

Unit 3 Topic 2.4 Page 54

Activity: Media

The misuse of statistics

Learning objective

At the end of this activity you should be able to:

- use a case study to explain the importance of statistics in a trial and how they can be misused.

Using the link below, complete questions 1 to 21 that follow.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7F03Wf3lvzs>

1. What was Sally Clark convicted of in 1999?
2. How old were the babies when they died?
3. How was baby Christopher's death recorded?
4. How was this changed after Harry died?
5. What was Sally Clark's sentence?
6. How long was she in prison?
7. Why was Sally Clark released?
8. According to Sir Roy Meadows, what were the odds of a family losing two babies to cot death?
9. What is the actual statistic for the chances of one cot death?
10. Why did Meadows modify the chance for the Clarks and what was the new figure?
11. What is the formula for calculating the probability of two events?
12. Note the figures that Meadows used to reach the probability he gave in court.
13. How does the probability of having a second cot death change?
14. What is conditional probability? Use the example to help you explain.
15. How is conditional probability relevant to Sally Clark's case?
16. What formula should have been used to give the probability of two cot deaths in Sally Clark's case?
17. What answer does this formula give?
18. How does this compare to the statistics from Meadows?
19. Why was the figure given so important for the case?
20. What happened after the statistics had been challenged?
21. Why are statistics so powerful in cases like this?