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

**Interview Questions**

**#20, Sunset Park, recruited October 28, 2018, interviewed November 2, 2018**

**TO216E01.mp3**

*Background Questions:*

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

**37**

1. What is your race or ethnicity?

**Hispanic**

1. What is your gender?

**Male**

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

**Some college**

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

**I’ve been riding since I’ve been a kid, so I want to say – serious riding – I would have to say about 3 – how about 4 years? (*unintelligible*) I got serious over the last four years.**

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

**All my life – since I learned as a child, and the last 4 years.**

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

**As far as I observed, I would say more careful.**

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

**Yes, I have.**

[f/u Q: Do you care to share any details about that?]

**I don’t mind – that’s fine. One – I believe it’s two that -- Actually, I went down on my bike three times. Two involved the -- another vehicle. One of them was a construction cone. So, the first one, I was riding in the bike lane and a woman made a right-hand turn right through the bike lane, and I stopped short, right before hitting her car, and I ended up flipping over my bike. The second one, I was riding down Kent Avenue in Brooklyn, in the bike lane, near the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and a woman was coming into the intersection, and I can’t really recall if I – I want to believe that I had the right-of-way, and the lady looked like she might have been distracted – I don’t know if there was a phone or whatever, and she ended up – I mean, she had a clear view of me coming along, and yet she slammed on her brakes at the very last second. I saw her coming, and she basically struck me with her vehicle – it wasn’t a strong hit – I kind of jumped off the bike, and the bike ended up just falling to the ground, so it wasn’t that serious.**

[f/u Q: were you injured in either of these crashes?]

**I was, but nothing broken, nothing sprained – well, sprained, yes, no -- bumps and bruises, nothing broken, thank God. But I was out of commission for at least a week within both crashes.**

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?)

**Well, I do it as my commute to and from work – that’s my main reason. And then on the weekends, I go for a casual ride or (*unintelligible word*) a workout ride where I do over fifty miles.**

[f/u Q: Do you do that every weekend?]

**Not every weekend, but as much as I can get, so -- I would say maybe twice a month.**

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

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**In the last twelve months, let’s see, I -- I would say I ride at least twenty days out of each month.**

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

**Well, my commute to work, round-trip, is about an hour and a half, and on the weekends I’m usually out for at least four hours.**

[f/u Q: And would that be four hours each day on the weekend?]

**No, usually just one day on the weekend. I go biking on a Saturday – I’m gone for 4 to 5 hours.**

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

**My commute to work is quite hectic, so I would have to say -- out of the 20 – well, I would have to say, most days. I would have to say maybe – leisure rides, I’ve done maybe 8 for the whole – for the past 12 months, and the rest are all commuting with heavy traffic.**

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

**I would have to say half the time.**

*Primary study questions:*

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

**It can be quite dangerous. There are a lot of distracted people out there, and I’m not just talking about motor vehicles, but pedestrians as well, and other cyclists as well.**

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

**I would have to say, the motor vehicles on the road. A lot of motor vehicles do not respect the bike lanes, and a lot of motor -- a lot of drivers of motor vehicles – in my – in my experience, I’ve noticed lots of drivers completely distracted while on their phones while driving – text messaging or just whatever they’re doing with their phones.**

Are there particular things you do while riding to avoid these hazards or dangers?

**Yes, I usually – I look very aware of my surroundings, especially after my incidents that happened quite some time ago. I look ahead of me, I look towards my sides, I’m constantly mindful of who I’m surrounded by, as far as vehicles and people and other riders, and I never wear headphones because I feel that that’s a major distraction as well.**

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

**I think that a car, or any type of motor vehicle for that matter, making a turn without signaling is something that’s almost unavoidable, because you’re not sure if they’re going – you know, if they’re turning -- if they don’t have a turning signal, you can’t anticipate the car’s going to turn, and I think that that’s something, or -- Another dangerous one – I can’t say that it’s completely unavoidable, but there are distracted drivers who do not keep their – do not stay within their lane and they start to drift over to the side where they can actually be forcing themselves onto the bike lane, and, I mean, usually you have enough time to react, but those are the things that I’ve experienced.**

With respect to those dangers or hazards, are there particular things you do while you’re riding to avoid them?

