

We haven't
been great at
forecasting,
historically

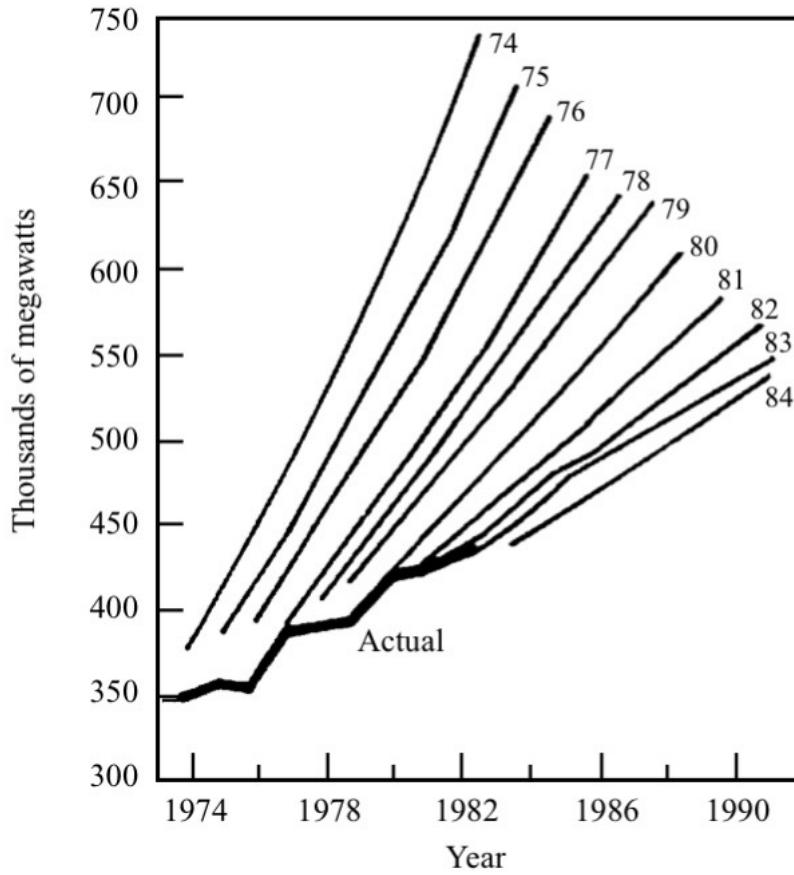


Figure 1. Projections of U.S. electric load growth: Annual 10-year forecasts of summer peak demand. (Source: OTA, 1985, Figure 3-3)

1995 Annual Energy Outlook

Coal Remains the Dominant Fuel for Electricity Generation

Figure 40. Electricity generation by fuel, 1993 and 2010 (billion kilowatthours)

