

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Sports news and network rights: Balancing a conflict of interest

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This study has examined news programming by two sports news networks, ESPN and Fox Sports 1, evaluating four variables that examined what sports were covered, what visual elements were employed in individual stories, what teams or schools received coverage, and how long stories ran. The data collected found that sports with broadcast contracts with each network — more specifically, the National Football League, National Basketball Association, college football, and college basketball — received more coverage than other sports. The study also found that both networks cover teams and schools within their geographic region at a similar rate, while each network's coverage of the NFL outpaced any other sport in terms of average time per story.