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# ACTION CAMERAS AS SOCIAL FACILITATORS: AN ANALYSIS OF AMATEUR EXTREME MOTORCYCLE VIDEOS

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**ABSTRACT**
In diverse social situations, individuals may find themselves as either actors or observers. As actors, individuals may act alone or in the presence of others. Social facilitation theory focuses primarily on how people react to being the focus of attention when performing a task. The theory proposes that the presence of others may facilitate performance and vice versa. Advances in digital technologies point to new recording and viewing options, such as action cameras and video sharing websites. This article argues that for extreme actions performed without an audience, the presence of an action camera allows for the controllable presence of potential future viewers. In order to show how action cameras may function as a social facilitator, four extreme action videos on YouTube are analyzed in this article. Video analyses show that action cameras are effective in drawing potential future viewers. Action cameras can therefore be thought of as social facilitators of extreme actions.

***Keywords***: *Action camera, social facilitation theory, recording technologies, extreme actions, motorcycle sports*

# SOSYAL KOLAYLAŞTIRICI OLARAK AKSİYON KAMERALAR: AMATÖR EKSTREM MOTORSİKLET VİDEO ANALİZLERİ

**ÖZ**
Farklı sosyal durumlarda, bireyler kendilerini bazen aktör bazen de gözlemci olarak bulabilmektedir. Bireyler aktör olarak yalnız ya da başkalarının varlığında eyleyebilir. Sosyal kolaylaştırma teorisi temel olarak, insanların herhangi bir görevi yerine getirirken ilgi odağı olduklarında nasıl tepki verdiklerine odaklanmaktadır. Teori, başka insanların varlığının performansı kolaylaştırabileceğini ya da zorlaştırabileceğini ileri sürmektedir. Dijital teknolojilerdeki gelişmeler, aksiyon kameraları ve video paylaşım internet siteleri gibi yeni kayıt ve izleme opsiyonlarına işaret etmektedir. Bu makale, izleyici olmadan gerçekleştirilen ekstrem aksiyonlarda, aksiyon kameranın gelecekteki potansiyel izleyicilerin kontrol edilebilir varlığına imkan sağladığını ileri sürmektedir. Aksiyon kameraların sosyal kolaylaştırıcı olarak nasıl işlev gördüğünü göstermek amacıyla, YouTube'da bulunan dört ekstrem aksiyon videosu analiz edilmiştir. Video analizleri, aksiyon kameraların gelecekteki potansiyel izleyicileri oluşturmada etkili olduklarını göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla aksiyon kameralar ekstrem eylemlerde sosyal kolaylaştırıcı olarak düşünülebilirler.

***Anahtar Kelimeler***: *Aksiyon kamerası, sosyal kolaylaştırma teorisi, kayıt teknolojileri, ekstrem eylemler, motorsiklet sportları*

## INTRODUCTION

The history of painting, photography and cinema reveal the strong desire to capture people, events, landscapes, actions, etc. for a future audience. In various social conditions, individuals function as either actors or observers. These actors may act alone or in the presence of others, who may be passive observers or co-actors. However, the presence of others does affect the possible actions or reactions of

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the primary actor. Therefore, an action camera recording the actions can be considered an influencing factor.

Though simultaneously acting and recording may not be an easy task for the actor, advances in recording technology offer a vast number of options to accomplish this safely and easily. With small, cheap, and portable action cameras, people can record their actions. In addition, wearable and mountable action cameras also allow for recording actions in extreme environments, where film crews cannot be present. Video-sharing websites, such as Vimeo, YouTube, and Facebook, are full of extreme videos recorded by the actors themselves. In this article, I take these developments into consideration and examine action cameras as social facilitators.

Social facilitation research concentrates primarily on how people react to being the focus of social attention when performing a task. The theory proposes that the presence of an audience is a source of arousal and performance of the actor is a function of drive (arousal) and habit strength. Therefore, when performing a task, if the actor establishes responses well for his action, and if the habit strength of his skill is high, the presence of others (as co-actors or observers) will facilitate performance and vice versa (Zajonc, 1965: 272-273).

In this context, I argue that for extreme actions carried out alone, the presence of an action camera is equivalent to the presence of potential viewers. This is all done with the actor's full awareness that s/he may later choose to publicly release the recording or not. Therefore, the actor is able to take full advantage of "presence" of viewers while avoiding any possible negative effects. The moment the actor pushes the button to record his action, potential future viewers are included. This can have a motivatation effect on the actor that may facilitate or improve her/his performance.

However, unlike a live audience, these potential viewers cannot distract the actor or have a negative effect on the actor's performance by their on-site presence. In particular, this is because the actor has the option to not release the recording or to only do so after editing, leaving the option to show only selected segments. Therefore, the presence of an action camera offers a controllable presence of potential observers. As a result, the action cameras can be thought of as a tool to instigate a better performance, especially for the extreme actions. For a comprehensive analysis of the function of action cameras as a social facilitator, I will first explore the desire to record and then the invention and effects of action cameras.

