**Safety-oriented On-road Practices of Adult Bicycle Riders in Brooklyn, New York USA**

**Interview Questions**

**#16, Bushwick, recruited 10-7-2018, interviewed 10-8-2018**

**TO122E01.mp3**

*Background Questions:*

1. What is your age? (Were you born prior to this month and day in the year 2000?)

**34**

1. What is your race or ethnicity?

**African-American**

1. What is your gender?

**Female**

1. What is the highest level of education that you completed?

**Bachelor’s degree**

1. How long (in months or years) have you been riding bicycles?

**20+ years, since I was a little kid.**

1. How long (in months or years) have you been riding bicycles in Brooklyn?

**3 ½ - 4 months.**

1. Compared to most other bicycle riders you have observed, are you more careful, less careful, or about the same?

**I’d say about the -- Nah, more careful.**

1. Have you been in any bicycle crashes that involved other vehicles or pedestrians?

**Yes. Just one time. A car didn’t see me.**

During the past 12 months…..

1. What have been the main reasons or purposes for going bicycle riding? (Commute? Errands? Transportation to other locations? Exercise? Recreation? Part of your job? Other?)

**To run errands and for transportation, like to go to the library or if I need to go pick up something to eat, or things like that – it’s just easier on a bike.**

1. On average, how frequently have you ridden your bicycle?

**5 days a week – 5 out of 7.**

1. On average, how long (in minutes) did you ride each day you go bicycling?

**40 minutes to an hour.**

1. How much of your bicycle riding took place when there was a lot of motor vehicle traffic?

**There’s always traffic, so I would say all the time.**

1. How much of your bicycle riding took place in darkness or low light conditions such as dusk?

**Not a lot – I try to not ride at night, so I would say 10 % or 15% -- so let’s just go with 10% -- it’s not that much.**

*Primary study questions:*

1. From the perspective of safety, what is it like to go bicycle riding in the streets of Brooklyn?

**From the perspective of safety? I feel like you’re risking your life all the time – I know that sounds -- I’ve bicycled in North Carolina and Atlanta and it seems like, here, unless there’s, like, a designated bike lane, it doesn’t seem to be quite that safe to me to go bicycling here.**

1. For a bicycle rider in Brooklyn, what are the most common dangers or hazards that confront a bicycle rider?

**Oh my gosh -- One are those people when they put their hazards on and they’re, like, stopped in the middle of the road, or -- so that’s another one. Or when people do not abide by traffic laws, like cars and bicyclists, and they just run past stop signs, they don’t stop at red lights – *(unintelligible clause)* -- those are probably most of the common dangers. And also, like, chards of glass and random things in the road that can puncture your tire – you can get run over and slip off of your bike, so it feels like there are so many dangers. Yeah – I bike here, I have to be very careful.**

Are there particular things you do while you’re riding to try to avoid those things?

**I do. Maybe it’s not the best, but I look – I’m constantly looking down at the ground, I’m looking out, so I’m constantly checking the road ahead of me to make sure there’s nothing that -- like a pothole or something that I could run over, like an object – so I’m constantly looking out for that, and also, like, for cars, if they happen to stop, or if a car turns and they don’t use their turn signal – like, I don’t want to run into the back of their car, so I’m constantly always checking for those things -- it seems like – so --**

1. Are there dangers or hazards that are difficult or impossible for a bicycle rider to see and react to? [Not asked: Are there particular things you do while riding to avoid them?]

**I think mostly everything should be – I don’t -- I can’t think of any off the top of my head -- so no, I can’t think of anything.**

1. Please describe things you have seen other bicycle riders do that you consider to be dangerous.

**(*She emitted a long gasp as I was reading this item to her*).**

**Number one thing: not wearing a helmet. I just don’t understand. Yeah, that’s, like, a number one priority – not riding wearing a helmet. Not using proper contr-- like, signals – like, bicyclists have signals, like right turn, left turn, when they’re stopping -- You use your arm, you extend it, and I noticed a lot of cyclists don’t do that – they’ll just run the stop sign, or turn, and then the car behind them will sometimes -- they don’t know what they’re doing – like, are they (*unintelligible word*) to turn left? Or right? So, it’s like there’s no communication between the cyclist and the drivers. And also, I’ve been seeing this a lot here – I don’t know if it’s the thing, but people are on their cell phones and biking, like, they literally have their cell phone in their hand, they’re, like, watching something or texting and then cycling, they’re not paying attention to anything, and, like, that’s dangerous. I’m, like, *(unintelligible word)*, like, hoping they’re being, like, cautious, like -- I’ve never seen that before, except here in Brooklyn. Yeah, that’s probably the -- Those are the major things I see other cyclists do -- other bike riders -- so.**

1. If it were your job to teach other adult bicyclists how to stay safe while riding in the streets of Brooklyn, what particular instructions would you give them?

