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

**Interview Questions**

**#23, Dean & Classon, recruited November 4, interviewed November 9, 2018.**

**TO223E01.mp3**

*Background Questions:*

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

**35**

1. What is your race or ethnicity?

**White**

1. What is your gender?

**Female**

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

**Master’s degree**

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

**I learned to ride as a kid and rode for fun as a kid. I can’t remember how old --probably 5, 4 or 5. But, as an adult as part of my regular live, really only the last year and a half.**

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

**Same – about a year and a half.**

[f/u Q: do you consider yourself to be an experienced rider?]

**There’s probably room for some growth. I mean, just getting used to navigating the streets as an urban bike rider – But, I’d say I’m pretty good at this point.**

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

**I would say I’m about the same.**

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

**No.**

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?)

**Getting from point A to point B faster and in a more convenient way than walking or public transit.**

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

**I would say I use my bike – probably 4 days a week. Not all day necessarily, but at least once.**

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

**I’m usually going shorter distances – it’s mainly within Brooklyn and usually sort of close to my home, so I would say on average …. maybe 30 minutes.** [30 minutes per day?] **Per day? Yeah – on average – 30 to 40.**

[f/u Q: Typically then in a week, about 10 hours of riding?]

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

**I would say, maybe half the time. Like, during daytime there tends to be more, and then at nighttime the roads tend to be a little emptier, or at least the roads that I’m choosing to take.**

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

**So, I would say, the majority are in the day – the bulk during the day, maybe 2/3 in the day, a third at night.**

*Primary study questions:*

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

**I choose to take roads, whenever I can, with less traffic on purpose – or roads -- and/or roads with bike lands preferably, so I generally feel safe, but I also am, like, extremely aware of my surroundings, especially other cars, because I feel like we still don’t have – drivers are still not super aware of bikers, and so I anticipate cars potentially, you know, drive swerving into the bike lane, or, like, opening their doors, so I generally feel safe because I tend to take the (*unintelligible*) busy roads, but I definitely am aware of dangers that can happen.**

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

**Again, I would say, like, obstruction of bike lanes: cars parked in the bike lanes, cars driving in the bike lanes, like, moving cars in the bike lanes – or lack of bike lanes. Or your shared, it’s, like, a shared road and then sometimes there’s just a lack of space. And, usually the bike lanes are not protected, so there‘s always a chance that, you know, car doors can open into it – again, cars can occupy that space. So I would say, mainly that type of bike infrastructure issue, that would be number one. And this, like, again, lack of awareness on the drivers’ level that, like, bikers, you know, have the right to occupy the bike land and they need to respect that.**

[And, considering the dangers or hazards that you just described,] are there particular things you do while riding to avoid those dangers or hazards?

**I mean, I always use my – well, at night, of course, I always use my lights, because I know it’s also the law. I am just very aware of my surroundings, so I’ll always be looking around to see what type of traffic is around me. Yeah, I would say, that’s generally what I do.**

1. Are there dangers or hazards that are difficult or impossible for a bicycle rider to see and react to?

**I’m lucky that I’ve not ever been doored, but I imagine that if, you know, someone opening a door all of a sudden. There (*unintelligible 1-2 words*) once, where, like, I had to come to a screeching halt, and that can be very hard to react to if it happens at the last minute. Otherwise, you can sort of see obstructions coming your way and get around them for the most part.**

Do you feel that there are any particular things you do while you’re riding to avoid those things?

**Again, just, like, awareness, sort of looking around, but I also think I (*unintelligible word*) be more careful. I can get impatient and so – but, yeah, making people – like, using my bike bell, you know, occasionally and making people aware that, like, this is a bike lane and I’m here – making my presence known.**

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

**Oh – I mean – swerving out of the bike lane into the normal lane, swerving in and out of traffic of all types, running red lights, not using bike lights, not using helmet -- although I am also guilty of that occasionally -- going the opposite way, like against traffic, when they shouldn’t be -- like I -- sometimes I’m in my bike lane going one way and I have someone coming right at me, using the bike lane but in the wrong direction. Uh, yeah.**

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 say, helmet use, lights – bike light use, just obeying, you know, traffic -- basic traffic laws, so not running red lights, especially not in busy intersections, and again, like, not listening to music – although again, when there’s no traffic I am as guilty of having earphones or earbuds in, but I would (*unintelligible word*), not – not – I would be putting it on low volume, you know, not being completely, you know, surrounding so you can hear what’s going on. Staying vigilant and aware of your surroundings.**

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.

