Call for Papers Vol. 5 (2022)

Media, Society and Cycling Cultures

Editors:
Paolo Landri (IRPPS – CNR)
Mario Tirino (Università di Salerno)

The Coronavirus emergency, the regime of social distancing have revitalised the bicycle as a means of transport in urban and suburban areas. The post-pandemic scenario also makes it possible to conceive of the bicycle as a vector of transformation and social innovation, with wider effects on cycling tourism and sport. The new post-Covid19 mobility needs are linked to the green transition framework, reflecting the emerging Zeitgeist towards sustainable mobility modes. The interdisciplinary field of study ‘Cycling and Society’ represents a part of mobility studies (Buscher, Urry, & Witchger, 2011). Cycling studies (Urry, 2004) start from a critique of ‘automobility’, the dominant paradigm of contemporary mobility. They try to outline post-car mobility scenarios and focus on ‘velomobility’ (Horton, Rosen, & Cox, 2007; Cox, 2020) as a practice characterised by high historical, anthropological, and cultural variability.

With the aim of contributing to this field of study, and notably to understand the conditions for the spread of cycling as practice, this call for papers invites articles focusing on the increasing mediatization (Frandsen, 2019, Tirino, 2019) and platformization of the experience of cycling. The long history of cycling is interlaced with the development of media, as it is for many sports. However, the availability of social media and digital platforms is reshaping the experience of cycling as a practice and culture and there is a need to map how it is happening and with what effects. By considering cycling practice as mediated by technology, body, language, and rules (Gherardi, 2010, 2012) we kindly invite you to send articles, from various disciplinary approaches, addressing the following questions:

- To what extent, the current digitalization develops within the history of the relationship between media and cycling? Are there continuities? Or discontinuities?
- How the experience and practice of cycling is being reshaped by social media narratives and usage (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) as a sport and as an everyday activity?
- How do digital platforms (Strava, Komoot, etc) interlace with the practice of cycling? How does it work?
- How do digital ecosystems give raise to the emergence of e-cycling? Is it a new sport? Or not?
- What are the effects of datafication of cycling? Are they enabling conditions for the spread of cycling? Are they enclosed in the mechanisms of extractive capitalism of data?
- What are the methodological challenges to studying the relationship between media, platforms, and cycling? Are we in need of digital native methods to fully grasp this contemporary phenomenon?
What are the connections between cycling, lifestyles, and subcultures in the digital age? How are different modes of cycling experience being told and remediated by social media and digital platforms?

What forms does cycling fandom take in the digital media age? What kind of relationships develop between professional cyclists and their audiences?

What role do media, platforms, and digital information resources play in the relationship between local governments and cyclists? How do media narratives contribute to the promotion and enhancement of a place through cycling tourism?

In the context of e-sports, do video games dedicated to cycling promote or not a greater knowledge of the discipline and a stimulus to practice? What are the relationships between videogames and non-competitive cycling?

What are the effects of the mediatization and platformization of cycling on issues such as gender, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and migration?

Proposals can be written in English, Italian or Spanish and must be sent to the following email addresses: paolo.landri@irpps.cnr.it; mtirino@unisa.it

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