

Forget Fake News: Why We're Wrong About Nearly Everything | Daily Beast

By Bobby Duffy

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People are often incredibly wrong about key social and political realities in their countries, as I explore in my book, [Why We're Wrong About Nearly Everything](#), which draws on over 100,000 interviews across up to 40 nations, including the U.S..

For example, people in the U.S. think that 24 percent of [teenage girls](#) give birth each year—when it's only 2 percent. Americans think that 33 percent of their population are immigrants, when the reality is around 14 percent—and that 17 percent of the population are Muslim, when it's around 1 percent.

Across 30 countries, only 15 percent of people think their [national murder rate](#) is down since 2000, when it is actually down by 29 percent.

Surveys of the general public in the U.S. show Americans are generally a pretty happy bunch, with 9 in 10 saying they're very or rather happy. But that's not our impression of our fellow citizens: We think only half of other Americans would say they're happy.

All the best evidence, including a review of over 1 million children, suggests there is no link between vaccines and autism in healthy children. But 4 in 10 Americans think there is, or they are not sure.

The temptation is to cry “post-truth” and entirely blame our increasingly sensationalist media, social media, and tribal politicians for misleading and bringing us down. But this is not a new phenomenon. [...]

Source: [Forget Fake News: Why We're Wrong About Nearly Everything](#)