

The pedestrian outlaw and the transformation of the cyclist: An examination of movement and identity along Lygon Street from my home to my workplace.

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At 8:20 in the morning, I was riding my bike on Lygon street, the way to my workplace in Brunswick East. My watch-ticking morning was interrupted by pedestrians walking on the street, a woman wearing puffer jacket and chit-chatting with her friend. After a while I asked myself: why can't I ride on the street when I "need" to hurry?

Lygon Street (see Figure1) is a long street that runs across the suburb of Carlton, where I live, to Brunswick East, where my workplace is located. From the shiny shopfront windows of retail stores in Carlton, to the numbers of Italian restaurants in Brunswick East, Lygon Street shows the tidy-order of the bike lanes around the restaurants and retail area. It also shows the messy-competition of territories. For example, as I ride my bike I encounter a man coming out of the Milk Bar after buying a classic morning newspaper. Another time, in front of a café, a woman with her dog waits for her coffee to come, and as there is no bike lane in front of the "little" café I have to say "passing" to let her know I'm there because this is my duty to of care to consider the danger for her.

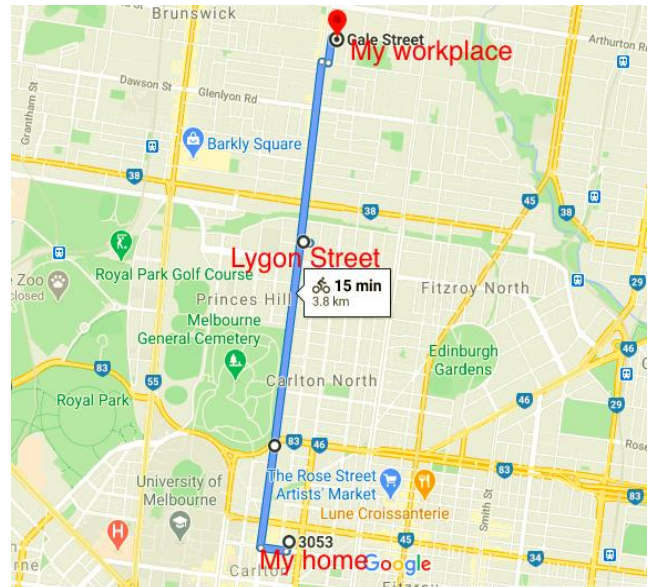


Figure 1. The route from my home to work, through Lygon Street.



Figure 2: The Milk Bar on Lygon Street. Around this area (residential), there were few bike lanes. The bike lane near the Milk Bar merges directly into the pedestrian path so I have to ride through here.

In order to have a deeper understanding of both perspectives, I decided to observe both cyclists and pedestrians' experiences by actually doing their actions (cycling and walking). As I did so I started to realise the dynamic relations of people on the street. From the perspective of the cyclists, I have observed many cyclists who did not obey the law; by "transforming" themselves from being a cyclist to a pedestrian they turn the corner quicker. The "messy" behaviour of cyclists: (sometimes they ride on both pedestrian and car lane), points out their flexibility to be a pedestrian when they get off the bike.

I was waiting on the bike lane, wanting the traffic light to tell me that I could move. But then I realised that I could turn left if I got off the bike! On another day, I saw an Uber rider do the same, but in his case he continued to ride instead of getting off. The cyclists use the space fluidly to move faster. The cyclists use the street creatively to move faster by transforming themselves. However, when I was riding I was always being scared when I passed the small path (in front of the Milk Bar) because I was afraid to hit pedestrians!

In contrast to the cyclists, the pedestrians might experience the flexibility of their movement differently. They occupy the space, walking, crossing the road (both legally and illegally), or waiting for their coffee in front of a café; perhaps, as I have

done, they drink a cream soda on the bench in front the Milk Bar in the unofficial bike path. This could be counted as one of the behaviours that affects cyclists' use of the place. Cycling (and driving) laws are designed to protect pedestrians as they are the most vulnerable ones on the street. The pedestrians are legally able to move very flexibly too, but not because they are physically able to transform into cyclists or cars. Despite the possible dangers of the flexible Uber-rider's transformation into a "pedestrian", they still enjoy flexibility in their movement on Lygon street. However, as they make choices about their movement they do so with the knowledge that they are the most vulnerable on the street, and that if they break a law they are the ones who will probably get hurt; cyclists make choices with the knowledge that their law-bending may hurt others. Pedestrians' slower, relaxed flow of time experience is facilitated by the protection of the law. Ultimately the law is designed to protect the most vulnerable being on the street, therefore others (cars and cyclists) have to take care of the pedestrians when they move on the street. Thus, the pedestrians are in some sense moving without thinking about the law: they are 'outlaws' who are ironically protected by the law. The meaning of the street for the pedestrian is slow, "free" movement from the law because of their outlaw character.



Figure 3: *An ordered landscape around Italian restaurants, Lygon Street. Everyone has to "be" in certain lanes.*

The different use of the street by cyclists and pedestrians sometimes creates disruption for each other as they aim to achieve their own use-purpose. However, the experiences of both pedestrians (moving free) and cyclists (moving fast) is sometimes disrupted by the tidy-order of the government because they establish infrastructure (e.g. signs, lanes) that controls the use of the space with power. For example, in smaller residential areas, the movement of a child crossing the road may not disrupt a cyclist riding in the "middle" of the little street. This is not the case on Lygon Street where there are clear signs for both to "fit-in-the-lanes" (see the Figure 3). The motivation of the government is to make the order on the street where it matters. The 'rules' are enacted differently in order to maintain public "safety". By contrast, around the quiet streets are residential areas where, pedestrians and cyclists' flexibility is freed, which formulates a distinctive landscape of their self-interested use of the space. Thus, another actor, the government engages the street for the purpose of public safety.

The observation of the street illuminates the different use of the space by the cyclists and pedestrians that are motivated by the different environment that they are in. The flexible movement of the cyclists and pedestrians formulates the landscape into particular relationships in everyday practices on the street. This reflects the notion of taskscapes, in which the landscapes are formulated through people's ongoing "using" of the place. Pedestrians are less constrained by the formal rules because they are the most vulnerable in any encounter with a car or a cyclist. Cyclists seem to be less vulnerable and are therefore more constrained by the official rules when they encounter a pedestrian. The geographical difference between the busy street and quiet street means that the cyclist has more flexibility to break the "rules" because there are less people and infrastructure to encounter. In this taskscape there are less pedestrians to harm and so the safety rules constrain the cyclist less.

The governmental road signs and laws control the users but they respond to the laws in the context of their geography and encounters with others: their taskscape. The geographical, infrastructural, and social relationships inform the use-purpose of cyclists and pedestrians in the context of the law: cyclists move as fast as they can, pedestrians are acting freely because they are protected by the law, and the government draws road signs to maintain peace and safety.

To write this journal, I was trying to be mindful about the difficulty of accurate representation of every person on the street. I tried to use their identifiable features as little as possible, and I am hoping that this analysis can help us to amplify the meaning of their motivations.