## THE DESIRE TO RECORD AND ADVANCES IN RECORDING TECHNOLOGY

The desire of individuals to record themselves or their actions can be seen even in cave paintings. Even before the invention of photography in 1839, people hired painters and posed for hours in order to capture their likenesses on canvas. The history of cinema also demonstrates that recorded activities have been watched with increasing interest—whether fictional or factual.

In the past, recording equipment was expensive for the average consumer and required expert knowledge. However, with the invention of cinematography, the history of cinema experienced continuous advances in recording technologies. Each development offered people additional options to record themselves, their daily lives, their actions, etc. It could be argued that recent advances in digital recording technologies have transformed ordinary consumers into producers of audiovisual materials. In 1963, the camera producer Andre Coutant pulled a fountain pen from his pocket and said, "The camera is still not as simple to use as this, but we are working on it" (as cited in Issari & Paul, 1979: 156). Today, it seems that this has been accomplished.

Despite the many developments in recording technologies, it is clear that the ability to reach a large audience is perhaps the most significant capability. In this context, the digital age not only offers consumers the capacity to produce their own recordings, but also enables them to immediately and very easily distribute their recordings through social media websites, such as YouTube, Facebook and

Vimeo. Very crucially, individuals are aware that they are able to record their own videos and upload them with the potential to reach millions of viewers across the globe. In this context, Foster (2012) states that action cameras have "viral" possibilities, meaning that the more authentic and immersive the video, the more viewers get interested in and feel as if they are experiencing the moment themselves. In addition, it is assumed that easy access to viewers encourages people to concentrate more on what they record and how they do it. The desire to record is now intertwined with the desire to attract the attention of others by uploading more interesting, more aesthetically pleasing, and more extreme audiovisual media.

For some actions, it is very difficult or even impossible to record oneself because of the concentration required. For instance, when an actor is in the midst of an extreme action that requires the actor's full attention, recording the action cannot be a priority. Because of the physical conditions, the action may not be recorded well. Nevertheless, video recordings of this type attract the interest of many, which led to the further development of mountable and wearable action cameras.

## THE BIRTH OF ACTION CAMERAS AND THEIR GROWING POPULARITY

The popularity of action cameras among extreme sportsmen, adventurists, and filmmakers has exploded in recent years. Not only are action cameras lightweight, waterproof, and easy-to-use, but despite their small size, they can record high-definition videos with optional 170-degree, wide-angle lenses. Such enhancements allow viewers to partake in the action from the perspective of the actor himself. The first action camera produced for customers was the GoPro, which remains the most recognized and popular one on the market. Its production story offers insight into the reasons for the popularity of action cameras, as well as possible uses for them.

The desire to produce high-quality recordings of extreme action presented actors with a conundrum. Cameras supporting high-definition video quality are extremely expensive, costing between $1000 and $30.000, which was one crucial obstacle to their widespread use in risky shoots. Moreover, attaching a relatively expensive camera to the helmet of a rider or to bike handles can also be difficult and make an already dangerous stunt even less safe. The CEO of GoPro, Nick Woodman, offered a solution to this problem by inventing the first action camera. His company's product, the GoPro Hero action camera, doubled in sales each year from 2004 to 2015, making it the most purchased camera in the world (Hockenson: 2013).

The birth and ultimate success of this camera is directly related to a consumer driven need for recording. Though initially designed for surfers, the potential uses of the camera expanded greatly in a very short period (Foster: 2012). The diverse mounting apparatuses for the cameras have also greatly expanded their applications. Innovations in the apparatuses are further allowing actors to attach the cameras to equipment safely without obstructing the actor (Hockenson: 2013). These cameras can either be mounted onto helmets or vehicles (such as bicycles, motorcycles, etc.) or worn by actors, allowing them complete concentration. Due to their relative affordability and ease of operation, action cameras have spread throughout the extreme sports and adventure world. The diverse applications of action cameras have also reached reality television, scientific research, wildlife documentaries, Hollywood films, and even the military. The small size and capacity to record in varied lighting conditions have also made action cameras indispensable.

As the fastest growing camera company in the world, GoPro's 2011 revenue is approximately $250 million (Foster: 2012). According to Kash Shaikh, a Senior Director at GoPro, "It's [affordable mountable camera] a simple but powerful idea that filled an unmet need" (Hockenson: 2013). It could be argued that this unmet need underlines what I earlier characterized as the dual desire to record for both sharing experiences and saving recordings for future viewings.

Today, it is not only shooting opportunities themselves that have improved, but more editing options have also become available. With simple editing software, even novice users can make arrangements,

edit their videos, and even add music and text. These advancements can help add depth to videos, which makes viewing them a richer experience. However, no matter how interesting the videos may be, there must also be a way to quickly share and distribute them. The rise of diverse channels dedicated to sharing amateur and professional videos worldwide is one of the most important factors that helped transform ordinary people (solely from viewers) to producers of audiovisual materials. For instance, "Mountain biker in Africa being flattened by a sprinting gazelle," a video posted to YouTube in October 2012 has drawn 12.4 million views. Interestingly, GoPro states that a new recording filmed with an action camera is uploaded to YouTube every two to three minutes (Foster: 2012). These examples demonstrate both the popularity of action cameras and the vast viewing potential for the videos.

