



## Sport or Spectacle? The case of Formula One

An analysis of the evolving dynamic between Sport and  
Media.



<sup>1</sup>Annabelle SCRASE

Mémoire de recherche sous la direction de Mme Clémence Fourton

*Majeure « Communication et Médias »*

Année universitaire 2023-2024

---

<sup>1</sup> Nemenov, Alexander | f1 photographer (n.d). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.gettyimages.fr/search/2/image-film?page=5&phrase=alexander%20nefedov&sort=mostpopular>

## **Authors declaration**

I, the undersigned Annabelle Scrase, declare on my honour that this research document is the result of my own work. I have neither forged, falsified, nor copied any part of others' work to pass it off as my own. All sources of information and quotations from authors have been properly cited.

I understand that failure to cite a source, or to cite it clearly and fully, constitutes plagiarism. I acknowledge that plagiarism is a serious offense and may be severely punished.

## Abstract

In 2017, Liberty Media, a relatively unknown mass media corporation, bought Formula One, assuming control of the sport. Successful strategic initiatives were launched aiming to expand the sports reach, attract a larger audience, and globalize its appeal. This acquisition mirrors a broader trend of media conglomerates gaining significant influence over sporting entities. While this phenomenon is extensively researched, the effects of these changes on fan perception and the essence of the sport remain relatively unexplored. This thesis endeavors to examine how Formula One's acquisition by Liberty Media catalyzed a shift from sport to spectacle, a sentiment echoed by fans. As well as exploring how this shift affected the sport fandom itself. Through comprehensive research into Liberty Media's strategies and changes, coupled with the creation of a survey aiming to parse fan perception, this study aims to show that Formula One has indeed embraced a more spectacle-oriented approach, potentially compromising its core sporting essence. This resonates strongly among fans and underscores the ramifications of this evolving sport/media relationship.

**Key words:** *Sport Fandom, Commercialisation, Sociology of fan behaviour, Motorsport, Globalisation, Spectacle, Entertainment.*

---

En 2017, Liberty Media, une société de médias de masse relativement inconnue, a acheté la Formule 1, assumant le contrôle du sport. Des initiatives fructueuses ont été lancées dans le but d'étendre la portée du sport, d'attirer un public plus large et de mondialiser son attrait. Cette acquisition reflète une tendance plus large des conglomérats médiatiques qui acquièrent une influence significative sur les entités sportives. Bien que ce phénomène fasse l'objet de recherches approfondies, les effets de ces changements sur la perception des fans et l'essence même du sport restent relativement inexplorés. Cette thèse vise à examiner comment l'acquisition de la Formule 1 par Liberty Media a catalysé le passage du sport au spectacle, un sentiment partagé par les fans. Elle explore également la manière dont ce changement a affecté le fandom sportif lui-même. Grâce à une recherche approfondie sur les stratégies et les changements de Liberty Media, associée à la création d'un questionnaire visant à analyser la perception des fans, cette étude vise à démontrer que la Formule 1 a effectivement adopté une approche plus axée sur le spectacle, risquant de compromettre son essence sportive fondamentale. Ce constat résonne fortement chez les fans et souligne les conséquences de l'évolution de la relation sport/médias.

**Mots clés :** *Fandom sportif, Commercialisation, Sociologie des comportements des supporters, sport automobile, mondialisation, spectacle, divertissement.*

## **Acknowledgements:**

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to Clemence Fourton, whose guidance in undertaking this project was invaluable. I greatly appreciate the help and advice throughout this year.

Thanks should also go to every single person who filled out the survey for this project.

Many thanks to my parents for their unwavering support and encouragement.

Special thanks to my brother, Ed, who acted as a fantastic sounding board and greatly helped in times of need.

So as not to be accused of favoritism, I would also like to recognise my other siblings, Katy, Jonny, Alfie, and Lucy, whose positivity bolstered me through the more frustrating times. I'm grateful for the encouragement from my Grandpa Joe, Grandma and Uncle Sim.

It would be remiss of me not to mention my housemates, Valentine and Ninog, without whom this experience would have been a lot less pleasant.

Finally I thank my friends Sina, Océane, and Sarah.

