

Driving Anger Among German Cyclists – A Diary Study

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Keywords: Anger, driving anger, cycling.

Abstract: Although the numbers of accidents and fatal injuries on German roads seem to have been decreasing over the past years, the number of accidents in which cyclists have been involved is still high. This trend is especially observable and pronounced in cities. At the same time there are more and more reports of driving anger and road rage among cyclists in bigger German cities like Berlin. Traffic psychological research shows that especially anger and aggression among road users lead to maladjusted driving and thereby to a higher accident risk. Therefore, our current study focuses on cyclists' traffic related anger or driving anger. To ensure a huge range of anger provoking events, in a preceding study cyclists discussed anger provoking events they have experienced in daily traffic in focus groups. These results were rated regarding their anger intensity, clustered within the groups, and afterwards aggregated by independent raters with regard to their traffic context. In this current, additional study we asked participants to keep a bicycle driving diary registering all anger provoking events they had experienced during one week. These results served to secure and specify the results of our first, preceding study. Results of both studies showed that most anger provoking events occurred when it came to conflicts between car drivers and cyclists. Especially the conflicts with car drivers seemed to cause more anger among cyclists than conflicts with other cyclists or pedestrians. Implications for further research as well as for applied issues will be outlined.