**Nah – just as I said earlier just be mindful of my surroundings, and I’ll constantly pay attention to the cars next to me and in front of me and as well as – oh, one danger I didn’t mention before is car doors opening – yeah, my brother, who also rides his bike, he got hit by a car door. People don’t normally look out of their sideview mirror before they swing the door open and that’s a dangerous thing, so I try not to get too close to the parked cars.**

[f/u Q: Was your brother injured?]

**He got a pretty nasty bruise across his shoulder and chest, yes.**

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

**Oh -- I ride in the City often, so I’ve seen cyclists cutting through traffic, and that’s extremely dangerous. You know, swerving in -- and not riding the bike lanes, first of all –dangerous -- and then cutting through traffic -- dangerous, as well as riding against traffic, I don’t understand why so many people ride against traffic, so it’s -- very dangerous thing. Yeah, those are the things that really stand out to me.**

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 have to say, try to plan your route ahead of time – map it out, try to stick to the bike paths as much as possible, where there is any. Go with the flow of traffic, do not go against traffic, be mindful – do not be distracted, do not answer your phone or look down to your phone. Try to keep both hands on the – on the handlebars. Stop at the red lights, stop at the red lights, and stop at the red lights. That goes for stop signs as well, just -- Even if you’re going to go through it, at least give yourself enough time to react if you have to, but I’ve definitely seen some things where people do not obey the traffic signals and they -- I mean, that’s super dangerous.**

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. I’m riding, I am looking at least a block ahead of me, I’m looking at – using my peripheral vision to look both to my left and right, as well as glancing from side to side, just checking to see if any pedestrians are trying to, like, cross in between parked cars, because they don’t all cross on the corners, and making sure that somebody just doesn’t dart out and I run into them. Looking for -- looking -- as I’m riding along the bike lane, if there’s parked vehicles towards my right or left, I try to pay attention, if I can see through, to make sure somebody’s not sitting inside, where a potential door could fly open. And I’m pretty much just aware of my surroundings, listening -- as I said before, I used to ride with headphones on years ago, and I realized just how dangerous it is, because I couldn’t really hear the traffic around me too well, so -- just be mindful visually as well as audibly what is around you.**

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

**Stop at the signals, at the – and look both ways.**

* Traffic signs and signals

**Same thing – obey the traffic signs.**

* Right-of-way

**Don’t assume you have it. I did – and I flipped over and almost got hit.**

* Pedestrians

**Are never aware that you’re there.**

* Speed

**This is a tough one for me, because I do ride quickly. The thing is, though – I don’t ride quickly everywhere – once I’m in -- you know, I have a clear path ahead of me, I do like to build up speed but I would have to say, speed, don’t – give yourself enough time to stop safely, I would say.**

* Respect

**I believe that respect for the road is as -- go as far as how safe you want to be. I think you respect vehicles on the same road, sharing the same road with you, then you can hope to gain that type of respect; if you cut a vehicle off, don’t expect that vehicle not to do the same to you.**

* Trucks, buses

**Try to stay clear from them – they have a much harder time seeing you, their view is limited compared to regular pedestrian cars, passenger cars.**

* Parked cars

**Watch for those doors. And, there’s not many people signal before they pull out of a parking spot, so I always try to check and see if there’s a driver sitting in the seat of a parked car.**

* “Taking the lane”

**Yeah, I think that that’s just a -- you’re asking for trouble there, that’s just a recipe for disaster. As I said before, many drivers are – especially in Brooklyn and within the City – many drivers are driving distracted, as well as, there are some who have some potential road rage issues, so you doing that can just aggravate someone to, you know, a dangerous level, so I don’t recommend that.**

* Pet peeves

**Pet peeves -- let’s see– pet peeves, I would have to say -- do I have any pet peeves? Yeah, for me, it’s it’s it’s – I don’t – I hate when people go against traffic --and I’m not just talking about going against vehicular traffic – I don’t like when bicyclists ride on the wrong side of the bike lane. I’ve had experiences with that on a daily basis, where there’s a cyclist, and I’m in the bike lane and going the correct direction, and the cyclist is also coming, you know, head-on with me in the wrong side of the bike lane, (*garbled*).**

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

**Okay – this was -- actually, this was a pleasant experience. I thank you for offering me this opportunity to share with you.**

[I certainly appreciate your willingness to participate and taking the time to share with me. The information you gave me I think is going to be very valuable.]

