

2015

Race, Gender, Sexuality, Ability, Identity and Cycling, Blog 8

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ENDO: transforming cycle culture

Race, Gender, Sexuality, Ability, Identity and Cycling — UNIV 291 SEC 039



About ashleyketchum

Author Archive | ashleyketchum

Free tattoo?!

by [Ashleyketchum](#) on [September 28, 2015](#) in [Discussion](#)

As some of you may know, Absolute Art Tattoo did some free Richmond-inspired tattoos. I found an [article](#) that tells which tattoo was the most popular one! Thought it was interesting...

I really wanted the Fan one, but didn't get the chance! Did anyone get one of these?

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City vs. Country: Ethnography

by [Ashleyketchum](#) on [September 28, 2015](#) in [Bike ethnography](#)

Since I commute to school, I was able to see the race from both inside and outside of the city. Surprisingly, there was a pretty big difference between the two. While a lot of people that call the city home seemed to be agitated by it, the people farther away seemed to be more excited. This probably has something to do with the type of cultures in the two—cities are much more fast-paced, while people in the country like to take the scenic route.

The businesses were also affected in different ways. From what I heard and saw, local businesses and restaurants in the city suffered during the race because people were staying away from the area. I went to Galaxy Diner one night and heard whispers between staff how slow it had been all week. However, on Wednesday, when the race went all the way into Hanover County, I saw that business was booming for the local cafe beside my work. This came as a shock because I was hearing all negative, all week, and

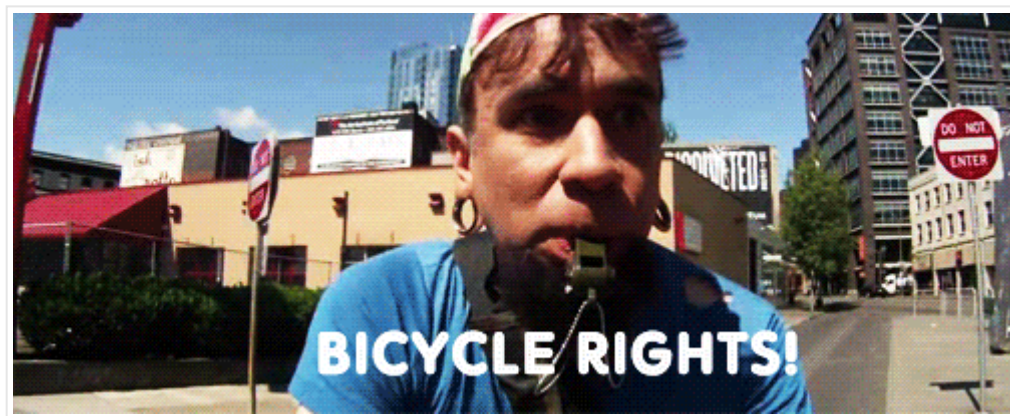
now here are all these people supporting local business as they watched cyclists pass. To me, this shows how different the city can be from the country; a lot of people in the city view anything out of the ordinary as inconvenient, while people in the country find it exciting.

One thing that I didn't realize about cycling was how seriously people take it; I mean it's definitely a professional sport. I had no idea people paid \$10,000 for bicycles. I was surprised how by how many cyclists I saw this past week, and even more surprised that people who were obviously competing were riding around even when they weren't racing. I was amazed when I heard people talk about how they biked here from miles away, just to watch the race. The race definitely brought all different types of people from all over the world together, and it was really a sight to see whether you actually enjoyed it or not.

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Critical Mass

by Ashleyketchum on September 23, 2015 in **Artifact Analysis**



Critical Mass is a movement in many cities where cyclists take to the streets in large groups and ride. This started in San Francisco in the 1990's, when a group decided they would bike home from work together once a month. This has occurred a few times in Richmond as well. To some, this is bothersome and annoying, but it does get people thinking; cyclists are a huge part of our city's community, yet they are barely an afterthought when it comes to city planning, or even the well-being of citizens.

We are a city that is hosting a world-wide cycling race, yet we don't even have bike lanes for our own community? Many drivers do not pay attention to the "three-foot" law ([learn more here](#)), completely ignoring the safety of the cyclist. It seems like it would take something like a Critical Mass ride to get people to see that cyclists are a part of this city.

During Critical Mass, cyclists block traffic with their leisurely pedaling group. To the cyclists, this is nothing more than a "get-together and ride", but others see it as protest because it brings together large groups of people that have the same ideals. Some motor vehicle drivers get so mad at these "protests" that there have been instances where participants have been run over; if this doesn't stress the importance of cyclists' safety, nothing will.

If Richmond will basically shut down the entire city for a week, a little Critical Mass demonstration couldn't hurt anyone. In fact, it would probably raise awareness that the city has never seen before: "It is enough to stop and make you think of a city where most people rode, for the environment, for camaraderie, for their mental and physical health."-Mark Holmberg, CBS News

In fact, a large part of this movement is not "anti-cars" like some seem to think when they are stuck behind in traffic, but is more "pro-human."

"When I bicycle around town I see things happening and can stop and explore them in depth with no hassles. I also see my friends and acquaintances and can stop and speak with them directly. This, combined with the absence of mass media pumping into my brain in the isolation of my car, sets up organic links and direct channels of human experience and communication." (Carlsson, "Bicycling Over the Rainbow")

In short (TL;DR): Richmond could benefit from regular Critical Mass demonstrations by letting everyone in the city know how important cycling is to our community.

<http://wtvr.com/2013/06/01/holmberg-critical-mass-bike-ride-slows-the-flow-down-to-easy-biking-speed/>
http://www.sirc.org/articles/critical_mass.shtml

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Focus

by **Ashleyketchum** on September 17, 2015 in **Introduction/focus selection**

Hi all! My name is Ashley McCann. I'm a Religious Studies major, and maybe possibly thinking about a Gender/Sexuality minor. What I'm excited about focusing on during the race is:

- Gender/sexuality, especially in regards to #nopodiumgirls and UCI regulations; focusing on differences in expectations.
- How different cultures blend with cycling culture (scraper bikes, critical mass, etc.). It would be fun to study different cycling cultures from around the world.

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