



By Cory Soal
R.H.A.D.

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OPINION

TELLING BIG STORIES USING MANY SMALL STORIES

CRASHES OFTEN DUE TO MISJUDGING DISTANCE BETWEEN VEHICLES AROUND TURNS, WRITES MYERS



BRYAN MYERS
Column

It's about trust. Our relationship with our readers is built on transparency, honesty and integrity. As such, we have launched a trust initiative to tell you who we are and how and why we do what we do. This column is part of that project.

Collecting small details can lead to big stories.

In trying to identify why this year has had a particularly high

number of motorcycle collisions, we're also able to examine what can be done to prevent them.

When I started looking at fatal and life-altering motorcycle collisions in 2019, I gathered a list of all the crashes we covered, and from there picked out the details in what became effectively a spreadsheet in my notepad. Where did the crash happen? How old was the victim? What were they driving?

What might be a small story about a traffic accident, when lined up end to end with other motorcycle collisions this year, starts to tell a much bigger story.

While one in five motorcycles

in Canada belong to a woman, the list of victims in 2019 is exclusively male. While the youngest victim of 2019 was a 21-year-old Oakville man, the majority were older than 30, with the oldest victim being a 54-year-old man from Hamilton.

The bikes themselves were mainly sport bikes, often in a dark colour.

Speaking with Sgt. Ryan Snow of the Halton Regional Police Service's traffic services unit, I learned that a number of collisions involving motorcycles aren't necessarily distracted driving or speeding, but a motorist misjudging the distance between a bike and their vehicle when making a left-hand turn.

Smaller, sportier bikes can make it more difficult for drivers

to gauge distance, especially if a motorcycle is moving faster than anticipated. Thus, by installing brighter headlights on bikes, giving motorcyclists more space, and slowing down, the roads are safer for one of the most vulnerable road users.

While Snow provided an answer to why, Rob Copeland, the chief instructor at Motorcycle Training Ontario of Halton/Peel, provided insight on how riders and drivers can minimize potential tragedy.

We welcome your questions and value your comments. Email our trust committee at trust@metroland.com.

Bryan Myers is a reporter with Metroland Media Group's Halton Division.



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