

THE HUNTING DYNASTY

Behaviors of Cyclists

Cognitive-behavioral quirks that affect the
decision to cycle

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At A Quick Glance

Cognitive-behavioral quirks that affect the decision to cycle:

1. Fear
 - a. Of roads
 - b. Of traffic
 - c. Of one's abilities
 - d. For personal safety
 - e. Theft
 - f. Of motor vehicles
 - g. Of aggressive driver behaviour
2. Geography
 - a. Unpredictability of weather
 - b. Terrain - hilly
 - c. Distance (and time taken to travel from home to work)
 - d. Access to well-maintained cycle routes
3. Personal factors
 - a. Clothes (cycling attire, changing into formal attire (and access to showers and changing rooms)
 - b. Make-up, hair (especially women)
 - c. Cycling style (doing it right, not slowing down others)
 - d. Sexuality / style (physical exposure and embarrassment, may lead to sexual harassment)
 - e. Status (reflection on economic and social status)
 - f. Age (ability to exercise)
 - g. Ethnicity (reflection on social standing)
 - h. Dislike to give up comfort of car (inertia)
 - i. Perceived difficulty in combining shopping, family commitments to cycling trip

- j. Lack of confidence of one's capabilities
 - k. Inability to comprehend technical information about cycle technology
 - l. Dislike for exercise
 - m. Dislike for exposure to fumes
4. Cost
- a. Cycle
 - b. Accessories
 - c. Maintenance
5. Marketing
- a. How it is packaged – name, appeal, target group
 - b. Ease of access – integrating with Oyster, easy for the casual cyclist to understand?
 - c. Marketing as 'cycling to work' – is it fun?
 - d. Difference in perception of cycling (positive) and cyclists (negative)

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Understanding the Demography – Men, white, affluent

In London, around a third of cyclists are women, in contrast to cities in countries such as the Netherlands and Denmark, where women typically make more journeys by cycle than men (Garrard, 2003). More strikingly, in a city where more than one in three residents belong to a minority ethnic group (Bains & Klodawski, 2007), 86% of male cyclists and 94% of female cyclists identify themselves as White (Green, Steinbach, Datta, & Edwards, 2010). Cyclists are also more likely to come from more affluent social groups, with on average 1.5% of those living in households earning under £15,000 cycling, compared with 2.2% of those living in households earning over £35,000 (Green et al., 2010). With the white affluent men

Table 1
Percentage of adults who are cyclists by ethnicity.

| Ethnicity ^a | Men | | Women | |
|------------------------|------|-----------|-------|-----------|
| | 2001 | 2005–2007 | 2001 | 2005–2007 |
| White | 3.4% | 3.6% | 1.3% | 1.6% |
| Black | 1.9% | 1.4% | 0.1% | 0.2% |
| Asian | 0.9% | 0.8% | 0.1% | 0.0% |
| Other/Chinese | 2.1% | 2.3% | 0.7% | 0.5% |
| Total | 2.9% | 3.0% | 1.0% | 1.2% |

Source: Transport for London, LATS 2001, LTDS 2005–2007.

^a Aggregated from self-identified UK census categories.

being the majority of the cyclists in London, the Boris Bikes scheme has been called the ‘posh-boy toy’.¹ It is important to provide people with very many, very diverse, positive and affirming representations of both cycling practice and cycling identities.

Ethnic communities:

For many ethnic communities, cycling is inappropriate within their communities, or simply invisible as an adult transport mode. The normative practises that determine the relationships between ethnicity, age and (different kinds of) cycling are likely to be differently enacted in other locations. Currently, in London, the resonances of cycling reflect its unusualness. It can offer a certain bourgeois distinction to those whose identities are not threatened by the possibility of poverty being the reason for cycling; it can offer the ultimate in autonomous, efficient travel; it can provide a signal of empowered gendered identity.²

¹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/bike-blog/2011/jul/10/boris-bikes-hire-scheme-london>

² Steinbach, R., Green, J., & Datta, J. (2011). Cycling and the city: A case study of how gendered, ethnic and class identities can shape healthy transport choices. *Social Science & Medicine*.

Issues women face:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Lack of confidence about being able to safely navigate | Crawford, S., Garrard, J., Hakman, N. (2006). |
| Do not want to slow others down (on group rides) | |
| Not knowing how to repair a flat tire | |
| Intimidated by overly technical information from experts / bike shops | |
| Juggling the development of many new skills at once | |
| Cultural norms – appearance | |
| Adverse traffic conditions | |
| Driver aggression | |
| Self-consciousness, in terms of performance and appearance, at not having suitable bicycling clothing that fits and is flattering | Janov, J. (2005) |
| Might be responsible for household errands (grocery shopping, picking up children etc.) and may perceive this difficult on a bicycle | Krizek, K., Johnson, P., Tilahun, N. (2004) |
| Women tend to be more risk-averse and bicycling is considered risky | |

Fear

Numerous studies have shown fear to be the most significant barrier to cycling (British Medical Association 1992; Davies *et al* 1997; Gardner 1998; Gardner and Ryley 1997; Pearce *et al* 1998; Ryley 2004). One study based on quantitative and qualitative research, *Barriers to Cycling* (CTC *et al* 1997, 7), concludes ‘the most prominent practical barriers perceived to be deterring potential cyclists were danger and safety’. The UK Department for Transport (2007, 2) reports that 47 per cent of adults ‘strongly agree that “the idea of cycling on busy roads frightens me”’.