**I would recommend to either use a designated bike lane, or stay as far to, like, the left or right, depending on what side you’re on, to the curb as possible, even if there’s, like – there’s cars in that lane, just stay as close as possible, so that other passing cars can get by you. If there’s an emergency vehicle, you can quickly get out of the way. And to also wear reflective clothing or light-colored clothing when you’re riding at night, because I think, I almost ran into somebody – they were just in the middle of the street, I didn’t see them at all – so some sort of reflectors, like, reflectors on your bike or something like that (*unintelligible couple words*). Use proper hand signals -- traffic signals – like, when you’re turning, when you’re stopping, stuff like that. And then just -- if you have, like, an accident or need bike repair or maintenance, like, maybe always keep a kit on you or something like that, so you’re not, like, stranded or – because I see that a lot, where cyclists will get really upset and flustered, and it’s great to have, like, a kit on hand or something. I mean, I need -- I don’t have one, but I do need one! (*unintelligible*) to the nearest bike shop and I was, like, I need a kit or something, like a repair kit – so -- yeah.**

**Oh, and don’t use your phone – please do not be on your phone while you are commuting, like, unless it’s, like, some sort of emergency -- or get, like, a bike – I don’t use my phone, but I’ve seen some cyclists use – it’s, like, a bike holder – like, a phone holder for bikes – it’s, like – they make those, so – it would be really great if you were to issue those or you could pick them up and, like, discount it – I don’t think a lot of people realize that.**

[Tell me again what that is.]

**It’s, like, a cell phone holder, but it’s specially for bikes, and you can clip it to the handlebar, it’s really cool, but it’s, like, really difficult to find them, and I -- even the bike shops don’t carry them. And so it’s, like, where do I buy it – I haven’t seen it on line.**

[Yeah – I’ve seen them, too, and I don’t know where people get them.]

**Right. So I’m, like, I don’t know. It would be great if, like, bike shops offered those. (*Unintelligible clause*)**

1. Imagine for a moment that, right now, you are riding on a Brooklyn street along with other traffic. Tell me all the different things you are doing to keep yourself safe and avoid a crash or collision as you ride.

**Okay, so, like -- so I’m thinking of my last bike ride, or I’m thinking, like, I’m on Broadway right now. I’m constantly, like, just turning left to right looking for traffic, to see if there’s, like, any cars that have ran a red light, or any emergency vehicles, any pedestrians – like, I’m kind – I’m looking down as well, I’m trying to determine whether or not the road conditions are safe. If it was, like, raining earlier, is the road really slick? Because my tires sometimes lose traction, so I’m calculating all of these things, and then also my route as well, I’m thinking about, hey, can I take an alternate route? Maybe if I turn down this street, I’ll, you know -- there’s less traffic and I’ll get there safer, and if there’s any construction going on – there’s so much construction in Brooklyn, I did not realize there was so much construction – so sometimes they actually close off the road, or you have to take an alternate route, so I’m constantly checking to see if there’s construction as well. And if my tire pressure is okay. Because it sucks to get a flat while you’re, like, on the road, and you, like, have to be somewhere (*unintelligible 1-2 words*), and then all of a sudden – yeah, that happens. And I’m, like, no, why is this happening? I literally just had my bike serviced, I left the bike shop, got a flat when I got home – right when I got home, the tire was flat, the opposite tire. I was like, what’s going on here? And the guy, when I took it back to the shop, he said, unfortunately, you know, we can’t control the streets of New York, he’s, like, it’s just -- that’s how it is. (*unintelligible 1-2 words*) -- Yeah, there’s like, in Broadway, where -- I live off of Broadway, so that’s, like, where I cycle, that main road, and Bushwick Ave. There’s not -- Bushwick Ave has more of, like, a designated bike route – Broadway doesn’t. So – and then sometimes it’s just, like, the road needs maintenance, and my bike is a road bike, it’s not a mountain bike, and I feel like a mountain bike (*unintelligible word*) more than my road bike, so that’s why I’m constantly checking the ground and, like, conditions to see if (*unintelligible) --*  if there’s, like – yeah, if there’s, like, (*unintelligible 1-2 words*) randomness in the concrete or if there’s, like, some obstruction in the way. So -- yeah, it’s -- I’m on high alert all the time riding here.**

1. Now I would like to throw out a few words or phrases and ask you if they trigger any additional thoughts about how to ride safely:

* Intersections

**Oh, I think of – pedestrians need to realize that bicyclists do go at high speeds and that it’s difficult to brake really, like, fast, so yeah -- I’ve also seen some, like, instances of where bicyclists run into pedestrians. So, yeah -- that’s what I think of for some reason.**

[f/u Q: Are there things you do, or that you think bicyclists should do, to avoid those kinds of things?]

