

Do media love Beyonce more than the Super Bowl?

January 31 2014, by Dave Ottalini

Whether it's the Super Bowl or March Madness, a new study reveals that only half of the published photographs of championship games picture the games themselves, while the rest capture the action at other events associated with the big game.

[SportPix](#)

[, a new study from the International Center for Media & the Public Agenda \(ICMPA\) at the University of Maryland, evaluated 3,274 photographs published by 16 major American sports and news outlets as they covered Super Bowl XLVII and the 2013 NCAA Men's Basketball Final.](#)

[Across the Super Bowl coverage, the SportPix study showed that Beyoncé received more photographic attention than any other single personality – more than the coaches, quarterbacks or other players. Beyoncé's performance attracted immense coverage for an event that only lasted 14 minutes.](#)

["The SportPix study makes clear that news outlets have decided that fans are equally interested in seeing the sidebar events to a big](#)

[game](#), as the play action itself," says ICMPA Director and Study Leader Susan Moeller.

News outlets 'get' that photos are a way that visitors to online sites are

experiencing and reliving the games. "As a consequence," says Moeller, "they are using more and more photos in their stories. The Baltimore Sun ran almost 500 photos of last year's Super Bowl victory, and outlets such as ESPN, Fox Sports and the Bleacher Report ran well over 100 photos of the NCAA men's final."

Photographically covering championship games is now about much more than the game. "What makes a photo so powerful is that just one can create an understanding, right or wrong, of a person or event," says Kevin Blackistone, panelist for ESPN and visiting lecturer, Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism at UMD's Philip Merrill College of Journalism. "That's why this well-done content analysis is so fascinating."

Researchers from ICMPA and UMD's Philip Merrill College of Journalism used Pinterest to collect the thousands of images in the 36 hours after both games, on February 3-4 and April 8-9, 2013. They then analyzed the photos to determine how 16 sports and news outlets visually portrayed the two [events](#)—four online television networks, four Internet natives and eight online newspapers and magazines.

Together with ICMPA's 2013 PrezPix study of the 2012 presidential election that evaluated almost 9,000 photographs, ICMPA's SportPix study is believed to be the largest academic research project to date to use the Pinterest platform to aggregate and evaluate news [photos](#).

More information: View the SportPix study at sportpix2013.wordpress.com.

Provided by University of Maryland

Citation: Do media love Beyonce more than the Super Bowl? (2014, January 31) retrieved 16 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-01-media-beyonce-super-bowl.html>

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