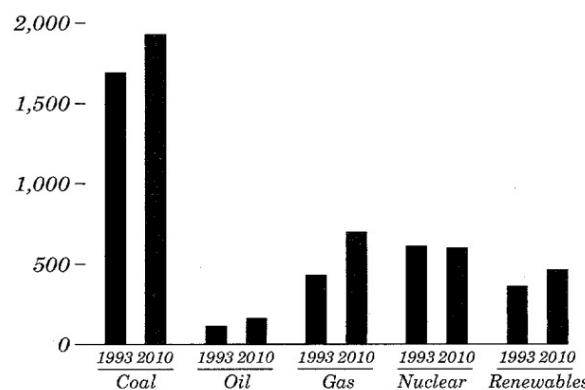
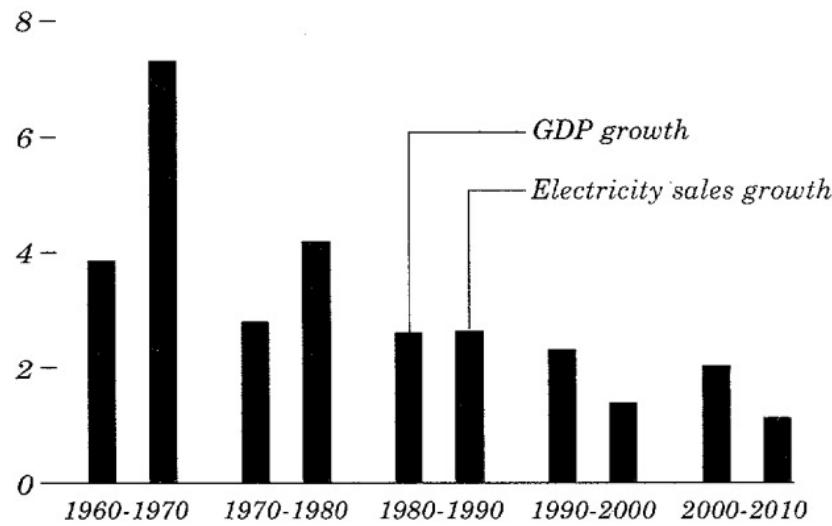
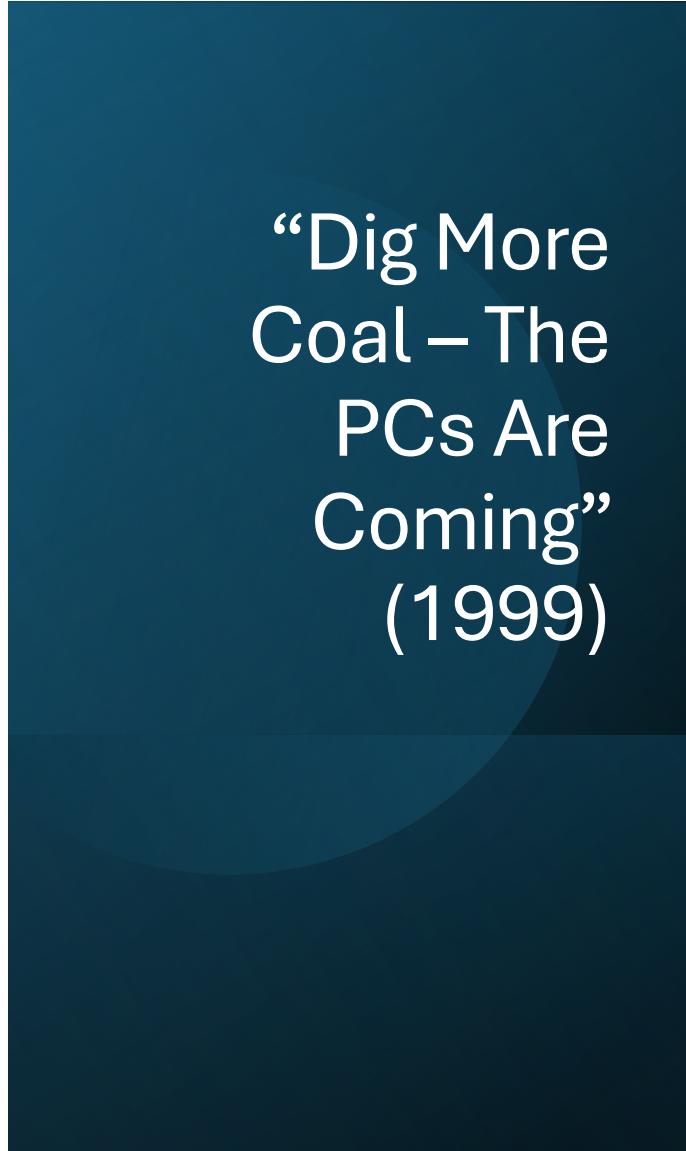


Figure 36. Growth in electricity sales and gross domestic product by decade, 1960-2010 (percent)



There are factors that could mitigate the slowing of electricity demand growth seen in these projections. New electricity appliances seem to appear almost daily. Only a few years ago, no one could have foreseen the growth in home computers, facsimile machines, copiers, and security systems, all powered by electricity. If the new uses of electricity are more substantial than currently expected, they could partially offset the efficiency gains shown in these projections (see discussion in Appendix H).



“Dig More Coal – The PCs Are Coming” (1999)

“It's now reasonable to project that half of the electric grid will be powering the digital-Internet economy within the next decade.”
(Forbes)

“By 2010, data centers (the back-end of the Internet) accounted for ... about 2% of U.S. electricity.”
 (“Growth in Data Center Electricity Use, 2005 to 2010”)