

# News For Thought



## Study Shows Women Who Ride Are Happier

The old adage that you never see a motorcycle parked outside the psychiatrist's office may prove more insightful than previously considered, as a new study reveals that the key to happiness for the better half of U.S. is a bike key!

The Harley-Davidson Female Riders Survey, conducted by a leading global insights firm and commissioned by the Harley-Davidson Motor Company, shows that women who ride their own motorcycles are noticeably happier, sexier and more confident than women who don't ride. After interviewing 1,013 adult female riders and 1,016 adult female non-riders, the findings make it clear that riding a motorcycle greatly improves a woman's feelings of overall self-worth.

- o More than twice as many always feel happy (37% of riders vs. 16% of non-riders)
- o Nearly four times as many always feel sexy (27% of riders vs. 7% of non-riders)
- o Nearly twice as many always feel confident (35% of riders vs. 18% of non-riders)

More than half (53%) of women who ride cite their motorcycle as a key source of happiness, according to the findings, and nearly three in four (74%) believe their lives have improved since they started riding.

When it comes to romance, the market research collected by Kelton Global also shows riding can improve relationships, as female motorcyclists are more content than non-riders with:

- o Communication with their significant other (60% of riders vs. 38% of non-riders)
- o Physical intimacy (51% of riders vs. 35% of non-riders)

More and more women are, in fact, riding. A 2012 study by the Motorcycle Industry Council found that women accounted for 12% of U.S. motorcyclists -- up from 10.5% in 2009, and Milwaukee-based Harley-Davidson is selling more motorcycles to women than all their competitors combined, according to Claudia Garber, Director of Women's Outreach for Harley-Davidson.

## Loud Motorcycles Targeted In Chicago

The city of Chicago is turning a deaf ear to loud motorcycles, so much so that that an alderman has proposed a ten-fold increase in fines for violators, those who change their mufflers to make them louder, according to DNAInfo Chicago.

The alderman is calling it a quality of life issue, and his proposal would increase the maximum fine for violations from \$100 to \$1,000.

## Road Crashes #1 Killer Of Americans Abroad

Road crashes have been named the leading cause of unnatural death among Americans who travel outside of the country, where they are unfamiliar with local driving rules and customs, and more U.S. citizens die in car or motorcycle accidents than from terrorist events accord-

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ing to a new study from Johns Hopkins University.

Using data from the U.S. State Department that represented 5,417 unnatural deaths between January 2003 and December 2009, the research team calculated the rates of death by dividing the number of unnatural deaths by the number of Americans who visited each country.

"We know that the distribution of road traffic fatalities varies dramatically across different parts of the world," Huseyin Naci, from the London School of Economics and Political Science, told Reuters news service. "While pedestrian deaths are more common in many parts of Africa, motorcycle and bicycle deaths occur more frequently in southeast Asia."

Out of all the countries deemed unsafe for travel, Thailand ranked first among the most traffic-related deaths with 16.5 deaths per one million visits. Vietnam came in second with 15 deaths per one million visits, Morocco third with 12 deaths per one million visits, and South Africa fourth with 11 deaths per one million visits.

Researchers also reported that scooter and motorcycle deaths accounted for a large portion of traffic-related deaths.

## Motorcyclists Safer Behind The Wheel

Evidence suggests that roads would be safer if more drivers rode motorcycles, as motorcyclists are safer behind the wheel of a car than non-motorcyclists, according to a leading U.K. insurer.

Equity Red Star compared car drivers to car users who also have an insured motorcycle, and found the latter 23% less likely on average to make a claim on their car policy.

The firm also adjusted the figures to take into account the different typical ages of car drivers and motorcyclists, and still found the riders to be 21% better behind the wheel. The results showed motorcyclists were 20% less likely to make a bodily injury claim on their car policy.

The insurer examined 200 million policies between 2007 and 2012.

Rob Clark, Equity Red Star's Head of Retail Motor, said: "A motorcyclist could, behind the wheel of a car, be said to be 23% better."


Clark presented the data during a conference organized by the Motorcycle Industry Association at the Department for Transport in London to examine evidence that increasing the number of motorcyclists on the road could actually improve safety.

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## 2014 Predicted To Be A Breakout Year For Electric Motorcycles

Navigant Research recently released a report titled "Electric Vehicles: 10 Predictions for 2014?" in which it is estimated that 700,000 plug-in vehicles will be on the road around the world by the end of this year.

The given justifications? Rebounding economies, better products, battery prices that have come down providing competitive price points for e-motorcycles, a large potential clientele that has already had a positive electric experience via e-bicycles, e-scooters and e-mopeds.

  
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## Helmet Use In Michigan Drops After Repeal, Still Higher Than Norm

A state survey has found that nearly three-quarters of Michigan motorcyclists wear helmets, down from almost a hundred percent before the state ended mandatory universal helmet use in 2012, letting riders opt out under certain circumstances.

Data for the Wayne State University study was collected over the summer by use of video cameras randomly placed across the state, and shows that 73% of motorcyclists in Michigan wear helmets, down from 99.4% in 2006 when the last statewide observation survey was conducted.

Still, the authors note that Michigan's usage rate is 13% higher than the 60% of U.S. riders spotted wearing helmets in a nationwide survey in 2012. Also interesting to note, the current rate of riders wearing helmets is slightly lower than the 74.7% of helmeted riders involved in motorcycle crashes, according to the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, meaning lidless riders have a somewhat better safety record.

The Michigan Department of Highway Safety said that helmet use varies widely among types of riders: 94.5% of people riding sports bikes wore helmets while only 33.3% of riders of choppers and custom bikes did. Female riders and those under 30 and over 60 also wear helmets more frequently.

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