## Summary

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b><i>Chapter 1 : Unveiling Formula One's sporting Essence: Liberty Media's Impact in Perspective.....</i></b>	<b>26</b>
I. Tracing Formula One's Journey: From Sporting Origins to Global Triumph.....	26
II. Liberty Media's Acquisition: Transformative Vision and Implications for Formula One's Future	31
<b><i>Chapter 2: Understanding Formula One's Evolution: Factors Driving the Transition from Media Event to Global Spectacle.....</i></b>	<b>39</b>
I. Formula One's U.S. Expansion: Implications for the Sport's Future.....	39
II. Commercializing Formula One: From Elite Club to Mainstream Sport.....	46
III. External Forces at Play: Factors Influencing Formula One's Evolution.....	56
<b><i>Chapter 3: Formula One's Changing Fanbase: Exploring the Influx of New Faces.....</i></b>	<b>69</b>
I. Deciphering the Formula One Fandom: Understanding its Composition.....	69
II. A Catalyst for Change: The Impact of "Drive to Survive" on Formula One Fandom.....	74
<b><i>Chapter 4: Strong Fan Perspectives on Formula One's Evolution and Current Landscape..</i></b>	<b>82</b>
I. The Depth of Survey Responses: Exploring reasons for Extreme Fan Engagement.....	82
II. Spectacle Over Sport: Fan Sentiments on Formula One's Transformation.....	87
III. The 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix: A Turning Point Highlighting the Spectacle-Driven Transformation of Formula One.....	98
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Bibliography:.....</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Annex:.....</b>	<b>130</b>

## **Table of figures<sup>2</sup>**

**Figure 1:** Chart representing opinions on the Las Vegas Grand Prix

**Figure 2:** Chart representing familiarity of respondents with F1 TV

**Figure 3:** Pivot Table cross referencing familiarity with F1 TV to Interest in subscription

**Figure 4:** Chart representing opinions on the pursuit of F1's new type of content

**Figure 5:** Pivot Table cross referencing age of the respondents to Interest in subscription

**Figure 6:** Chart representing age distribution of respondents

**Figure 7:** Chart representing gender distribution of respondents

**Figure 8:** Pivot table cross referencing age of respondents to gender

**Figure 9:** Chart representation the duration of time individuals have been F1 fans

**Figure 10:** Chart representing familiarity with "Drive to Survive"

**Figure 11:** Chart representing viewership of "Drive to Survive"

**Figure 12:** Word Cloud showcasing opinions about the impact "Drive to Survive" has on F1

**Figure 13:** Chart representing individuals' level of agreement to the statement about Formula One transitioning into a Spectacle.

**Figure 14:** Chart representing individuals who have been fans of F1 for 10-15 years' level of agreement to the statement about Formula One transitioning into a Spectacle.

**Figure 15:** Chart representing individuals who have been fans of F1 for under 3 years' level of agreement to the statement about Formula One transitioning into a Spectacle.

**Figure 16:** Chart representing opinions about changes to quality of racing

**Figure 17:** Word Cloud showcasing opinions on stewarding in recent years

**Figure 18:** Chart representing opinions on if the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix restart was handled correctly

**Figure 19:** Word Cloud showcasing opinions on the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix situation

---

<sup>2</sup> All figures used in this thesis were created using data obtained from the survey

# Introduction

"Formula One is no longer merely a Sport," "I want to rekindle my love for F1, but the aftermath of the Abu Dhabi debacle still stings," "F1's dazzling and tarnished 2021: a lesson in perspective," "Verstappen's Victory in F1: Did the FIA prioritise spectacle over fairness?" "What the hell is happening here?" "Sport or Spectacle?"<sup>3</sup>

These provocative headlines are just a glimpse of the myriad of articles that flooded publications in the aftermath of the 2021 F1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. The race, marred by a controversial call culminating in Max Verstappen's championship victory over Lewis Hamilton, sparked intense debate. For many, it underscored a disconcerting trajectory wherein Formula One veers away from its essence as a sport, evolving into a spectacle. This shift coincides notably with Liberty Media's acquisition of the sport in 2017<sup>4</sup>. What distinguishes sports brands from conventional businesses is the emotional connection fans harbor toward the event. During a sports event, spectators transcend their role as mere consumers; they become integral participants in the drama unfolding before them. Consequently, it becomes paramount for sports brands to uphold their intrinsic value and sustain fan engagement amidst evolving dynamics<sup>5</sup>.

Indeed, Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One has ignited fervent debate surrounding the perceived dilution of its sporting integrity. The relentless pursuit of entertainment at the expense of authenticity, a trend prevalent in sporting discourse at large, has now firmly entrenched itself within Formula One<sup>6</sup>. The contentious events of Abu Dhabi 2021 serve as a poignant illustration of this overarching issue, crystallizing concerns regarding the prioritisation of spectacle over sporting integrity within the pinnacle of motorsport.