## THE ACTION CAMERAS AS A SOCIAL FACILITATOR

It could be argued that the presence of a camera in a social situation affects the individuals or atmosphere being recorded. Regardless of their size or function, a recording camera may be enough to have an effect on the behavior of the individuals being recorded. The reason for this may be connected to the presence of future viewers who would be able to watch the recording later. If, however, we disregard the presence of a camera and focus instead on the effects that the presence of others may have on a particular social situation, we may more easily understand the role played by an action camera on individuals recording themselves. In this context, the possible effects of the presence of individual upon other individuals are the main concern of social facilitation theory.

### *Social Facilitation Theory*

As social beings, humans are almost always in the company of others. The influence that individuals have on one another has been of central importance to social psychology. Many researchers have tried to understand how and why the behavior of an individual affects the behavior of another (Zajonc, 1965: 269) In addition, it is not only the actions of the performers that have been studied extensively, but also their reactions to serving as the focus of social attention. Carried out in 1897, Norman Triplett's experiments were the starting point in this new field of study.

Specifically, Triplett's study was focused on how the presence of others impacts a person's performance of motor tasks. By examining the outcome statistics for the 1897 bicycle racing season, Triplett (1898) found that cyclists accompanied by pacemakers finished with better times than those without. According to Triplett, this was because the physical presence of another person heightened the racer's competitive instinct. Gordon Allport, known also as a "trait" psychologist, coined this new research agenda in social psychology "social facilitation, which he described as "an increase in response merely from the sight or sound of others making the same movement'' (Allport, 1924: 262). It should also be noted that early studies of social facilitation were primarily carried out with a co-acting other (e.g., Allport, 1920, 1924; Mayer, 1904; Meumann, 1904). To study the influence of a "pure" audience, independent of other social factors, such as rivalry, social facilitation studies also introduced a passive observer paradigm, with an individual passively observed by one or a few individuals (Uziel, 2007: 580).

Social facilitation research conducted between the 1920s and 1960s included a diverse group of participants who performed a wide array of tasks. Whereas the results revealed a clear increase in performance when in the presence of others, as either co-actors or spectators, other studies demonstrated that the presence of others was detrimental to performance. In 1965, Robert Zajonc, known for his works on a wide range of social and cognitive processes, focused on these conflicting results and offered a new hypothesis. More specifically, Zajonc attempted to integrate the contradictory findings into a single model based on drive or activation theory (Strauss, 2002: 238 - 239). Though Allport's studies have shown that social facilitation affects overt motor responses, he has also found the inverse, especially in regards to tasks that require problem-solving tasks. Allport further assumed that intellectual and other thought processes are hampered due to the presence of others, rather than facilitated.

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Zajonc's drive theory moves a bit further to help resolve these contradictory findings. Specifically, Zajonc reformulated social facilitation in his drive theory and hypothesized that, "…the presence of others as spectators or co-actors enhances the emission of the dominant response" (1965: 274). In this way, Zajonc's theory offered two important propositions: (1) the presence of an audience was a source of arousal, and; (2) performance was a function of drive (arousal) and habit strength. If the habit strength of a skill is high, the corresponding arousal of the audience would facilitate performance and vice versa. Therefore, for tasks with well-established responses (such as word association, multiplication, etc.), the probability of mistakes is rather low because the responses are either second nature to the respondent, or under the influence of a stimulus. Thus, the presence of others, as spectators or co-actors, further enables the production of dominant responses. However, for problem-solving or tests of judgment, completely tasks without an audience is preferable allows for better performance. Zajonc thus concludes that performance is enhanced through the presence of spectators, whereas intellectual labor is impaired (1965: 270 - 273). However, it is also important to note that in Zajonc's theory, habit strength is an important consideration. For instance, it can be assumed that there is a habit for responding easily to simple tasks. This response is usually correct and results in an improvement in performance. However, with complex tasks, a response made while observed is more often incorrect and leads to performance impairment (Uziel, 2007: 580).

***Different Approaches to Social Facilitation***

In 1968, Cottrell et al. made an experiment and their published findings that were inconsistent with Zajonc's (1965) initial claim that the "'mere presence"' of others resulted in increased activation (p. 249). In their Evaluation Apprehension Theory, it is argued that the drive in social situations is a learned one and that activation can be expected to increase when actors are able to associate the audience with an evaluation of their performance. In other words, the approval or disapproval a person receives function as a system of social rewards and punishments, which then serve to enhance or impair the actor's performance (Cottrell, 1972).

