While investigating the airline safety data, it was quite apparent that airline travel has only become safer over the years. To help illustrate this point, I created bar plots of airline incidents and airline fatalities from 1985-1999 compared to the number of incidents and fatalities from 2000-2014. The data show that both statistics have decreased by nearly 50% in that time frame. Additionally, a comparison of fatal accidents in each of these time frames has decreased by almost 75%, from 122 accidents in 1985-1999 to only 37 from 2000-2014.

I also chose to include a line plot showing both the total number of automotive-related fatalities as well as the number of pedestrians killed in automotive accidents from 1994 to 2017. Neither of these statistics has made much of a reduction, especially when compared to the increase in airline safety.

Finally, two tables illustrate a comparison between the number of automotive fatalities from 2000-2014, 576,546, and the number of airline fatalities in that same timeframe, 3,109. A second table compares the airline fatality number to the number of pedestrians killed by motor vehicles, 70,139 from 2000-2014. You’re 22 times more likely to be killed by a motor vehicle while walking down the street than you are to be involved in a fatal plane crash. I chose the comparison of airline fatalities to pedestrian fatalities to illustrate how you’re at more risk of being killed in a car crash when not even being in a car than you are to being killed in a plane crash.

Media coverage is more likely to focus on a fatal plane crash than a car accident because the latter is so common that the occurrence doesn’t often even qualify as news. This creates a sense of fear in people despite airline travel being far and away the safest mode of transportation.