**So, stay – I would be staying -- stay in my bike lane whenever possible. I -- be const– I am constantly sort of scanning my surroundings, being aware of cars that are parked and potentially opening doors, cars that are signaling to turn – for instance, they’ll just, like, soar right into the bike lane to turn, without realizing that you are *(garbled)* – and – yeah, just trying to be aware and follow the traffic laws as best as possible.**

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

**Yep, I mean, obeying them, being aware of them – although I know a lot of people just will, you know, roll right through – I’m guilty of that too, especially when there’s no cars around, but it’s just not worth it – at big intersections, I would say obviously it’s important to really act as you are a car.**

* Traffic signs and signals

**Yeah, when it’s a red light in particular, signaling, like, a potential larger intersection, it’s very important to pay attention. I am guilty of rolling through stop signs when I know there’s – when I can see that there’s no cars coming.**

* Right-of-way

**I mean, same as cars, right? I just generally obey the car traffic laws when it comes to right-of-way.**

* Pedestrians

**Yeah, important to be aware, but also, pedestrians pose a hazard to bikes, because a lot of pedestrians are also not aware of bike lanes or oncoming bikes, so that’s another hazard. Plus, then, cars, but – yeah, that’s definitely something else that you need to be aware of that can pose a problem.**

* Speed

**My – so, my bike is really – in my personal case, is kind of clunky and heavy, so I can’t even get very fast on it, like I almost think it helps me be safer. I never (*unintelligible 1-2 words*) – yeah, and I purposely don’t go very fast either, because I think I would -- that would be dangerous. But I do see people going, you know, zipping in and out and going really fast, which I think, especially if you get, you know – if you do collide with someone or a car, then your injuries are potentially going to be a lot worse.**

* Respect

**This is a good one, because I feel like there is not much respect for our bike – you know, for riders and bike culture in New York – more and more, but – cars – there needs to be more respect, especially for the infrastructure and bike lanes so we can bike safer.**

* Trucks, buses

**Yeah, they’re kind of scary – I mean, I hate being on the road with trucks and buses, and I know that a lot of bike accidents have occurred with, like, with tractor-trailers and buses that are turning at intersections, which is also partly why I try to avoid busier streets like Atlantic or Flatbush – and I don’t like being on the road with, like -- and sharing the road with a bike -- or – a bus route. I think they’re generally good – I’ve been -- I’ve been, like, on Bergen, there’s a bike lane that I’m on all the time, and there’s also a bus route, but they generally, I think, are aware of you and will often, like, honk, even if there’s room and they’re passing you, just so you’re aware that there’s a bus there. But it still makes me a little nervous.**

* Parked cars

**Parked cars I don’t have a problem with, except I always – I’m always anticipating someone opening their door. So I’m just always aware: is there someone in the car? You know -- what’s going on? Is it abandoned or is someone inside?**

* “Taking the lane”

[She was not familiar with it, so I defined it.]

**I mean, it seems like it would be less safe, although maybe if – maybe if they’re concerned about getting doored, they feel like it’s actually safer to be away from the parked cars on the side. I mean, I’ve ridden in the middle of the road when it’s a shared -- when it’s a shared lane and there’s no dedicated bike lane, I’ve been in the middle when there’s not much traffic. But wouldn’t do that – again, also because my bike doesn’t go very fast. So I know that I’d be holding up traffic.**

* Pet peeves

**Yeah, there’s a lot of pet peeves. And mainly, like, obstructed bike lanes would be the main thing. Is (*unintelligible*) obstructed bike lanes, and people, like, turning into the bike la– like cars turning into the bike lanes, potentially causing me to, like, ride my bike straight into the car if I weren’t to brake. They clearly don’t look and see if there’s a bike coming before they turn.**

[f/u Q: So, how do you keep yourself safe in those situations?]

**I mean, I’m usually – if I’m ever crossing at an intersection, I’ll always look to see what’s going on in my peripheral vision, to see if there’s a (*garbled word*) car turning, and if there is, I usually anticipate, then I’ll have to brake, and then I usually mutter something under my breath. (*Laughter)* I don’t think that usually helps the situation, but – express my frustration.**

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

**I think we’re – I think it’s generally getting better, as the more and more bikers that we have on the streets, the, you know, the more people are getting used to us being on the road. That also – I think, the more – the safer people feel, the more relaxed they get, which has definitely been my case. So, like, when I first started biking and I was like “Oh my God! – I’m on the road with cars and traffic and this is stressful”, and I would never ride without a helmet, and I would never ride with any earbud in, and it was, like, super-safe, and now I’ve gotten more comfortable, and now especially in the summer when it’s hot and I just don’t want to have a helmet on – whatever -- if I’m going a super-short distance and I’m lazy, I, like, won’t wear a helmet, and I recognize, like, “Ugh, I should never be on the road without a helmet”, but I’ve gotten more comfortable, so I feel like I’m in more – I’m in more control and I’m more aware of my surroundings. But I kn-- also know that, like, the best safety measure is to create bike infrastructure, more than – That’s going to -- that’s going to create better safer biking conditions, more than telling everyone to wear a helmet. You know, like, look at Europe – they don’t -- almost no one wears helmets in these – in cultures that have a huge bike presence and they don’t have – well, hardly any accidents. But that’s because the bike infrastructure is so strong and there’s such a respect for bike culture – so it would great to get to that – those levels, but we’ll see – we also live in a car society, so it might be hard, but – little by little.**

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