Daley *et al.* (2007) also found that danger was a significant barrier for occasional and non-cyclists who had lower levels of skills than regular riders. It is possible that inexperienced cyclists may be at higher risk on the roads in comparison to experienced cyclists, who are likely to have developed skills and confidence with exposure to cycling in traffic.³

Fears of cycling may also include fear of being on view, of working one’s (perhaps ‘unsightly’, perhaps ‘sightly’, certainly gendered) body in public, fear of harassment and violence from strangers (on safety fears of using cycle paths, see Harrison 2001, 23; McClintock 1992, 28, 35; Ravenscroft 2004; Ravenscroft *et al* 2002).

Especially for novice and returning cyclists, the potential psychological barriers are massive; people are afraid of appearing inept, and most people do not currently receive formal training in either how to ride or how to repair a bike.

Also, there is fear of using one’s body, of sensing one’s body, of getting sweaty, of experiencing ‘hard work’, of hills. Other fears are more connected to issues of identity and include the fear of ridicule, of losing status, of riding a gendered, classed, raced and stigmatised vehicle, of undermining one’s existing sense of identity.

Fear has driven huge numbers of cyclists off UK roads (Hillman *et al* 1990). This downward trend in levels of cycling results in the remaining cyclists feeling less safe because those in a minority generally perceive themselves to be less safe than those in the majority. But these remaining cyclists are also objectively less safe, because other road users become less considerate of cyclists as cyclists become less common (and more strange) and as these road users themselves become less likely to also sometimes cycle. The more people who cycle, the safer cycling becomes; the fewer people who cycle, the more dangerous cycling becomes (Jacobsen 2003).

³ Van Bekkum, J. E. (2011). Understanding and encouraging cycle commuting in workplace setting: A psychological perspective.

The anxieties of family, friends and colleagues can all work against a desire to cycle, just as they can encourage currently more socially-acceptable demonstrations of care through car-dependent practices, such as the chauffeuring of children (Maxwell 2001).

The fear of theft of cycles and fear for one's personal safety, depending on the surrounding environmental and social context are other fears that need to be challenged (Cavil & Watkin 2007).

People's fears of the (im)probabilities of injury and death are culturally constructed. For instance, cycling in London became substantially less fearful, relative to travel by bus and underground train, in the wake of the bomb attacks on public transport in July 2005; consequently the level of cycling increased significantly immediately after the bombings, but then dropped back down again (though remaining above its previous level) once people's fears of travelling by underground and bus had subsided (Milmo 2006).

All these fears of cycling are socially, geographically and historically variable. Unequally socially distributed, they will tend currently in the UK to be greater among women than men, among those people riding with children than those without, and among ethnic groups with little history and experience of cycling. Unequally spaced, they will tend to be lesser in places with higher levels of cycling and where cycling is correspondingly closer to 'ordinary practice', such as Cambridge in the UK. Fears of cycling also shift over time. High-wheeling cyclists feared 'coming a cropper'; in the late nineteenth century, many women undoubtedly feared the damage cycling might do to their respectability (Simpson 2001); and today, there is the omnipresent fear of traffic.⁴

⁴ Horton, D. (2007). Fear of cycling. *Cycling and Society*, , 133-152.

Weather

The weather posed the second biggest challenge overall. Mayes et al., (1996) found bad weather to be a common barrier for people who do not cycle and suggested this is an excuse that non-cyclists hide behind. Van's (2011) study shows that not only non-cyclists but infrequent and new cyclists also perceive the weather to be a significantly bigger challenge than experienced cyclists. A possible explanation is that cyclists develop strategies to cope with weather conditions over time (e.g. buying the appropriate waterproof clothing).

Women perceived weather to be more of a challenge than men. This may also stem from women's aversion to risk taking (Byrnes, Miller & Williams, 1999) as inclement weather can increase danger on the roads from poor visibility and wet surfaces. Another possible reason is that women often have more complex needs, in relation to their physical appearance (hair and make-up) than men and poor weather conditions can adversely affect appearance.⁵

How hilly the terrain is, the distance to and from work, the time taken during rush hours and whether routes that are easy to travel in and are well-maintained are important consideration for cyclists.

⁵ Van Bekkum, J. E. (2011). Understanding and encouraging cycle commuting in workplace setting: A psychological perspective.