Further elaborating upon Zajonc's modification of drive theory, B. Guerin and J. M. Innes's "Monitoring Theory" presents yet another important approach to social facilitation. In 1980, Zajonc suggested that the effect of social facilitation arises out of a sense of uncertainty experienced by the individual in social settings. Using this modification as a base, Guerin and Innes argue that individuals are predisposed to monitor and then react to the demands of social presence. Individuals face a multitude of threats that require great vigilance and alertness in case of an attack. This heightened sense of preparedness further incites arousal. According to Guerin and Innes (1982), this increase in arousal is responsible for the social facilitation effect. In 1983, Guerin proposed that the social facilitation effect could be expected when a situation triggers uncertainty (when an actor does not know the observer and is unfamiliar with the situation or task). When uncertainty is triggered and the arousal level of the individual increases, the social facilitation effect can be expected.

Social facilitation studies have already shown that active self-presentation in front of an audience could greatly influence performance (Strauss, 2002: 243). This approach is referred to as a self-presentation approach to social facilitation. Furthermore, Bond assumes that people first strive to appear competent in the presence of others and, second, try to deduce the difficulty level of the particular task. If the actors perceive the task as easy, they can then execute it competently, thus presenting themselves positively. However, if the actors perceive the task as difficult, they realize that they may fail in completing it. This leads to heightened anxiety and potential embarrassment, which impairs learning and results in performance decrements (1982: 1048-1049).

Another approach to social facilitation is the Distraction-Conflict Theory. It is premised on the assumption that actors are distracted by the presence of others and will have difficulty focusing on the task at hand. According to Distraction-Conflict, social presence distracts and creates an attentional conflict for the individual. However, Sanders et al. (1978) argued that this leads not only to a

deterioration in performance, but also to an increase in activation, arising from the attentional conflict of wanting to concentrate on both task and audience simultaneously. Baron (1986) later modified this theory and argued that the performance decrements of complex tasks were not because of the increased activation of attentional conflict, but instead due to cognitive overload. Whether caused by increased drive or cognitive overload, the unavoidable result is an attentional conflict. This conflict is then believed to facilitate the performance of easy tasks (due to their low demands), but impairs that of complex tasks (Uziel, 2007: 582).

Zajonc's drive theory is very useful in my video analysis because riding a motorcycle is considered a motor task, for which the actors have an acquired habit strength. As far as the actors are concerned, the evaluation apprehension and monitoring theory together with the self-presentation approach to social facilitation seem to be more convenient applications. However, I argue that the role of personality a significant variable in analyzing the above mentioned motorcycle videos. It is therefore crucial to consider the role of personality in social facilitation before analyzing the videos.

***The Role of Personality in Social Facilitation***

Jan Graydon and Timothy Murphy's experiment is vital to understanding the effect of personality on social facilitation. They begin with an exploration of extroversion and introversion, as described by Eysenck. According to Eysenck's theory (1967), extroverts are considered to be "stimulus hungry." More specifically, extroverts seek out cortical excitation, are sociable, and are also comfortable with social interaction. In stark contrast to extroverts, introverts, on the other hand, avoid strong stimuli and certain social situations. Graydon and Murphy (1995) believed Eysenck's theory would have clear implications for social facilitation effects and hypothesized that an audience would provide comfortable conditions for an extrovert, thus yielding enhanced performance. For the introvert, however, the audience may provide too much stimulation and hinder their performance. Graydon and Murphy conducted the experiment in a sporting context, and their findings revealed that this effect was highly significant in the direction of their hypothesis (p. 265-266).

Departing from Graydon and Murphy's study, still other experiments focused on the role of personality differences in social facilitation. Uziel's review, for instance, allows for understanding of the role of personality in social facilitation. In his review Uziel concludes that there are two major orientations towards social presence: positive and negative. While positive orientation reflects extroversion and high self-esteem, negative orientation suggests neuroticism and low self-esteem. According to Uziel's meta-analysis of social facilitation studies, an orientation towards social presence has a significant effect on performance. He writes, "As hypothesized, positive orientation predisposed individuals to improve their performance under social presence, whereas negative orientation predisposed individuals to experience performance impairment under social presence." (2007: 594).

**METHOD**

To show how action cameras may function as a social facilitator, I will analyze video recordings. The criteria for selecting videos for my study is a crucial consideration. Though extreme actions can be recorded professionally, this usage of action cameras is beyond the scope of this analysis. In particular, I am interested in action cameras, which allow actors to record themselves—even in the most difficult conditions and without any lapse in concentration. I will focus on this usage to demonstrate the possible effects that action cameras may have as a social facilitator.

In social facilitation research, three factors are believed to affect response performance: the task, the audience, and the actor (Grant and Dajee, 2003: 633). Considering each of these factors will be instructive by aiding us in determining both the categories and scope of video analysis. First of all, action cameras are being used for recording several types of tasks. For my analysis, I focus on recordings of extreme actions, which can be thought of as tasks that the actors set out to execute. Moreover, the actors of these tasks may need facilitation to surmount the possible difficulties and successfully doing the extreme actions.

