

## Archive 2

Representativeness and availability heuristics cause people to infer incorrect rates of events, particularly those that are negative to the health and well-being of individuals. Media plays a big role in the narrative of unfortunate events and fuels such trains-of-thought along the way.

"We are teaching an entire generation of kids to be afraid" (20/20, 2013), one expert states, when it comes to the growing narrative that the world is full of constant and unavoidable danger. This idea is widely propagated by media reporting and constant exposure to negativity.

Representativeness heuristics causes us to make inaccurate statistical judgements about events. The media's constant barrage of crime and tragedy causes people to believe that everything is dangerous, such as airplanes, when really the rate of certain events is much lower than perceived. The example of airplanes is notable due to the amount of media coverage a plane crash gets. Travel by car, however, leads to far greater casualties, making it much more dangerous than air travel.

The amount of coverage tragedies get is directly related to availability heuristics, basing judgements related to events with the most available recall (Nyla Branscombe, 2017). Positivity rarely makes headlines, so media coverage is riddled with traumatic events. These events are highly memorable and easily recalled. With that being said, people inappropriately infer that they are in unsafe and unhealthy situations when they truly are not.

## References

20/20. (2013, November 20). Are We Scaring Ourselves to Death? (C. Rock, Compiler) Retrieved January 2021, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmiFShBQDIIs>

Nyla Branscombe, R. B. (2017). *Social Psychology* (14 ed.). New York: Pearson. Retrieved January 2021



"We're teaching an entire generation of kids to be afraid." - Are We Scaring Ourselves to Death? (YouTube)