

Types of distractions that create dangerous accidents on the road today

[Psychology](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Road Rage

Road rage has been claiming a significant portion of fatalities and accidents today. An article, for instance, published by the New York Times blamed temper and aggressive behavior for at least 28, 000 deaths in the United States highways. (Wald 1997) According to Levinson (2002), the deliberate violence in the road accounts for at least 1 in 1, 000 traffic fatalities. (p. 1412) It appears that most people, regardless of age, race, socioeconomic and gender lines, are prone to this type of behavior because the distractions that lead to it are quite commonplace. This paper outlines three of these. The most fundamental distraction that could precipitate road rage is psychological in nature. According to Cameron (2009), driving is an aggressive activity wherein a driver is handling a potentially lethal machine and that being forced to share common property - the road - heavily stresses individual ownership. (p. 67) This psychological distraction is manifested by drivers acting as if they own the road or in instances wherein drivers feel territorial defensiveness, which often occurs. The dynamics of this behavior is important because these drivers often feel angry when their space in the road is threatened as if their property is being infringed when someone cuts up, overtakes, and so forth. It could be also demonstrated in instances when drivers feel angry if someone drives recklessly, changes lanes without signaling, leading the offended party to behave aggressively in response.

Another type of distraction pertains to the external environment: that of heavy traffic and congested roads; the weather such as the heat or humidity; noise such as horn use; and, time pressures. Jacoby and Youngson (2004)

identified this distraction as the most common in cities and towns in the United States and around the world. (p. 1841) Any one or a combination of the cited elements could trigger among drivers different types of aggressive reaction. Some may even respond negatively when another makes eye contact because it is seen as confrontational.

Finally, the last type of distraction is all about stimuli or the responses of people in instances wherein their lives are being put in danger. Again, one can cite the offense that drivers take when another is being driven recklessly, when a driver breaks traffic regulations, makes an obscene or aggressive gesture or using a cellular phone on the road. There are drivers who desire to take revenge or take matters unto their own hands and perhaps “ set things right” by being confrontational, which of course often lead to a more serious altercation. The numerous cases of road rage have a fair share of examples that have been caused by this type of distraction. While one can say that road is not exactly an epidemic that threatens the safety and security of motorists, the problem is certainly serious and could erupt anywhere and anytime to anyone. The types of distractions outlined here underscore the fact that the sheer number of factors and variables involved can occur and affect just any drivers and not just those who have some psychological problems with stress. Moreover, in trying to address this problem, a simple anger management solution is not enough. The problem is more complex and characterized by a combination of psychological, cultural, emotional and environmental dimensions.

References

Cameron, S. (2009). *The economics of hate*. Northampton: Edward Elgar

<https://assignbuster.com/types-of-distractions-that-create-dangerous-accidents-on-the-road-today/>

Publishing.

Jacoby, D. and Youngson, R. M. (2004). Encyclopedia of Family Health. New York: Marshall Cavendish.

Levinson, D. (2002). Encyclopedia of crime and punishment, Volume 4. London: SAGE.

Wald, M. (1997, July 18). "Temper Cited as Cause of 28,000 Road Deaths a Year." The New York Times. Retrieved 31 March 2011 from