

CHEAT SHEET

Super Bowl LII breaks record for lowest audience

David Bockino, assistant professor of communications, unpacks the effects of the superbowl's low audience ratings

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Professor David Bockino

David Bockino is an assistant professor of communication in the School of Communications. In an interview, Bockino discussed the ithe possible effects that the superbowl ratings will have on the future of the NFL.

Q: How does the NFL measure viewership?

A: The NFL measures viewership the same way every other television network measures viewership. They look at mostly average audience, which is the average number of people who are watching the Super Bowl or watching a program during any minute. They are looking at how many people in general are watching the Super Bowl which would be a reach number, but the media and press usually report an average audience member which reports the average number of people who are watching the Super Bowl at any one minute. This would be the 103 number. Then they added the online audience which was 2.6 which came to about 106. That's the number that the NFL will use to compare to other Super Bowls.

Q: What factors do you think contributed to the low ratings this year of the Super Bowl?

A: I have no idea. I thought the number was going to be huge but I was wrong. I thought this was going to be the highest rated Super Bowl of all time; two really big markets, big game, a halftime show



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Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Nick Foles (9) holds his son and waves during the victory celebration after Super Bowl LII on Sunday, Feb. 4, 2018, in Minneapolis, Minn.

that wasn't appreciated by a lot of people — but it didn't lose a ton of audience — it was at least middle of the road. I just think for whatever reason the NFL was down during the regular season. A lot of people will put that on the kneeling during the national anthem. I think that's part of the story, but I think the interest for the NFL may have just been down a bit this year. It was a surprise to me.

Q: How will these ratings affect the NFL?

A: They won't. It's still the tenth most viewed program of all time. The NFL is by far the strongest sport property in the country. It's the most viewed sports program all year, it's still a massive number and it'll be a rounding error eventually for sponsorships. They're still going to charge the same amount of money. I really don't think it's a huge deal and I don't think the NFL is going away any time soon. If I worked as VP of research for the NFL, I'd keep an eye on it and see what we could do to sort of bring people back because it was smaller than last year but it's not a plummet

like people would think it is. It's a lower rating than last year and you always want to grill, but because of what happened in the fall with lower ratings I think they should've expected this; and they probably expected this.

Q: Do you think that this will become a trend of decreasing?

A: I haven't seen NFL total yearly ratings. I think they're down a little bit but I don't think it's going to keep decreasing this much. I think maybe it's peaked because all sports peak and then they sort of settle in a little bit. But the NFL has a lot of issues, one of which is player safety and people are turned off because NFL players are legitimately having health issues after their career. Once people start to realize that, it kind of turns the sport off to a lot of people. I think that's a big factor. There's tons of commercials and I think they're trying to address that issue and trying to get people to interact more. There's also a lot of ways to consume the NFL with mobile sites and online services. Actually, watching the program on TV could be an issue. I don't think interest in the NFL

is going to wane too much, but of who's viewing their actual games it'll probably be a little less year.

Q: Do you think that mobile and online viewings make for what's been happening recent years with cable?

A: I don't think it makes up financial sense. They're definitely making as much money through the Internet. It's sort of what we always talk about with COM100, a fragmented audience, a million different ways to do get millions of entertainment options available to people now. To get people in front of a TV at a certain time is harder for everyone. Cable work ratings across the board are down, newscasts, popular shows — so the NFL be any different than other things? And it's not, it's not.

Q: How might the NFL increase ratings in the future?

A: Make the game more interesting. Which probably means make commercials which they're never going to see because then they'll start losing interest. The owners will be mad. I don't think the NFL necessarily has to make changes, they just need to keep their content more engaged and engaged with the entire year. If gambling is legalized, then you're good to go. It will probably get legalized in 10 years or less. If people can bet on their couches then that's what they need. It's no big secret that NFL viewership is driven by betting on the game and gambling. If you bet on football and gambling away, it's plummeting is no surprise to the league. So make one of those things legal and easier for the vast majority of people to do for those who don't want to use online booking sites, and they would probably see their ratings go up. Now would that invite a host of issues? Absolutely. But talking about ratings — that's not

Smith residence hall experiences second wave of vandalism

Smith hall suffers over \$100,000 in damages to their amenities

Cammie Behnke and Maggie Brown
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Vandalism damages to the first floor bathroom of Smith residence hall are now over \$100,000, according to John Dooley, vice president of Student Life. Elon University is planning to charge all Smith residents \$300 at the end of the semester.

The first floor bathroom of Smith Residence Hall has been vandalized twice already this year. The first incident reportedly had "tens of thousands of dollars" of damage.

The university has been warning students since the fall. But in a recent letter to residents, Dooley said the charges will be added to the students' tuition unless those responsible are identified.

The cost includes damage



A ripped urinal from the wall, damaged exit signs and broken ceiling tiles have been a part of the damages.

CAMMIE BEHNKE | ELON NEWS NETWORK

from a ripped urinal from the wall, damaged exit signs and broken ceiling tiles in September 2017. The total cost does not include the University's installment of security cameras.

Since the installation of security cameras, Dooley stated that the actions of vandalism discontinued. But because of how severe the damages were at the beginning of the year, the uni-

versity had to take action. Much of the reason the university is having to punish all residents of the dorm is because whoever did cause the initial vandalism is not speaking up.

"It is disappointing that no one has taken responsibility or provided information about the individuals involved," Dooley said in his letter.

Many residents are not

happy with this letter they received. Smith resident Michael Sloan said charging each resident is not fair.

"I physically was not on campus when this incident happened and I still have to pay \$300 for it," Sloan said.

According to the letter, the charges would be nearly \$1,000 per resident for the community damages, but they are only charging the residents \$300.

The university said if students were to provide information to Campus Safety and Police about the vandalism and destruction, those students would not be billed the \$300.

The University Housing Agreement states in section 3, residents are responsible for community damages "in halls or sections where the university has determined that there is theft or undue

SMITH HALL DAMAGES

\$100,000

Total damages done to Smith residence hall first floor bathroom.

\$300

Amount Elon University plans to charge all Smith residents at the end of the semester. The charges actually amount to be \$1,000 per resident but are only being charged \$300.

abuse of university and the responsible individual(s) cannot be identified.

But students are set with this decision by the university.

"I don't think it's fair to charge all of us to find the [responsible]," Sloan said. "The investigation to keep going because it's unfair for everyone in the hall especially to pay when all of our stuff is damaged."