

Fear reflect or
represent the outside
world.

[Entertainment](#), [Games](#)



Fear is an emotion, our emotions are based upon our own and others actions. Fear of crime gives rise to the risk-fear paradox which is prevalent across all societies, independent of actual pertinent levels of crime and security.

“ Fear of crime can be considered contagious, because social interaction is the mechanism through which fear is shared and chronically worried populations are created. Even those that have never been a victim of crime can be seriously worried about it” (Curiel, 2017). The media does engender fear of crime; the media’s socially constructed distorted view of crime does result in higher levels of fear of crime within populations, despite the fact that these media representations very rarely reflect or represent the outside world. An important comparison which should be drawn in order to answer the question posed in the title is one between research completed to study the impact/effects which playing violent video games has on individuals. There is a distinct relationship shared between playing video games and watching violence on television, this is because both involve individuals watching depictions of otherwise unrealistic violence taking place in front of them. Social media is another sphere through which through media engenders fear of crime. Fear of crime exists outside the realms of societal pretences and instead is a condition embedded within the human psyche. Factors such as the levels of crime and security within any society are obvious predictors for levels of fear of crime, further predictors are factors such as past experiences, demographic factors, and the perception of insecurity; which as of recently has emerged as a social problem.

Jean Baudrillard’s theory of hyperreality is one which will be closely considered in the answering of the question posed in the title. Fear of crime

<https://assignbuster.com/fear-reflect-or-represent-the-outside-world/>

and hyperreality are associated in that Surette (1998) put forward that fiction is closer to news than to reality, this statement being founded upon a study performed by Mandel (1984) which determined that between 1945 and 1984 over 10 billion crime thrillers were produced. The theory most often used to explain the effects of exposure to certain media contents is called cultivation theory and was introduced in the 1970s by George Gerbner.

His research was based primarily on the possible effects television may have on its viewers. Gerbner concluded that heavy exposure to media content could over a longer time period gradually implement attitudes in its audience that "are more consistent with the world of television programs than with the everyday world" (Chandler 1995). Results taken from Dowler (2003) indicate that "viewing crime shows is significantly related to fear of crime and perceived police effectiveness.

"Dowler goes on to mention that regular crime drama viewers are more likely to "hold negative attitudes toward police effectiveness, although "regular viewers of crime shows are more likely to fear or worry about crime.

Similarly, regular crime drama viewers are more likely to hold negative attitudes toward police effectiveness, although a bivariate analysis indicated that newspapers as primary source of crime news and hours of television viewing are not significantly related to fear of crime, punitive attitudes or perceived police effectiveness." The relationship shared between the mass media and a fear of crime is dependent on the audience with whom it shares (Heath and Gilbert, 1996). Dowler (2003) reported that local crime news "increased fear among those who lived in the reported area, whereas non-

local crime news had the opposite effect.” Furthermore, local crime news has a greater effect for residents of higher crimeneighbourhoods, those who both watch a lot of television and live in high crimeneighbourhoods were also found to be more fearful of crime than counterparts who did not (Dowler, 2003).