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

**Interview Questions**

**#9, Williamsburg, recruited 9-16. Interviewed 9-17.**

**TO101E06.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?

**White**

1. What is your gender?

**Male**

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

**Bachelors**

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

**For my life, since I was little – 28 years**.

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

**For the last 8 years**.

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

**I think I am more safe, but I don’t know if that means that I am more careful – you know what I mean?** [How would you dist…?]  **I think people might characterize me as being not careful, but I do feel like, I’m definitely looking out for pedestrians and I’m also looking out for not getting hurt -- myself. So -- But I have my own kind of ideas about how to do that.**

[f/u Q: what do you think other people might say?]

**Biker going the wrong way is not good. And that – you know – I mean -- I go through red lights, I go the wrong way, I pretty much just ride any type of way that I want to, except for not on the sidewalks, and that’s about it.**

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

**Yes**. [f/u Q: May I ask: More than one?] **Yeah, I’ve been doored a number of times, and -- but not for several years, but I definitely had some period of dooring – and then one time I did get kind of, like -- I had committed to an intersection without realizing that it was a two-way street until, like, the last second and then saw that I was imminently about to be hit, so I did get hit from the left side, but I was fine.** [Wow. Okay.] **Yep. So that was also a good lesson.** [Say that again?] **That was a good lesson.**

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?)

**Just getting around – just, like, pretty much for whatev- any reason – all the reasons that you have listed on this thing.**

[f/u Q: Do you bicycle as part of your job?]

**Sometimes – yeah – yeah – well, just more, I mean , to – yeah, yeah, I guess I have bicycled as part of my job.**

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

**Pretty much every day.**

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

**I would say, at least an hour – I mean, like, if you add it up, like, each little ride, or, like – I mean, you know what I mean? Or, like, the whole day?** [Yeah, I guess, the whole day, probably --yeah.] **Yeah, like, more – the minimum of an hour, I would say – maybe more.**

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

**You know, about an – I mean, it’s pretty -- There’s a lot of cars in New York, so, you know.**

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

**About I guess maybe 40%, let’s say.**

*Primary study questions:*

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

**Well, it’s potentially extremely dangerous – and also, most of the time, it seems fine. Like, I feel like -- I feel like, since people really do ride a whole lot, so cars are pretty accustomed to interacting – you know – like, it’s not odd that you’re on a bike.**

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

**Other – well, you know -- Road conditions, other riders, other people, and other cars and trucks – and weather.**

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

**I think I just generally try to be really perceiving of what is going on, and then – and then imagining how -- my safe route through all of that – you know – and then really focusing – like, I guess just -- also just being really open to the idea that, like, that people will just do all sorts of unexpected things, so, you know, you have to kind of – not – you know – just pay -- be paying attention. Know that your bike is -- Know whether or not your brakes work before you go riding -- and stuff like that.**

1. Are there dangers or hazards that are difficult or impossible for a bicycle rider to see and react to? Are there particular things you do while riding to avoid them?

**I’m sure that there are – but generally, like, you know, you can reduce them by really paying attention, I feel like – also just by knowing when there’s -- when you are lacking information, you know – like, see -- like if there is a real blind corner or something, or trying to take in any -- even, like, looking under -- you know, if you can see under vehicles, sometimes you can see that there’s somebody’s feet there, you know, like -- there’s a lot of stuff that you can notice. So – anyway – So I feel like, of course, I’d be crazy to say that there’s not things that are impossible for a rider to see and react to, but also, like, that doesn’t mean that we have to be lazy.**

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

**Well – riding a bicycle.** [f/u Q: any specific behaviors?] **Not really – I mean, just knowing -- or not knowing how to ride a bicycle, I guess. Or just sort of – I don’t know --- I might consider it dangerous, is just being too aggressive and -- and just not, like, respecting the others on the road.**

[f/u Q: With regard to respect, what do you think are important things for bicycle riders to do to respect others?]

**To never get upset with pedestrians, and to – and to yield to them completely, and then to -- to generally be – out of the -- out – so, like, give cars a pass. And to be predictable – like, to not just be –like -- if you’re going to do something, you want to be signaling, you want to, you know, just sort of be looking to make sure that the way is clear. But I feel like it’s less out of respect for the cars and more – with the cars -- with the cars, it’s more just like, I don’t want to get hit by a car, you know. So it’s really important to me that I’m looking out for them – and then with the people, I feel like – people, you know, like -- since they don’t have any mode of conveyance, then they sort of are the primary ones to be respected, you know. Like, I have a thing – Like, like, a car has a thing that weighs a lot more than me, and I have a thing that weighs a lot more than just a person, so – and also, I’m able to travel very -- much more quickly, so – I don’t know -- I feel like that’s the main thing, but -- but -- I don’t really like, sometimes I see people just yelling a lot, at, like, if somebody steps into the bike lane or if there’s some other kind of problem. People screaming, I don’t really like it.**

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 guess I feel like I would want to just maybe do it where, we would go for a ride and then I would observe what’s going on, you know. Like, it’s hard to say, because some people might do certain things just naturally very well, and other things they might do, or there might be things they do that’s weird that you didn’t even know what to think, you know. So I don’t know if I can say.**

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.

