

1. Full citation.

Jane Spencer and Cynthia Crossen, "Why Do Americans Feel that Danger Lurks Everywhere?" Wall Street Journal, April 3, 2003.

2. Where did/does the author work, what else has s/he written about, and what are her/his credentials? (This question only has to be answered once for Vogel.)

Jane Spencer is now the Executive Editor of The Daily Beast. At the time of the article she was correspondent for the Wall Street Journal. She has worked in Hong Kong and New York, and while in Hong Kong she was one of the key members that won the Pulitzer Prize in 2007 for the investigation of China's "naked capitalism". Cynthia Crossen is a staff reporter at the Wall Street Journal. She has written several books including *Tainted Truth* and *Rich and How They Got That Way*. She is interested in the art persuasion in America.

3. What are the topics of the text?

The topics of the text are fear, statistics, marketing and society, and globalization.

4. What is the main argument of the text?

The main argument of the text is that Americans are living in a constant state of fear. This fear is caused by the media and people around them stating different statistics and "facts" that are not always accurate and commonly taken out of context.

5. Describe at least three ways that the argument is supported.

The argument is supported with the anecdotal evidence that a person is more afraid of terrorist attacks than car accidents even though car accidents are statistically more likely. Another way the argument is supported is media is constantly reporting about dangers in "children's toys to McDonald's coffee, anthrax to secondhand smoke, West Nile virus to SARS". The third way the argument is supported is that people live 60% longer so they are more afraid because instead of losing 10 years of their life they could lose 40 or more.

6. What three quotes capture the message of the text?

"Today, thanks to research labs, tort law and media hype, danger seems to lurk in every corner of life, from children's toys to McDonald's coffee, anthrax to secondhand smoke, West Nile virus to SARS. Faced with a barrage of warnings -- including the color-coded caveats of the new Homeland Security department -- it's not surprising that in contemporary America, the safest society in recorded history, many people feel as though they have never been more at risk."

"Fear is an evolutionary survival technique -- early humans who worried about other carnivores were more likely to be on guard against them. 'We are hard-wired in our brains to fear first, think second,' says David Ropeik, director of risk communication at the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis."

"But most people try to reduce the fear in their lives. Unfortunately, once a person has learned to fear something, he or she may always associate the experience with fear."

7. What three questions about environmental risk and precaution does this article leave you with?

Carrie Ann Drexel  
Governing Environmental Risk  
02/05/13

How do we make people want to listen to facts about something instead of fearing it right away?

How many commercials and different media types do people watch that cause fear daily?

Why do people fear certain things, but do not fear important environmental change? Why does the media only show certain topics for people to fear and play down other topics (climate change)?