

Our Everyday Dangers on the Road
By Noora Ahmed

A friend texts you. Someone passes you because you are not driving fast enough. People are driving under the influence. You are trying to change the radio station. Distractions are what many people encounter every day while on the road. In 2018, New York state recorded 168,736 were either injured or killed in car accidents (How Often Do People Get Hurt or Killed in Car Crashes in New York, 2019). To keep everyone safe on the road in New York and across the U.S., we must create more rigid laws and create an inclusive conversation about the importance of road safety.

"The National Safety Council reports that cell phone use while driving leads to 1.6 million crashes each year" (Texting and Driving Accident Statistics - Distracted Driving, n.d.). In most states, texting and driving is illegal and could lead to fines, but distracted driving can have grave consequences. It is immoral to endanger others' lives to check a text. There could be laws that allow cell phone towers to see if you are traveling at high speeds when using data.

In 2018, over 20 million people drove under the influence of alcohol, and over 12 million people drove under the influence of narcotics (National Institute of Drug Abuse, 2020). This is a pressing issue with legalizing recreational marijuana use in different states. In my home state of New York, there should be severer laws for those under the influence of any illicit substance such as fines and community service. Those who have caused accidents while impaired should be required to go to schools, events, and community gatherings to discuss their stories and how their actions led them to where they are today.

In 2018, speeding killed 9,378 people, and in 2017, speeding was a contributing factor in 26% of all traffic fatalities (Speeding, 2019). Many of my friends have gotten speeding

tickets, only having to pay a fine or have their charges dismissed. Speeding generates uncertainty on the road for other drivers. More police need to be out on major roadways and in small towns because many drivers do not follow the speed limit. Also, more machines that alert the police of speeding along the road or at traffic lights would be beneficial.

I put my phone on Do Not Disturb while driving. I put on my own playlists, so there is no temptation to change radio stations, and I understand that my actions on the road can have deadly implications. Spreading the message of practicing safe driving habits by talking to my friends and family and posting it on social media is my contribution to spreading the message of road safety. I am a cautious driver because, just like everyone else, I want to go home at the end of the day. When you start driving, you have the personal responsibility to be the most reliable and well-informed driver that you can be to protect others, which is the driver I strive to be.

References

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