**I’m generally not biking within, like, less than three feet of, like, the parked cars that are next to my side, just so that if anything is to happen, you know, like with a door opening, I’m kind of outside of that, and then – and then I’m also just really, like, hearing if there’s any cars behind me, you know, and I’ve also very recently probably looked behind me to know if there’s anything there too, and I’m just being – you know, and I’m just going wherever I want to go. And I’m looking out for cops!**

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

**Watch out.** [f/u Q: Do you want to say anything more?] **You know, like, if there’s a red light and there’s a police officer right there, don’t just blow through it. If you come to the light and, you know, you go slow and you see that there’s absolutely no cars that are going to be crossing through the intersection and there’s not any people there, then just go – because, it’s like -- you’re going to get ahead of all the cars that are on your same street, because they’re -- they have to stay at the light, so if you’re able to go through the intersection, then you can bike with no cars around you, so it’s better, so just do it. But not if there’s any cops, you know. So – that’s that.**

* Traffic signs and signals

**Always be looking at them.**

* Right-of-way

**Pedestrians number one, then cars, then bikes.** [f/u Q: In that order, are you saying?] **I think so, because pedestrians have the right just because they’re frail, cars have the right because they’re huge, and then bikes are maneuverable and quick and light, you know -- so it’s just like – we have a much – since we have more ways that we can choose, maybe we have the, like, last right-of-way, I feel like.**

* Pedestrians

**Not paying attention.** [f/u Q: I know you have already said some things about riding around pedestrians – any other thoughts about how to ride safely around pedestrians?] **Just really see what the people are up to, like, be aware if people are aware of you or not, you know, like – try to -- I feel like one thing that happens too is that it’s almost, like, good to just really, like -- like, you have to be aware of where all the pedestrians are but, like, if you just stare at them, then sometimes people can almost maybe feel like, they get into this, like, pause panic mode, like if somebody just inadvertently steps in front of you – like, if somebody just, like, walks into the bike lane and they’re not paying attention, sometimes then they will look, like – so even though you’ve already just decided, like like I guess – what am I trying to say? – like, some- you can -- you can see how somebody’s walking and then – and then just sort of, like, set your trajectory so you’re going to pass just behind them if they continue at their present rate, you know. But then sometimes people will -- so you’ll sort of have that in mind if you see this person, like, just bumbling into the road or whatever, and then what will happen is, like, sometimes then they will look or they’ll hear you coming or whatever, and then they just -- they look up, and then they get scared and they pause, and so then you get into this thing where, like, oh now I have to go ahead of you, or, like, or are you going to go forward or whatever? or I’m just going to stop, you know, like -- so I feel like, one good thing to do is, like, just really kind of, like, try to, with your gaze even, communicate to others that, like, you -- you are going to go past them – like, like -- you don’t want to, like, be staring at them necessarily, and more just sort of, like -- that they see that you’re focused, like, on the – I don’t know – way around them -- I guess. And just don’t get so, like, hot and mad at the people, because it’s, like, of course they’re not paying attention, you know.**

* Speed

**Speed is -- as much as possible! Like, you know, but be careful, and know -- always be, like, sure that, like, whatever dangers you imagine could come up, you should be at a speed that you can appropriately deal with them.**

* Respect

**Well, you know, I think it’s good, it helps if you have it.**

* Trucks, buses

**Trucks and buses are big and scary, but fine. Just, you know, like -- Again, you just have to be aware. And look out for lift-gates and stuff like that – you know – Sometimes when a car is close – when a -- It’s never happened to me or anything, but, like, I’ve had some close calls, I feel like, with just not exactly seeing that there was a lift-gate projecting out, you know. So -- that would be bad!**

* Parked cars

**Oh yeah -- Parked cars are just, you know, dangerous because of the dooring, mainly, I feel like. So -- You want to almost be looking if there are people in cars – you know – and just – I don’t know -- That’s another reason why I generally, like, don’t feel that bad about going the wrong way a lot – it’s because I feel like, if I’m going the wrong way, I’m much more able to hug the parked cars, because I have a better view inside of all the vehicles, and also, like, if a door does happen to open, it’s just – it’s not going to be nearly as bad. So – you know -- And then you can see when cars are coming and stuff. And I said earlier that I never go on the sidewalk, but, like, sometimes if I’m going the wrong way and then I see, like, it’s kind of a tight street, and then there’s a car way down there that’s going to be coming and I know it’s going to be, like, kind of a funny little thing, I’ll just sort of, like – you know -- if it’s in a quiet area I’ll just go get up on the sidewalk for, like, twenty feet while the car goes by or something. But always very slowly, and sometimes even if I’m on the sidewalk I just take one of my feet off and, like, just kind of, like, ride and coast on one side of the bike, you know – so -- just so that I can -- I’m, like half dismounted.**

* “Taking the lane”

**Oh yeah, I know all about taking the lane.** [And so, how -- ?] **Sometimes you just do it.** [Pardon me?] **Sometimes you do it. Sometimes you have to do it. Like, also, I’ve ridden around with a trailer a bunch, like, when I was doing it more for work. And -- in that case, you definitely just, you know, take over. That’s that. And when there’s real openings, you know, I let people pass and everything. But I think we’re allowed, right? As bicyclists.**

[f/u Q: So you think that, as far as riding safely, taking the lane is a good thing?]

**I think sometimes it can be called for.**

* Pet peeves

**Pet peeves? I don’t know. I mean, I’m so thankful to be able to ride around, that’s the main reason I like to live here – I feel like. Because – just because -- So, my main pet peeves are that -- I would actually say -- relate more to the enforcement, and the – because, like, I have paid a lot of money to the -- New York, you know, for going through red lights and stuff. One good thing –** [Do they make you go to court for that?] **Basically you get a ticket, and you can just pay it…… (discussion of procedures and consequences and other observations).**

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

**I guess that about covers it.**

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