Personal Factors

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Car culture – bias towards car use, status symbol, expression of sexuality Exposure to fumes Physical embarrassment, sexual harassment Complexity of bike design | Mayes et al., (1996) |
| Direct barriers –personal image, cycle technology Indirect barriers – competing transport modes, alternative activities | Davies et al., (1997) |
| Distance, age, health, inertia, family commitments, time-consuming, lack of facilities to change at work-place | http://www.bicyclealliance.org/getinvolved/promote.html#24 |
| Lack of time and inhaling car fumes | Garrard et al. (2006) |
| Lifestyle reasons - belief that cycling detracts from sexual image, that the bicycle is impractical for transporting a young family or that frailty in old age prevents cycling Indirect deterrents - the cultural dominance of the car i.e. car users never consider the possibility of using other travel modes Direct deterrents - e.g. cycling's lack of status, sexual harassment | Crawford (2006) |
| Perceived barriers to physical activity | (Bauman et al., 2002; Trost et al., 2002). |

Costs

The cost of purchasing bikes, accessories and maintenance also act as deterrents (Mayes et al., 1996, Davies et al., 1997). Lower education and lower income seem to be linked to lower levels of cycle use (de Geus et al., 2008; Plaut, 2005; Reynolds, Harris, Teschke, Cipton & Winters, 2009). It is hence important to make the cost and the opportunity cost of owning a cycle minimal.

Marketing

The name of the product and the proponent of the scheme can be quite important. Even though Barclays put in a couple of million pounds into the cycle hire scheme, it is now called Boris bikes because it is catchier and received affirmation when Arnold Schwarzenegger tweeted about his experience referring to the cycles as Boris bikes.⁶

It is important to consider how easy it is to sign on to the scheme. Whether the scheme is easy to meld into one's schedule, modify based on existing schemes, incorporating features of other plans are important considerations. For example, is it possible to integrate the Oyster card into the PleaseCycle scheme (maybe as a reward / incentive)?

A market that needs to be explored further is the casual cyclists who do not need expert advice or professional attire and only require easy-to-understand maintenance and repair advice.⁷ Does PleaseCycle's BikeConcierge cater to this?

By marketing cycling as something most people don't like to do, a way to get to work, is PleaseCycle being most effective? Could the attitude towards cycling be made something 'more fun'?⁸

The public images of cycling and cyclists can act as barriers or facilitators of cycling. The perception of a cyclist as "brave", "fit", 'environmentally friendly', or "foolish", "inconsiderate" or "hazardous" can influence a non-rider's choice of whether to ride or not in different contexts (Skinner and Rosen, 2007). A study in Sydney revealed the public's views on cycling and cyclists were revealed. While 'cycling' was generally viewed as a positive, environmentally friendly activity, the actions of some 'cyclists' were disliked, which influenced views about cycling, particularly among non-riders. A cycling acceptability hierarchy emerged; with recreational riding at the top, followed by cycling for sport and exercise, with transport / commuter cycling towards the bottom. While there was greater acceptance of recreational riding, riding for transport was not viewed as a mainstream activity. There is a need to improve the public acceptability of cycling and change public norms so it is seen as an everyday activity that can be undertaken by almost anyone, without the need for special clothing, expensive equipment or limited to purpose built facilities.⁹

Is the product being marketed to the right target group in the right manner?¹⁰

⁶ <http://thisbigcity.net/what-londons-cycle-hire-scheme-got-right-and-what-it-got-wrong/>

⁷ <http://thisbigcity.net/how-would-you-radically-rethink-cycling-in-london/>

⁸ <http://thisbigcity.net/radically-rethinking-cycling-in-london/>

⁹ Daley, M., & Rissel, C. (2011). Perspectives and images of cycling as a barrier or facilitator of cycling. *Transport Policy*, 18(1), 211-216.

¹⁰ Gatersleben, B., & Appleton, K. M. (2007). Contemplating cycling to work: Attitudes and perceptions in different stages of change. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 41(4), 302-312

| Type | Barriers | Actionables |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Never contemplated | Personal barriers | |
| Contemplated but never tried | Structural barriers - lack of cycle lanes, hills, weather | <p>Motivate and encourage to develop specific action plans.</p> <p>Eg: Assistance in determining and testing a good cycle route, well organised cycling to work events and support with borrowing and buying a bicycle</p> |
| Prepared to cycle | Lack of facilities and personal barriers such as work and family commitments | <p>Develop specific action plans to help juggle their new travel behaviour with their daily commitments and eventually establish a new travel habit.</p> <p>Eg: More flexible working hours so that people have the time to combine various activities and to try out and establish their new travel plans</p> |
| Occasional cyclists | More cycle lanes | <p>Provide positive feedback and social support.</p> <p>Eg: Feedback information on issues such as fitness improvements and environmental or financial savings. Flexibility because of having a cycle (cycling past stationary traffic) might appeal to some (those who rely on public transport, get stuck in traffic, move from individual to collective transport) [discounting - behavioural decisions are more strongly influenced by behavioural consequences which are immediate than to consequences which are more distant in time and space]</p> |
| Regular cyclists | More parking and changing facilities | |

Recommendations

1. Help prospective clients get through their fears by highlighting PleaseCycle's exclusive features as part of BikeConcierge.
2. Show how CycleHub can help circumvent geographical issues through planning.
3. Circumvent personal factors that deter people from cycling by showcasing the overarching effectiveness of BikeConcierge. Also bring to the fore the glow factor through BikeMiles.
4. Highlight how BikeConcierge's insurance and maintenance plans are employee-friendly.

References

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