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Cycling in the news

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Abstract

The way the news media report on cycling can shape how the public perceives cycling and influence public policy support for cycling initiatives. Agenda setting theory explains how the news media can influence what people think about while framing theory explains how the media shape people's understandings of issues.

Drawing from a sample of 326 news articles published in four metropolitan newspapers between 1998 and 2008, this paper presents some preliminary findings from our content and framing analysis of news about cycling within Sydney and Melbourne. These findings answer research questions including how prominent is cycling within different newspapers? What aspects of cycling attract news media attention? How are cycling and cyclists framed by news stories? Is news coverage positively or negatively oriented towards cycling and/or cyclists?