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According to boffins at Warwick University, people in Britain were at their happiest in the 1920s.

And the most miserable year of the past 200 years was... 1978. Really?

Now the methodology does seem questionable.

The researchers looked at each year on Google, and counted the number of positive or negative words associated with each one.

But the English language has hardly stood still over that time: in the 19th century, everybody talked in long-winded, dramatic prose – well, Timothy Dalton did in all those costume dramas – which made putting the bins out seem momentous.

And when today's teenagers describe somebody as 'sick', it means they are pretty cool and funky.

Whereas in the 1850s it meant they had typhoid or scurvy.

I suspect people's memories about which were the best and worst times depend a lot on their age, and what exactly they were up to at the time.

The supposedly dreadful 1978, which marked the beginning of the Winter of Discontent, seemed pretty good if you were a Nottingham Forest fan.

And for a kid enjoying days off school and making their own bread at home, it was pretty good fun too.

Power cuts and camera-crew strikes permitting, the television was better, too.

Also, while I'm sure the 1920s sound great if you're of the Extinction Rebellion persuasion – with milk delivered by horse and cart and holidays restricted to a month's hop-picking in Leominster – it also marked the beginning of the Great Depression.

Which I'm sure was worse than 1978.

For me, 1989 was as good as it got. We had pretty much all the modern

technology we enjoy today, such as cars, phones, TV and video recorders, but you could actually buy them from proper shops in the town centre, which probably helped society seem more ordered and cohesive.

We also made stuff as well: manufacturing accounted for a third of jobs in the Black Country as recently as 1996.

More importantly, it was a sizzling summer with no stroppy teenagers lecturing us about climate change.

And I had a great holiday with my mates in Amsterdam.

Meanwhile, Lewis Hamilton is so concerned about climate change he is urging us all to go vegan.

Now, having spent four days in January following a vegan diet for a feature, I do respect anybody whose dedication to their cause extends to such a restrictive lifestyle.

But if Lewis really wants to save the planet, I think there are one or two other things he should give up first. Like swanning around the world on a private jet, spraying champagne about, or driving around racetracks at 225mph, maybe?

Remember the hoo-ha about the taxpayer being short-changed when the Government sold Royal Mail shares for 330p a shot? You may even recall Vince Cable, business secretary at the time, being grilled in the Commons for letting the shares go too cheaply.

Well, Royal Mail shares saw a bit of a rally this week – to 219p. And guess who's still got his.