

# Study: Cyclists are more law-abiding than drivers

By Peter Flax, Outside

If you live in the U.S., you've surely heard an oral history of naughty cyclists. There's a widely held perspective that city and suburban streets are overrun with lawbreaking riders—a swarm of oblivious, entitled cyclists rolling red lights, blasting through stop signs, slaloming down one-way streets, then (hypocritically!) flipping off drivers.

As someone who has driven hundreds of thousands of miles over the past 34 years, and ridden a bike for even longer, my point of view is different. Everyone seems to break the rules, whether they're on two wheels or four. The big difference is that some do it on an 18-pound bicycle and some do it in a 4,000-pound SUV that can cause exponentially greater harm.

But people who don't bike don't see it that way—they just see people on bikes charging through those stop signs. And it's nearly impossible to combat their perceptions or even engage in meaningful debate without hard evidence of a different reality. And to date, very little research has produced quantifiable data comparing how drivers and cyclists actually behave on the road.

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