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From among the diverse kinds of extreme actions, I concentrate on motorcycle sports because unlike extreme sports such as wingsuit skydiving or ice climbing, riding a motorcycle is not an extreme action. Generally, individuals ride motorcycles as part of their everyday lives. However, it is also possible to ride motorcycle at the extreme edges. Therefore, the possible effects of action cameras as a social facilitator at the extreme edges can be better observed in extreme motorcycling recordings.

A second important qualification for selecting videos is the type of the actor. The actors who record their own riding can be either amateurs or professionals. However, for my analysis, I choose only those recordings of amateur actor-recorders. In motorcycle road and off-road racing, all necessary precautions are taken to ensure the safety of the riders. Moreover, professional riders may perform better, due to the presence of observers and co-actors. To focus solely on the role of action cameras as social facilitation, the actor-recorders must be acting in isolation—without observers or co-actors. Therefore, I delimit my analysis to consider only those action video recordings made by amateur riders themselves. Selecting only amateur actors may also be helpful for determining what makes a particular action (e.g., riding a motorcycle) extreme. For a professional rider, riding at high speeds during a race may not be sufficiently extreme. However, for amateur actors, the same activity may be considered extreme. For example, neglecting reasonable safety precautions in extreme weather when driving can very quickly merit a particular action extreme. The quality of "extreme" is then reserved for actions that involve for more than an ordinary or expected amount of risk for a particular action or sport.

In addition, I assume that the selected video recordings are made with future viewers in mind as part of a selective process. If the recordings are made with a future viewer-observer in mind, then the actors cannot be certain who this would be audience may be comprised of. Not only can an actor-recorder select which recordings or selections to post for viewing, s/he may also decide not to broadcast his recordings at all. As observed before, social facilitation experiments often consider the effects that the presence of co-actors and observers might have. For my study, I focus on *future possible* observers, which will help exclude a paradigm of co-actors, and only include videos that depict extreme actions done and recorded by the actors alone.

The videos in this study have been uploaded by actor-recorders to various websites, such as YouTube, Facebook, Vimeo, etc. After extensive viewing of motorcycle riding videos, it is obvious that the extreme nature of riding a motorcycle generally takes two main forms. The first is related primarily to the high speeds reached while the other is related to the distance and difficulty of road conditions. I incorporate these forms in the categorization applied to the video analysis; namely, focusing on extreme speed and extreme road conditions. Two videos fall under each category, with a total of four videos analyzed. (Note: The variables of gender and race fall outside the scope of this study. Therefore, each of the selected videos feature actor-recorders who are Turkish men.)

## ANALYSES OF EXTREME SPEED MOTORCYCLE VIDEOS

### *Video 1: "Hayabusa Acceleration"*

This video was uploaded to YouTube on September 1st, 2011. The single shoot video lasts 7 minutes 16 seconds and had 1.147.370 views as of September 18st, 2015. The actor-recorder-1 rides a sports bike that is designed for high-speed riding. The video begins with a shot of the actor-recorder-1's face. Situated behind the wind protector in an upright position, the frame uses the sky as background, rather than the road or front dash of the bike. This is the only angle that shows the actor-recorder-1 clearly. After looking into the camera and making sure that it's recording, the actor-recorder-1 looks into the lens of the camera and directly facing potential viewer-observers. In addition, this actor-recorder-1 waves his finger as a salute to his viewers. After mounting the bike and taking his place behind the camera, the actor-recorder-1 tilts the camera down, so that the dashboard of the bike is on view instead of being aimed up at the sky. This part of video shows that the actor-recorder-1 is cognizant of his potential viewer-observers and wants to display himself before beginning his action.

Throughout the remainder of the recording, the camera frame includes the dashboard, and analog speed indicator (spanning from 0 to 350 kilometers per hour [km/h]). However, the reflection on the dashboard simultaneously shows us the actor-recorder-1, the action camera, and the fast-moving landscape behind him. The sound throughout the video is that of the wind contrasting the sound of the accelerating motorbike. Ten seconds into the video, the speed indicator already marks speeds of 200 km/h. and, only a bit later reaches 350 km/h. In the majority of the recording, the actor-recorder-1 rides at speeds faster than 300 km/h.

According to Zajonc, as discussed above, the presence of others as spectators or co-actors enhances the dominant response (1965: 273). In this case, riding at extremely high speeds on a highway can be considered a dominant response for the actor. Only the very experienced can ride super sports bikes at such speeds, and the actor-recorder-1's riding is an extreme action requiring a high level of skill and concentration. Therefore, we can surmise that the actor has a developed habit strength for riding at such speeds. According to Zajonc's drive theory, if the habit strength of a skill is high, the arousing effect of an audience would facilitate the performance and vice versa (1965: 272-273). In other words, when the task is easy, observers have a positive effect; otherwise they may have a negative one. In the case of this recording, the actor-recorder-1 can take advantage of the presence of thousands of potential observers without any negative effect. Specifically, this is because the actor-recorder-1 knows that if he is not successful in reaching the extreme points (such as riding at the top speed), no one will know about his failure to do so, unless he uploads the recording. Additionally, the possibility of future viewer-observers can be considered a drive force on the actor-recorder-1. The presence of an action camera, then, is a social facilitator bringing all the advantages and benefits of possible future viewer-observers without any potential negative effects.

