Approach to the Content Analysis of Unintentional Injury in Super Bowl TV Commercials

**TOPIC**

Content analysis of frequency and magnitude of injury (intentional, unintentional, or implied injury) depictions in Super Bowl television advertisements from 1984 through 2015. The Super Bowl is the most watched television event, and this year was the most watched television event in history. A record 114.4 million people tuned in this past weekend. The game also set standards for social media and online. And many people watch the game just for the ads.

**APPROACH**

Research Questions

- How often do unintentional / intentional / and implied injuries appear in super bowl ads?
- What is the trend of depictions of unintentional injury over this 2 year time period?
- Are certain subject categories more likely to use unintentional injury to sell their product?
- What is the tone in which the injury is portrayed? Is it used for humor, to show strength and masculinity, to shock the audience?
- How are the outcomes of unintentional injury portrayed?

**Content Analysis Methods**

*Sampling Frame:* Super Bowl ads from 1984 to 2015


*Coding sheets:* Two sheets will be used. Code Sheet 1 will be marked to track whether or not an ad portrayed injury or the suggestion of injury [yes / no]. Code Sheet 2 will be marked to code for injury within a commercial. Code Sheet 2 will be based on that used by Glik et al to record unintentional injury in children’s television programs.
Content analyzers: one

**Content Domains – CODE SHEET 2**

*Type of commercial:* Alcohol, Apparel, Food and Beverage, Movie Trailers/TV shows, Services, Technology, Automotive, Other

*Type of injury – intentional:* what was the injury, how did it occur, length of time shown

*Type of injury – unintentional:* what was the injury, how did it occur, length of time shown

*Type of injury – potential:* what was the injury, how did it occur, length of time shown

*Type of injury – implied/suggested:* what was the implied injury, how is it implied it will occur, length of time shown

*Risk factors associated with the injury event:* environmental risk factor, social risk factor, behavioral risk factor, safety factors present prior to event, safety behaviors prior to the event, safety procedure, safety factors/behaviors in response to the event

*Description of what happened:* source of the injury, cause of the injury, site of the injury, simultaneous injuries to different characters

*Character involved in accident:* sex, age category, nature of the character, race/ethnicity, role of the character experiencing the injury

*Outcomes:* physical consequences of the injury, level of severity of the consequences, psychological consequences, response to the injury by bystanders, treatment on injury, how/when/where of treatment

*Tone surrounding the injury event:* general tone of the injury, how graphic was the depiction, how relevant to the story/plot line was the injury

Very interesting – remember – you may or may not see much injury – but you may see many behaviors that could potentially lead to injuries but don’t. Which again is what Hollywood/advertisers do very well – they create a fictional reality which does not synch that well with reality ... and its that disconnect which is interested as well as the minimization of harm ... otherwise good luck.