

Part 2

Consumer Responses to Drought

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Liquid Politics: the historic formation of the water consumer

Cultures of Consumption Research Programme

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	CONSUMER RESPONSES	PERCEPTIONS OF DEMAND?
1895	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • widespread complaints • organised water consumer resistance • legal challenges to water company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • civilising standards • role of baths, WCs • waste not demand the problem
1921	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voluntary reductions and restrictions • waste: unintended consequences • 'preventable waste' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expansion of legitimate use: baths, car-washing and golf-courses • wasteful consumer
1934	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local authority and MP representation • voluntary reductions and restrictions • behaviour change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 standards of consumption: rural / urban • discovery of never-ending dynamic of water consumption
1959	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voluntary reductions and restrictions • industrial consumers cooperate but pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doubts about infinite demand, esp. industry, also private use • <i>hot</i> water • meters • is civilisation inherently wasteful?

'Towards the end of June it was thought advisable to reduce the supply to consumers, and accordingly the water ... was shut off for several hours at night, ... with the result that the consumption was diminished by about 10 million gallons a day. ... Those 10 million gallons tell an eloquent tale of kitchen taps and garden hoses left running all night.'

Special Correspondent, *The Times*, 6 August 1895.

'I have seen nothing more pathetic, though at the same time somewhat humorous, than the notices on the trams to use less water, when we have been taught for years to use more water as a rule of good health.'

J.J. Lawson (Labour MP: Durham), July 1934.