



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR  
2007 PROJECT SUMMARY**

<b>Name(s)</b> <b>Summer S. Hammeras</b>	<b>Project Number</b> <b>J0616</b>
<b>Project Title</b> <b>Gorillas in Our Midst</b>	
<b>Abstract</b> <b>Objectives/Goals</b> My objective was to determine if a person performing an attentionally demanding task (counting basketball bounces) would notice an obvious detail (gorilla) if it were presented in different ways. <b>Methods/Materials</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Create three different videos with two teams in black or white t-shirts bouncing basketballs.</li><li>2. Have a gorilla enter the video by either walking, running or walking through in a red jacket.</li><li>3. Show one of the three videos to different individuals and ask them to count the number of bounces by the team in white.</li><li>4. Record the results.</li><li>5. If the gorilla is not noticed, show the same video again with instructions not to count the bounces.</li><li>6. Record the results.</li><li>7. Compare the results from all three videos and decide which video did the best at capturing attention.</li></ol> <b>Results</b> <p>As it turned out nobody saw the obvious detail (gorilla) when it ran through the scene (0/60). Some people saw the obvious detail in the video when the gorilla walked through (4/60), and when it had a red jacket on (5/60). I let all of the participants who missed the gorilla watch the video for a second time without counting. In the change of speed video, six people still did not see it.</p> <p>I think nobody saw the gorilla the first time in Video 2 because it happened too fast. The reason why people saw the gorilla in Video 3 is because everything else was black and white but the bright red jacket caught their eye. Most people noticed color rather than speed according to my data.</p> <b>Conclusions/Discussion</b> <p>My experiment proves that it is challenging to focus on a task and try to see details at the same time. I think the age of the participants could have affected my results because much younger or older people had more difficulties concentrating on the task. In the future I would like to test my project on people of the same age because their abilities would be on the same level. Video like this could be a good training process for people who might be interested in police work or any job that is involved with a lot of action. These jobs need to be able to see obvious details around them even if they are performing another part of their job.</p>	
<b>Summary Statement</b> A person's ability to notice an obvious change in a scene is usually much less than they believe.	
<b>Help Received</b> My mother filmed my three videos while my six friends played basketball; sixty people watched the videos; Dr. Daniel Simons helped to give me the idea for my project when my parents took me to a museum in San Diego.	