

## PROJECT: A SPIRIT OF FEAR

Take a few minutes and read the following statistics:

Odds of injury from fireworks: 19,500 to 1  
Odds of being struck by lightning: 580,000 to 1  
Odds of having your identity stolen: 200 to 1  
Chance of dying from a car accident: 1 in 19,000  
Chance of dying from any kind of fall: 1 in 20,000  
Chance that Earth will experience a catastrophic collision with an asteroid in the next 100 years: 1 in 5,000  
Chance of dying in an airplane accident: 1 in 354,000  
Chance of dying from choking on food: 1 in 370,000  
Chance of dying from food poisoning: 1 in 3 million  
Chance of dying from parts falling off an airplane: 1 in 10 million  
Chance of dying from being bitten by a dog: 1 in 700,000  
Chance of dying from a shark attack: 1 in 3 million

In most of the situations above, you have very little chance of ever experiencing them. For example, look at the plane accident statistic again:

- Chance of dying in an airplane accident: 1 in 354,000

If you flew every day for 50 straight weeks (350 days), you could fly for one thousand years before statistically being in line for dying in an airplane accident. Since you probably will only live to be around 80 to 90 years old, the chances of dying in a plane crash are pretty remote. Other statistics above might predict your demise much sooner than that, or much, much later.

Here is the point.

Today, you live in a spirit of fear brought on by sensationalists who want to make money off your fears. If the media, for example, can convince you that 2012 is going to be the end of the world unless you are protected, somehow, you will go out and spend tons of money on things to protect you. You are left with a bunch of stuff, while someone else is left with a really fat wallet. A classic example of this sort of sensationalism is the famous Y2K scare a few years back.

### Directions

Create a slide presentation responding to the question: Who is responsible for spreading fear, the media or the audience who receives the messaging? Ensure that your presentation has a clear claim and sufficient reasons to support that claim, along with a refutation of an opposing idea. Include a works-cited page. Be sure that your presentation is professional, clear, and engaging.

Helpful links:

<https://www.wired.com/1998/09/will-the-lights-go-out-on-y2k/>

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/y2k-scary-proved-overblown-day-new-year-article-1.2033249>

<http://articles.latimes.com/1999/apr/25/realestate/re-30750>

<http://www.utne.com/community/individualpreparationfory2k>

Your presentation should be a minimum of 6 slides and should include the following:

- Title page
- Introduce your topic and pose the question
- Examples
- What types of Media sources reported on this issue – were they reputable?
- What happened after Y2K?
- References