***Video 2: "Honda 1000RR BURSA OTOBAN 299 : )"***

This video, taken on the Bursa highway in Turkey, was uploaded to YouTube on November 1st, 2012. The video, lasting eight minutes and seventeen seconds has registered 3,230 viewers and was recording using an action camera mounted on the motorcycle's fuel tank. The camera provides a relatively wide view, showing the dashboard, windscreen, sideview mirrors, as well as a part of fuel tank and the hands of the actor-recorder-2. In addition, the viewers can also see the road and other vehicles on the highway.

At the start of the video, the engine of the motorcycle is heard. The actor-recorder-2 stands near the action camera, with his reflection from the mirror of the motorcycle clearly visible in the shot as well. With warning shout to his audience of: "Only watch! Do not try! This is dangerous," the actor-recorder then begins. His caution reveals the high risk-level of his action, as well as his cognizance of potential viewers. Just as a showman often warns spectators at the beginning of each show to not make their own attempt of a dangerous task, the actor-recorder-2 also addresses his possible future viewers with a stark warning. In addition, the actor-recorder-2 may be pre-emptively considering possible criticisms of the video as setting a bad example for other bikers who may try to mimic the action.

According to Evaluation Apprehension theory, activation or drive increases only when actors are afraid of being evaluated by an audience (Cottrell, 1972). Although the actor is acting alone and without an audience, his warning clearly indicates that he is mindful of evaluation by future viewers. Consequently, it could be argued that the actor's drive may increase due to the possibility of these future evaluations. Therefore, the moment he pushes the record button, a social facilitation effect motivates him to push the limits even further.

Though streetlamps illuminate sections of the highway, the actor-recorder-2 has a limited field of vision. When traveling within the speed limit between 90 and 120km/h, the motorcycle's own headlights would be adequate. In this video, the actor-recorder-2 generally rides over 200 km/h and reaches a maximum speed of 299 km/h. Whereas it might be assumed that an extreme motorcycle rider would like to travel at very high speeds, he may also want to experience riding at top speeds for only a

short period of time. The actor-recorder-2 is persistent and constantly pushes his speed throughout the recording. When he ultimately reaches the maximum speed of 299 km/h, the actor-recorder-2 tries to maintain that speed for as long as possible, in spite of the limited visibility. In Turkey, traveling at these speeds is made even more risky because highways are not always adequately fitted with guardrails, fences, or other safety devices. By undertaking this extreme action in the dark, the actor-rider-2 is taking on an even riskier action. Any loss of concentration would then likely result in a potentially fatal accident.

It remains to be asked, then, whether the actor-recorder-2 would have continued to ride at such high speed, despite his limited visibility, if no action camera had been capturing the action. Moreover, how long would the actor-recorder-2 have continued to do so? Although it would be impossible to offer an absolute answer to these questions, monitoring theory and a self-presentation approach to social facilitation can be helpful in elaborating upon this point. According to Guerin (1983), if a situation or task is unfamiliar and the observers cannot be monitored, uncertainty is triggered and the arousal level of the individual increases. As a result, the social facilitation effect can be expected. In this case, a familiar task is made unfamiliar due to the adverse weather conditions. The actor-recorder-2 is here unable to monitor the observers, which suggests that uncertainty may be triggered in him. As a result, by an increase in the arousal level of the actor-recorder-2, a social facilitation effect could be expected. Furthermore, the self-presentation approach claims that actors strive for an impression of competence in the presence of others. In the recording, it can be argued that the actor-recorder-2 seeks to present himself to potential viewer-observers. Even though his opening monologue serves more as an act of self-criticism (by saying "this is dangerous"), the actor-recorder-2 still attempts to present himself as competent and brave (for attempting an action that ordinary bikers should not try to mimic). According to Bond (1982), if the actors perceive the action to be easy, then the actors can present themselves in a positive light by performing it competently (p. 1048-1049). For the actor-recorder-2, his extreme action can be characterized as risky, but not difficult. Consequently, it can be argued that pushing the record button of an action camera calls many possible future viewer-observers into being. Not only can these viewer-observers then evaluate the actor, but the actor-recorder-2 can also present himself in a positive way. For this reason, there would be no performance decrements due to fear or embarrassment. In essence, this suggests that social facilitation improves the performance and motivates the actor to push his limits.

