

Drive Less, Live Longer



U.S. highway fatalities rose 7.2 percent in 2015, the highest spike since 1966 (NHTSA). *The Journal of Risk and Uncertainty* recently published a related article titled, "Did the Great Recession Keep Bad Drivers Off the Road?" It found that during the Great Recession, each single percentage point **increase** in unemployment translated to a **14 percent decline** in traffic fatalities.

In 2009, socionomist Euan Wilson showed a strong link between traffic fatalities and the stock market. Yet the correlation doesn't end there: Speed limits, auto designs and road deaths all swing dramatically with negative and positive trends in social mood.

[Read an excerpt of "Roads and Recessions: A Socionomic Analysis of Cars and Travel"](#)

[\[Article\] Social Mood Governs Speed Limits, Auto Design, and Traffic Fatality Levels](#)

[2009](#), [Article](#), [Cultural Trends](#), [Economy](#), [Euan Wilson](#), [Excerpt](#), [Research](#), [The Socionomist](#)

[Ed: In this fascinating article, socionomist Euan Wilson reveals that even something as seemingly mundane as the habits of auto drivers are driven by social mood. Speed limits, auto design and traffic fatality levels all vary drastically depending on a negative or positive trend in social mood. Here is an excerpt of Wilson's September 2009 article.]

TRAVELING SAFELY: WHEN TO FLY

In January 2007, [The Elliott Wave Theorist](#) featured Mark Galasiewski's essay, "Aircraft Accidents." It offered evidence that airplane crashes are more likely in bear markets.

The idea is that it takes a team to safely operate a commercial airplane. Success requires cooperation among air traffic controllers, baggage handlers, ground mechanics, the pilot and co-

pilot, passengers, flight attendants, and other craft in the air. But in times of falling mood, people become more self-absorbed, suspicious and insular. People lean away from teamwork and want to go it alone. Embrace of effort gives way to avoidance of effort ([The Wave Principle of Human Social Behavior](#) (1999))... .

We then wondered: Does mood affect road safety in the same way?

DRIVING IN A RECESSION: IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!

The answer surprised us: In contrast to *flying* in a bear market, *driving* in a bear market is *safer* than in a bull market. Traffic deaths actually *decrease* during falling social mood.. Whether the decline comes from fewer cars on the road or more cautious drivers, we cannot conclusively say. Whatever the cause, falls in social mood produce safer roads.

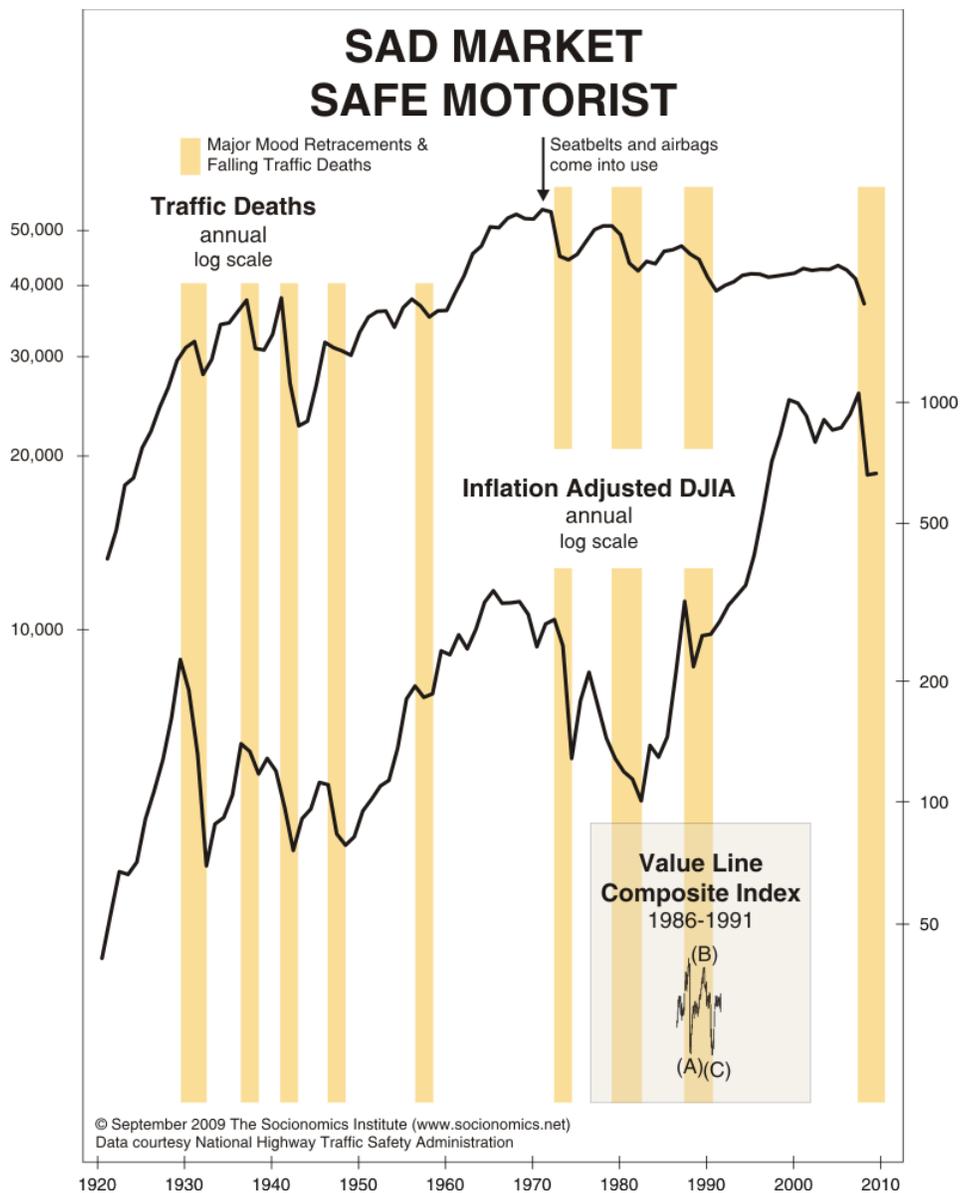


Figure 1

Total miles driven and auto deaths both drop in recessions. But deaths *per mile driven* also fall in bear markets..

Even the boom decades of the 1950s and 1960s saw small drops in traffic deaths *during pullbacks in the DJIA*. The temporary drops came during a time that, at a larger degree, saw the biggest overall rise in traffic fatalities since the 1920s.

Further, the bearish mood of the early-to-mid 1970s saw the largest drop in auto deaths since World War II. And the depressed mood of 1987 through 1991 accompanied a big decline in auto deaths even in the midst of the 1980s and 1990s bull market.

More recently, traffic deaths and total miles driven per capita have fallen dramatically since 2005. The year-to-year drop in 2008 was the biggest nominal fall ever, the same year of the stock market's largest ever year-to-year decline. Annual auto fatalities since 2005 have fallen a staggering 14 percent, which mirrors the decline in home values. ...

In the remainder of this four-page article, learn why states like Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee are introducing new crackdowns on dangerous drivers. Discover how automakers are improving their odds of success in this bear market by changing their cars' engine powers, fuel efficiencies, and styles, and why sales of one car in particular are the fastest growing in the country.