**Ethical Perspectives on the Environmental Impact of Motorsports**

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Technical Communication

2023-11-27

Motorsports categorizes racing where various automobiles compete against one another. Automobile racing is the root of motorsport enthusiasm and provides a platform to push the limits of automotive technology in the racing industry. Unfortunately, there are numerous aspects of the racing industry that create environmental risks. In motorsports, the main problems that challenge the preservation of nature are contamination of the environment and destruction of ecosystems (Doytchev, 2019). The study of disenchantment and utilitarianism makes a case that the environmental ethicality of motorsports is subjective.

Analyzing the ethical implication of human activities, such as motorsports, allows one to explore its environmental impact. Environmental ethics is defined in philosophy as the study of the moral relationship between humans and the environment or non-human contents (Brennan & Lo, 2002). This branch of ethics examines the value of nature itself and how humans utilize it. Brennan & Lo claim that pollution is generally accepted as wrong as is consuming large amounts of natural resources. They continue to speculate the root of the ethical dilemma by suggesting such environmental “wrongness” can be derived from various theories (Brennan & Lo, 2002). Two major understandings are: (1) the well-being of mankind is contingent on the sustainability of the human environment, and (2) nature itself has value, which prompts equal and fair treatment as beings. Theories such as utilitarianism and disenchantment provide interesting arguments for the case of the environmental ethics in motorsport.

According to Brenna & Lo, utilitarianism explains that only the effect of an action matters in the rightness or wrongness of said action. They continue to say that all sentient beings have equal consideration in the righteousness of an action (Brennan & Lo, 2002). This ethical theory looks towards the broad topics such as global warming and pollution to which motorsports contributes both directly and indirectly to. The motorsport industry relies heavily on fossil fuels for many things such as fuels, components, and operations. Motorsports also encourages the use of motorized transportation which indirectly contributes to large amounts of pollution (Doytchev, 2019). It must be said that the consequences of the racing industry will inevitably have a negative effect on the environment and subsequently affect large human populations.

On the other hand, disenchantment theory suggests that motorsport’s environmental impact might not be as big a deal. In ethics, disenchantment refers to viewing nature as objects governed by natural laws for human utility rather than recognizing that they have intrinsic value (Brennan & Lo, 2002). Fossil fuels and raw materials used for operations and ecosystems turned over for use as facilities and racetracks ultimately exist to be used according to this theory. Hypothetically, environmental destruction and pollution come second to the utility that is provided for human activity, which would lead to almost no ethical faults. Disenchantment does bring up one question: how far does human benefit go? If the use of a natural resource shows clear detriment to human wellbeing in the future, disenchantment could fall apart.

The answer to the question of whether motorsports is or is not environmentally ethical is both yes and no. Depending on the ethical philosophy studied, it is shown that the environmental risk posed by racing can vary in significance. It should be noted that this doesn’t reflect the objective impact on nature itself. Extracting fossil fuels from the Earth and creating carbon emissions has a guaranteed effect on the planet, per the laws of physics. However, when comparing how these effects can be examined under theories such as utilitarianism and disenchantment, the ethics start to diverge. Afterall, motorsports is an industry which is culprit to upper class chauvinism. The racing industry likely justifies their inevitable environmental impact because of their class status (Brennan & Lo, 2002). The people and organizations who fund motorsports want to see it happen. They hold value in designing cars and competing. It could be said that the people in motorsports value racing more than the environmental risks associated with it since they don’t have to deal with its immediate effects. However, the racing industry could be prone to failure if the environment is too heavily affected. Fortunately, contemporary racing has targeted positive environmental change in series such as Formula 1 with technological advances to reduce carbon emissions of vehicles and operations. In conclusion, whether motor racing is ethical is subject to the philosophy in which it is studied, which will likely keep the door open to racing for the foreseeable future.

**Citations**

Brennan, A., & Lo, N. (2002). Environmental Ethics. In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2022).

Doytchev, B. (2019). IMPACT OF AUTOMOTIVE AND MOTORCYCLE SPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. *Trakia Journal of Sciences*, *17*(Suppl.1), 860–863. https://doi.org/10.15547/tjs.2019.s.01.141