

Cycling safety and spatial inequality in Bogotá, Colombia

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The positive impacts offered by cycling as a mode of transport to health, the environment and traffic congestion are widely recognised, and supported by research (Handy, van Wee, and Kroesen 2014). However, while there has been sustained growth in cycling worldwide over the last two decades, it has often been accompanied by an increase in traffic accidents and deaths involving cyclists (Broe et al. 2017; Loreta et al. 2016). Many of the recommendations proposed to reduce such negative consequences seem to rely primarily on individual behavioural changes or segregating infrastructure; however, the positive impacts of such actions are not yet proven (Billot-Grasset, Amoros, and Hours 2016; Shinar et al. 2018; Dozza 2017; Wegman, Zhang, and Dijkstra 2012). While these actions are certainly necessary, research considering social, spatial and economic disparities and their relation to urban cycling is very scarce within cycling studies and have the potential to benefit cycling safety by expanding its underlying understanding (Brown 2016). Additionally, there is a clear disproportion between the research about cycling safety made in Europe, Oceania and North America when compared to the rest of the world – in particular, Latin America. While debates around transport and inequalities are prevalent in Latin American cities, not enough attention has been paid to cycling. In this study, through the archival analysis of media coverage of cycling accidents in Bogotá, Colombia, it is proposed that this dialogue could be beneficial to understanding cycling safety in these understudied cities and other unequal urban contexts.