**I really just think it goes back to more training with, like, the rules and regulations – you know how you have -- I know this probably extreme, but when I took my drivers test, I had to, like, learn all this stuff about rules, safety in the road – it seems like there’s, like, no cyclist classes here, or safety classes, so I’m assuming that’s why you’re doing this study, you know – like, yeah, that would be super beneficial. I’m not saying that everybody needs a permit or anything like that, because that would be ridiculous to need a permit to ride your bike, but it would be great if there were (*unintelligible 1-2 words*) education that cyclists could take.**

* Traffic signs and signals

**Cyclists don’t really obey them.**

* Right-of-way

**Right-of-way – it’s confusing, because I think bicyclists automatically contend, I know sometimes I do, I have the right-of-way, but that’s not always the case, and I think that’s why some accidents occur as well, or people get really impatient with cyclists and don’t move over – so, yeah.**

* Pedestrians

**Pedestrians – I don’t think they think of bicycles as, like, vehicles, but they are, because they’re modes of transportation, and I think, just being respectful of that. Like, I think of the street as being for pedestrians and the road being for, like, cyclists.** [I’m sorry, could you say that again?] **Yeah,** **I think that, like, the street being for pedestrians, like the sidewalk I mean, and then the actual road, that should be for cyclists. I mean, I do find myself on the -- riding on the sidewalk sometimes, when it’s, like, a lot of traffic, and I can tell there’s no way I’m going to get through all that congestion. So – yeah.**

* Speed

**Yeah, so -- Speed, especially if you have, like, a single gear bike, like, you’re not really adhering to the traffic laws, that can be pretty dangerous, not only for the cyclists but also, like, everybody involved, like the other drivers or pedestrians. So that’s what I think of when I think of speed – going too fast and not being able to quickly stop and not being able to swerve – I don’t know.**

* Respect

**Yes. I think people should respect cyclists and their -- give them more space on the road. They deserve just as much amount of space while cycling on the road, so move over or please share a lane. I don’t know what’s so hard about that.**

* Trucks, buses

**They actually terrify me, and I had a bus driver tell me to squeeze through, like, the car and the bus, and it literally was really narrow, and he said, oh, bikers do that all the time, and I see that as a potential hazard. I don’t think that’s very safe for cyclists. Especially if the driver is not acknowledging the cyclist – like, he acknowledged me, he saw me making eye contact and he said, Come here. But if they don’t see you and you squeeze through, what can happen? I just think of the danger of, like, I’m -- yeah.**

* Parked cars

**Oooh, with parked cars I think (*unintelligible)* do not have hazards -- running against the back of cars, so – yeah, I notice a lot of people stop in the road – like, they’ll stop and put on – sometimes they won’t even put on hazards either, so it’s difficult when there’s other traffic …..**

[Could I ask you to say this again. Your voice has gotten a little faint and -- ]

**Oh sorry, yeah – okay, what do you need me to repeat? About parked cars? Hello?** [Go ahead.] **All right --** **Can you hear me?** [Yeah.]  **Okay, yeah, so, when people stop in their vehicles and they don’t use their hazard lights, but they just literally stop in the middle of the road and there’s tons of traffic, and it’s really hard to navigate around the parked car – because cars -- yeah, the drivers don’t let you in, they’re just, like, whatever, I’m also – I’m going somewhere also, so they don’t -- they’re not considerate of cyclists *(unintelligible)* traffic. So that’s a big *(unintelligible*).**

* “Taking the lane” [provided a definition]

**Oooh – I see. I’ve witnessed that a few times, and I tried it once, but I felt so intimidated in Brooklyn here by the drivers, because they would just honk at me – *(unintelligible*) -- yeah, they were, like, get out of the way basically. So it doesn’t seem like a very wise play amongst, like – outside of the cycling community -- by bicyclers – like, yeah. People driving don’t care; they’re, like -- you need to get over.**

* Pet peeves

**This is probably something minute but not really big. (*Garbled*) a lot of females – females on the road, and I know they’re here. And, like, resources for a female cyclists, there just seems to be -- when I first arrived here and started cycling in Brooklyn, I was quite intimidated by things, like, I just would see so many guys out there and especially people of color, so that’s probably something that I really would encourage, that more people of color, especially female bikers, go out there and ride their bikes. Yeah, we need to build a strong sense of community. And I don’t feel that – like, I feel like, you know, there are cyclist clubs, but I don’t really feel that amongst the females or people of color.**

1. Please feel free to offer any other thoughts about the topics we have discussed today.

**Well, maybe – if you should -- I don’t know if this is relevant, but since everybody’s always on their phones, I really think there should be some portion or some, like, I don’t know -- some dialogue about, like, using your cell phone while on your bike, and I think there is a law where you can actually – I don’t know about this -- where you can actually be on your phone and still cycling. I don’t know -- I could be wrong – I remember watching a TV show where somebody was talking about that. So – but there needs to be some dialogue and clarification, because there seems to be a lot of confusion surrounding that. Yeah. People get in a lot of accidents and people getting hurt.**

Thank you very much for participating in this research study and especially for taking the time and effort to complete this interview with me.