**Well, I’m glad I can be of any type of assistance, so I thank you once again. This was a very – I think this is very important. I’m a avid cyclist, not just for leisure but as far as my commute to and from work, and I actually just got my wife riding bicycle as well and she commutes to work – it’s a short commute for her but it still makes me very nervous at times when she’s going to work, I’m constantly reminding her to be careful to watch for other vehicles that -- or I tell her, always assume that people do not know you’re there, that they don’t see you. Make yourself known, if you have to scream out loud, if you have to ring the bell. I always ride – I would recommend also that, if you don’t have – reflectors is not enough -- I use lights on my bike, on both front and rear -- always wear a helmet, and, yeah, just be careful – share the road – do not be aggressive on your bike just because you feel that you’re a pedestrian and you have the right-of-way over a motor vehicle – assume that you’re a motorcycle so you do not -- you no longer have the right-of-way -- and, yeah, just try not to be distracted. I’ve witnessed a person text-messaging while riding and flipped his bike over because he wasn’t aware that there was a lady crossing with a young child in front of him – slammed on the brakes, flipped over. It’s senseless, you know, you’re on a bicycle, you could literally stop, stand on your two feet, check your phone if you need to, and then you can get back on and ride. So -- you know, these senseless – I believe that a lot of – a lot of – a lot of accidents that cyclists, you know, experience – I would say many of them, just like motor vehicles, are avoidable, and it just – it takes just some respect for the road, respect for the other commuters, and knowing that, you know, you’re very vulnerable. You get into an accident with a car, you’re going to get a lot more damage to yourself than the car will, so – just be careful and be mindful of your surroundings.**

[Q I’m wondering if there are any questions you thought maybe I should have asked that I didn’t.]

**All right -- I guess, one thing that I’m surprised you didn’t ask – I mean, I thought maybe you thought you did and you missed it – was: do I always wear a helmet? *(unclear statement or question)* Also, I would say – do you -- do you use hand-signals? I actually taught my wife the hand signals to use. Not that many motorists care – you can -- most motorists probably don’t even know what the hand-signals are, which they should, but I can’t say that they do – and I – I mean, everything else, I think, you pretty much got down to the more important things and the more common areas, so I think that’s about all, yeah.**

[f/u Q: Thank you. With regard to hand-signals, is that something you feel is important?]

**I think it’s good that every cyclist is at least knowledgeable on them -- know what they are in the event that – whether or not the motorists around you respect the fact that you’re doing hand-signals to make them aware of what you’re -- but I don’t think it would – it would hurt, as opposed to not doing any hand-signals and just making a quick left turn or quick right turn or stopping suddenly, because a lot of times you might not be aware of who’s behind you or how close they are, because if you’re riding at a leisurely pace and there’s someone who, even on a cycle, on a bicycle riding behind you, and they’re going quickly, if you don’t signal that you’re stopping, it’s not like a bicycle has brake lights, they can’t tell, so I think that that’s definitely something that I’ve actually used when I’ve done group rides, where I’ve done – I’ve done rides where – I do the 5-borough tour, I’ve done one that’s called Bike to the Beach, it’s a 100-mile ride from here to the Westhamptons, so I’ve ridden in very large groups, and hand-signals don’t really work for those groups, so calling out where you’re at and where you’re passing a person ahead of you is definitely one of the most important things, so that’s something that I also would add – call out if you’re behind another cyclist, you know, call out, “I’m on your left”, “Passing on your left”, things like that. I think those are very important things, and that’s the way people are aware that you’re near them or you’re coming around them, and you keep yourself safe that way – and the other person as well.**

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