imagine life a hundred years ago, when there was neither television nor radio? For us, it doesn't ~~bare~~-bear thinking about, but perhaps our great-grandparents were equally as content to sit around a piano as we are to stare at a screen. There would have been no disagreement about what channel to watch, at least.

Which would you choose as the best of the two period's in which to live? In 1900 there was certainly less leisure time, ~~aeccomodation~~accommodations ~~was~~ were terribly cramped, and there were two world wars to come; (not to mention the Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918, which was ~~responsabler~~responsible for the deaths of more British people than the ~~Second-First~~ World War ~~preceeding~~preceding it); a holiday was a luxury and there ~~was~~-were no modern conveniences. I am not, of course, inferring that all is now perfect. Today we have global warming, gridlocked traffic, GM foods, BSE, ME, AIDS, and many other unwelcome contractions, abbreviations, and anagrams – all problems ~~all~~-partly or wholly ~~attribution~~attributable to technological advances. On balance, though, I think I would prefer to take my chances in today's silicone-enhanced world of bits and bites than in the troubled times of our forebears.