

After the Yes Ride ended last week, one of my friends asked me, “What was your favorite part of the ride?” I explained that I was fascinated by the progression of reactions that we got from locals as we crossed the country. When we told people in Washington that we were biking across America, we typically received smirks and skeptical well-wishes. In Iowa, people offered impressed and respectful recognition that we had already completed more than half the route. By the time we reached New England, locals responded with either silent awe or half-joking accusations that we were liars.

Periodically throughout the trip, a reporter or local would ask me, “What does biking across the country have to do with ending global poverty?” While I understand where they were coming from, to me the parallel is clear. We wanted to show people that something deemed impossible by many is not necessarily so. The skepticism that greeted us in the northwest is the same doubt that someone receives when they attempt to tackle a complex and long-standing dilemma. However, declaring something as “impossible” is oftentimes just an excuse, a cop out from having to put forth an honest attempt. By biking from Seattle to Boston, we illustrated what I consider to be the moral of the Yes Ride story: through hard work, perseverance, and the courage to push on despite doubts, we can turn a skeptic’s impossibility into reality. I encourage you to consider this point, to incorporate it into your own life as you see fit, and to act on it.

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