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## Bicyclist, 19, injured in crash with U-Haul

Posted September 1, 2009 04:46 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Globe Correspondent

A 19-year-old bicyclist suffered multiple injuries in a collision with a U-Haul van as she crossed a Newton roadway Tuesday morning, police said.

The bicyclist, whose name was not released, was taken by ambulance to Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, said police Lieutenant Bruce Apotheker. She was riding east across Walnut Street from Lakewood Road when she collided with the northbound vehicle at 9:51 a.m., Apotheker said.

Police did not know the extent of the bicyclist's injuries or the cause of the accident, as it remained under investigation. Apotheker said the cyclist was not wearing a helmet, but police did not know whether that was a factor in her injuries.

The 27-year-old driver has not been charged.

Officials said the bicyclist was not in a crosswalk when the accident occurred and that there is no crosswalk nearby.

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### 12 COMMENTS SO FAR...

1. Why is the presence of a crosswalk relevant? If a bicyclist is using a crosswalk, he or she must be OFF the bicycle and walking. Crosswalks are for pedestrians. Bicycles are vehicles, and bicycles must follow traffic rules. I hope the young woman recovers fully, but these bicyclists have got to follow the rules of the road and it will be safer for everyone.

Posted by [highandinside](#) September 1, 09 07:06 PM

2. What does a crosswalk have to do with this story? Bicycles must follow the rules of the road, not the rules for pedestrians.

Also, did the bicycle collide with the van or the other way around? The article spells it out both ways, and there's a big difference between the two.

Posted by [MITBeta](#) September 1, 09 07:14 PM

3. The crosswalk is irrelevant. A bicyclist does not have to be in or near a crosswalk. A bicyclist is a vehicle, like a car.

Posted by [Jeff](#) September 1, 09 10:20 PM

4. Like the others, I wish this young woman a speedy and complete recovery. And like the others, I wish that Mr. Rocheleau, the Globe correspondent, had (a) gotten his facts straight and (b) gotten them consistent. Either this lady collided with the van, or the van collided with her, and it -does- make a difference.

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Posted by EdA September 1, 09 11:14 PM

5. Come to Northern NJ and see groups or teams of cyclists violate every Rule Of The Road. Speed limits, stop signs, stoplights, crosswalks mean nothing to these idiots. I cannot wait until one or a group hits me in a marked crosswalk in Tenafly, NJ.

Posted by Robert II September 1, 09 11:39 PM

6. Know the facts...

The General Laws of Massachusetts

CHAPTER 90. MOTOR VEHICLES AND AIRCRAFT

Chapter 90: Section 14. Precautions for safety of other travelers:

The term "pedestrian" shall include persons operating bicycles, tricycles and similar vehicles

CHAPTER 89. LAW OF THE ROAD

Chapter 89: Section 11. Marked crosswalks; yielding right of way to pedestrians; penalty

Section 11. When traffic control signals are not in place or not in operation the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right of way, slowing down or stopping if need be so to yield, to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk

Posted by Fred September 2, 09 12:44 AM

7. It upsets me seeing people bicycling in boston traffic w/out helmets. I don't care if adults don't have a helmet law -- one spill/accident and the odds are very high for an extremely serious injury. Which will be on the driver's conscience, even if it is due to the cyclist's behavior (drive down comm ave by BU and you know what i am talking about -- scary)

Posted by bets September 2, 09 02:32 AM

8. Having been born and raised in Newton Centre, I know this area well. I have seen more than one bicyclist come bombing out of Lakewood Road, Berwick Road, or the other side streets in this area, as if there were no cars on the road. On more than one occasion, I have almost been run down by a bicyclist weaving in and out of traffic as if they felt immune from injury or death.

If bicyclists are going to claim rights like they just claimed when they got that law through the state legislature (regarding opening doors into traffic, etc.), then they ought to accept the responsibilities that come with using our streets as their personal raceways. Maybe a law penalizing reckless operation of a bicycle would be a good start.

Posted by ex-Newtonite September 2, 09 12:37 PM

9. The young woman was hit by the van. The van ran her over and the bike became lodged under the van. It seems preposterous that the driver of the van was not charged, but I hope that after a full investigation he will be charged to the fullest extent of the law. ONCE AGAIN THE WOMAN ON THE BIKE WAS HIT BY THE VAN.

Posted by concerned with roads September 2, 09 04:18 PM

10. Once again the comments in response to an article about cyclists immediately blame the victim without regard for the facts in the case or the remarkable hypocrisy of insisting that if bicyclists don't obey "the rules of the road" they deserve to be hit.

To all who feel this way, I ask you: do you follow all the rules of the road when driving in your car? Do you ever speed? Do you think there's a chance the van might have been speeding? I don't think there's much chance that the van WASN'T speeding, since pretty much every car exceeds the speed limit nearly 100% of the time.

Cyclists who ride recklessly and don't wear helmets certainly take their lives in their own hands at times. But SPEEDING CARS are what kill people.

Posted by SJB September 3, 09 01:40 PM

11. (1) Key point to resolve before people start blaming the cycling: "Police did not know the extent of the bicyclist's injuries or the cause of the accident, as it remained under investigation."  
(2) Traffic laws apply to people whether they are driving, cycling or walking. People disregard those laws frequently while doing all three, and will continue to do so until police change the area's dysfunctional road culture by aggressively enforcing laws.

(2) Why don't people publish their real names w their comments?

Posted by Louis Gudema September 6, 09 04:22 AM

12. If the driver of the van has not been cited in an accident where injury occurred it seems like a safe bet that they were not at fault.

Posted by Matthew September 6, 09 10:08 AM

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