## ANALYSES OF EXTREME ROAD CONDITIONS IN MOTORCYCLE VIDEOS

### *Video 3: "YolBiziBekler – Anzob Tunnel, Tajikistan"*

Tajikistan's Anzob tunnel is one of the most dangerous and difficult tunnels to pass through, whether by car or motorcycle. The tunnel, stretching five muddy and narrow kilometers is nicknamed as the "The Tunnel of Death" (www.dangerousroads.org). The actor in this video recorded several scenes from his motorcycle journey from Turkey through parts of the Middle East and East Asia. The actor-recorder-3, who has traveled many countries by motorcycle, prepares ride reports for his website, "www.yolbizibekler.com".

The video, "YolBiziBekler – Anzob Tunnel, Tajikistan," spans 4 minutes and 40 seconds and was uploaded to YouTube on January 31st, 2014. Since then, it has been viewed 292 times. This recording was made by the actor-recorder-3, who also speaks directly with viewers to provide information about the tunnel, as well as his own experience passing through it. One important characteristic of this video, which sets it apart from the others, is that the actor-recorder-3 has edited several shots and incorporated music into the video. As previously mentioned, these action cameras have transformed ordinary customers into producers of diverse audiovisual materials. Together with the ever-increasing editing opportunities, the actor-recorder-3 was able to make the video more interesting. In this context, it could be argued that the actor-recorder-3 considers potential future viewers in both the recording and editing phases. Editing the recordings reveals just how much importance the actor-recorder attributes to the interests of the viewers. The presence of the action camera is enough to question whether the actor-recorder-3 is truly without an audience.

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At the beginning of the recording, for instance, the actor-recorder-3 stands and holds the action camera in one hand. He wears open face helmet, so that his face remains visible on the left side of the frame. On the right side, we see the entrance of the tunnel, as well as some cows in the background. The actor-recorder-3 then begins to speak and gives us information about the tunnel's road conditions. He states: "Dark, smoky, all the hard conditions seem to be here. I am prepared. In a while, I will enter the tunnel."

In the last two sentences, "Sail," by Awalnation, begins to play. The next shot shows a closer view of the tunnel's smoky entrance. Later, the view shifts to the action camera, which has been mounted on the helmet of the actor, which allows us to observe the passage through the tunnel from the actor's point of view. For 3 minutes and 26 seconds, similar shots are incorporated. In addition, a five-second-long shot is inserted into the video, which is a shot of his face while in the tunnel alone. While riding over water-filled potholes in the dark tunnel, one can hear the lyrics, "Sail! Sail with me into the dark,".

When approaching the light at the end of the tunnel, the actor-recorder-3 holds his hands up. The subsequent frame is a photo showing a 'V' (victory) sign for the actor-recorder-3, with the exit of the tunnel inserted into the recording. In this segment, the actor-recorder-3 attempted to synchronize the video with the song, which makes the video a bit more intriguing for the audience. Though the video records the passage through the tunnel from the actor-recorder-3's point of view, on two separate occasions, the actor-recorder-3's face is visible when riding. The camera, mounted on the windshelf of the motorcycle, allows us to see his face along with the landscape behind him.

In this video, the extreme nature of the action is related not to speed, but vulnerability. Specifically, it deals with the risks inherent in traveling long distances on one's own, as well as crossing one of the most dangerous roads in the world using an unsheltered vehicle. The actor-recorder-3's speech just before entering into the tunnel clearly indicates his awareness of potential future viewers. However, it it is crucial to note that "observers" are only present when the actor-recorder-3 allows them to participate through observation. Beyond simply turning the camera off, editing and uploading further enable the actor-recorder-3 to avoid any negative effects that the presence of potential observers may have and to fully concentrate on the task at hand.

In addition, it is clear that the actor-recorder-3 films his action similar to a television program. Although without any co-actors his journey, the actor-recorder-3 can be said to be an extrovert. From the manner in which he records and edits the recording, it is clear that he is comfortable with social interaction. Eysenck's theory states that extroverted people are "stimulus hungry" (1967). By taking Eysenck's theory as a base, Graydon and Murphy argue that an audience would provide comfortable conditions for the extrovert and lead to an enhanced performance (1995: 265). For the actor-recorder-3, his hunger for further stimuli is limited only to his imagination: he can think potential viewers, which offer him stimuli to perform better.

***Video 4: "Yolsuz 1150 km den sonra değişiklik istiyorum galiba :)"***

The actor-recorder-4 in "Yolsuz 1150 km den sonra değişiklik istiyorum galiba" [I think I want a change after 1150 kilomether riding without road] begins his motorcycle tour alone on June 25, 2013. Spending 47 days to complete the 14,000 kilomether tour from Trabzon (Turkey) to South Korea (2013, Motosikletle 47 günde, para. 1), this short part of the journey was uploaded to Facebook on July 23, 2013. Over the course of his tour, the actor-recorder-4 shoots several videos, many of which show the extreme road and weather conditions. Along the way, the actor-recorder-4 relates his experiences to potential viewers by speaking directly to the lens of his action camera. The direct, first-person speech in these videos can also be thought of as a public video diary. For this reason, this video recorded at Altai, between Govi-Altay in Mongolia, is particularly useful to analyze.

Despite the difficult weather and road conditions, the actor is generally in a positive mood in almost every video. However, in this video, the actor-recorder-4 complains about adverse weather and road conditions. He holds an action camera as he walks and speaks directly into the camera. Standing in the middle of a desert, his motorcycle is all that is visible. In his speech, he says:

> *"Hello, we are going to Kongor. The first one hundred kilometers was on unbelievably good asphalt. When the asphalt ended, the road was completely muddy. It was unbelievably bad. After one kilometer of riding on the mud, I fell down. I am 195 kilometers away from Kongor. However, now I'm tired of these roads, this desolation, and these road conditions. That is why, I want to take this last 195 kilometers and complete the task. I hope everything goes well. That is all. See you soon."*

The actor-recorder-4's remarks explose his emotional situation. In addition, he appears exhausted and weary. He seems tired of being alone. However, although alone in the desert, it could also be argued that the presence of the action camera fills part of the emptiness. This can be surmised from the use of the first-person plural in the actor-recorder-4's statement, "We are going to Kongor." By discussing his feelings and describing the situation to potential viewers, the actor-recorder-4 invites observers and co-actors to the desert for a short period. While the video is being recorded, it could be claimed that the actor-recorder-4 is actually not alone and is able to postpone his loneliness, if only briefly. Pushing the record button of an action camera invites the immediate presence of potential viewers. This has two important effects. First, the actor-recorder-4 is stimulated and can attempt to exceed his limits by motivating him to attempt something more difficult and risky for later viewing. In addition, it is also clear that whenever the actor-recorder-4 finds himself helpless, alone, and jaded, the immediate presence of potential observers can lead to an increase in performance and completion of the task.

In the video, the actor-recorder-4 appears pessimistic, fed up, and alone. However, his other uploaded videos and writings reveal that he has a positive orientation toward social presence. Positive orientation reflects extroversion and high self-esteem. In addition, social facilitation studies have shown that a positive orientation predisposes individuals to improve their performance under social presence (Uziel, 2007: 594). The actor-recorder-4's direct engagement with potential viewers highlights his extroversion. In this context, the actor-recorder-4 has a positive orientation toward social presence. Consequently, it can be claimed that the presence of his action camera provides the actor-recorder-4 with a social presence that encourages him to perform better.

In each of the four videos analyzed above, the actor-recorders are extroverts with high self-esteem. The role of the action camera as a social facilitator that increases their performances and motivates them to test their limits can also be explained by the distraction-conflict theory. This theory claims that actors are distracted by the presence of others and have difficulty focusing on their tasks. However, it can be argued that each of the actors in the videos can focus completely on their tasks because no real observer is present. The theory also states that the actor attempts to concentrate on both task and audience simultaneously. For this reason, social presence distracts and creates an attention conflict (Sanders et al. 1978). The attention conflict, then, results in either increased drive or cognitive overload. Action cameras can draw many potential observers, which increases drive without leading to cognitive overload in the actors. Therefore, action cameras can be said to positively affect performance whether the tasks are considered easy or not.

## CONCLUSION

Digital recording and editing technologies have been providing more and more opportunities for individuals. Regarding these opportunities, the analyzed videos had been shot with standard wide angle action cameras. However, recently there have been new models of action cameras with the ability to capture 360-degree spherical content. Those cameras can capture everything around the actors. Accordingly, one of the promotional motto for GoPro 360-degree camera is "Bring everyone in the moment with you." (gopro.com/news). This motto itself may be thought as an indirect support for the claim that action cameras have a social facilitating function by bringing potential future observers wherever the actions take place.

360-degree action cameras also provide a much more active viewing experience for the observers. While the actors may record everything around them, the observers have the control to watch the action from any angle they prefer. With advanced editing software, 360-degree footages can easily be edited and uploaded to video sharing webpages by the actors. The viewers can actively watch those footages even with their mobile phones. This may also be thought as factor that indirectly strengths the action cameras' potential for social facilitating.

In addition to these ever-expanding prospects, the distribution options for recorded videos have become easier and more widespread. Social media platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook, Vimeo, etc., can all be thought of as stages upon which people can (re-)present themselves and their lives. In general, people want to draw more followers, comments, and viewers to their photos and videos. In terms of extreme action, the more extreme, the more interest it garners. Only one decade before, the recording and sharing of these actions were neither popular nor easy. Now, action cameras help make the recording, editing, and sharing of extreme actions a possibility for even the most novice of users. The ease of recording together with the immediacy of sharing videos provide many potential viewers to the actor-recorders who may still be alone and in the process of completing their extreme action.

As mentioned above, action cameras may function as a social facilitator in completing actions. The actor is able to take full advantage of "presence" of viewers while avoiding any possible negative effects. However, it should also be kept in mind that they also invite danger by motivating actors to keep pushing their limits.

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