## Framework

The objective of this research is to look into the effects of the acquisition of Formula One by Liberty Media. Furthermore, to analyse how it has affected the sport and the perception fans have of this change.

Formula One stands as the pinnacle of motorsport, characterised by highly specialised open-wheel racing cars engineered for unparalleled speeds. This prestigious world

---

<sup>3</sup> For the articles see Annex 1

<sup>4</sup> Liberty Media Corporation. Retrieved 25th November 2023. (2017, January 23). Liberty media corporation completes acquisition of Formula 1. Liberty Media Corporation. <https://www.libertymedia.com/news/detail/305/liberty-media-corporation-completes-acquisition-of-formula-1>

<sup>5</sup> Park S.-H., Mahony D., Kim Y. K. (2011). The role of sport fan curiosity: A new conceptual approach to the understanding of sport fan behavior. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 46–56.

<sup>6</sup> Kunz, R. E., Elsässer, F., & Santomier, J. (2016). Sport-related branded entertainment: the Red Bull phenomenon. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 6(5), 520-541.

championship unfolds through a series of races, taking place on diverse circuits across the globe. In this competition, 20 drivers representing 10 teams go head-to-head, each with the ultimate goal of clinching victory in both the World Drivers' Championship and the Constructors' Championship<sup>7</sup>. These championships unfold simultaneously throughout the season. Drivers earn points based on their position in the Grand Prix, which is the term used to refer to a race. Similarly, teams accumulate points based on the combined totals of their two drivers' performances. The World Drivers' Championship recognises the individual driver who accumulates the most points over the course of the season. Meanwhile, the Constructors' Championship is to honor the team that demonstrates superior engineering, strategy, and teamwork throughout the season, awarded to the team that obtains the most points through the combined efforts of their drivers. Indeed, F1 is renowned for its cutting-edge technology, with cars designed for optimal speed and performance. These aerodynamic creations rank among the fastest racing cars globally, each possessing distinct capabilities based on the respective team's craftsmanship. Stringent regulations govern car design, engine specifications, and racing protocols, ensuring equity and safety. The enforcement of these rules has sparked substantial controversy in recent times. This dual championship format ensures that both individual drivers and their respective teams are recognised for their contributions to the sport<sup>8</sup>.

Formula One is a massive global industry, with a yearly calendar typically consisting of around 20 Grand Prix spanning from March to November, usually starting in Australia and travelling across the world before concluding in Abu Dhabi. Every Grand Prix takes place on a different circuit throughout the racing season. In any Formula One team, the key actors include the drivers, the team (mechanics, engineers, strategists etc.) team owners and sponsors, who support Formula One teams financially. The Formula One race weekend typically spans three days. Friday and Saturday are dedicated to practice and qualifying, while Sunday is reserved for the main race day, where points can be scored. Occasionally, there are Sprint weekends, this means the race weekend will feature a “mini race” (a race representing 25% of the full race distance) on Saturday that also offers the opportunity to earn points towards the championships. The winner of the Grand Prix is the driver who completes the set number of laps in the shortest possible time, finishing first. The number of laps varies depending on the length of the track but always adds up to 305 kilometers, a traditional Grand Prix distance. Every race on the F1 calendar is designed to last approximately 90 minutes<sup>9</sup>.

More specifically, a standard Grand Prix weekend consists of five sessions. On Friday, teams have two practice sessions they usually use to gather data on tyre and fuel consumption and allow drivers to familiarise themselves with the track. On Saturday, they

---

<sup>7</sup> Tremayne, D., & Hughes, M. (1998). The concise encyclopedia of formula one. Dempsey Parr.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid



have a third practice session to prepare for qualifying later in the day. In Formula One qualifying sessions, drivers aim to set the fastest lap time. They are then organized based on these times, with the fastest driver starting first in pole position, followed by the others in descending order, culminating with the slowest driver starting last. Championship points are distributed between 1st and 10th place after each race. If a driver finishes outside of the top ten they do not receive points. The scoring system awards the winner 25, before scaling down based on grid position with 18 points for second place, 15 for third, and then 12, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2, with a single point for the 10th-placed driver. However an additional point can be earned if a driver finishing in the top ten also completed the fastest lap of the race<sup>10</sup>.

One of the most compelling aspects of Formula One lies in its live broadcast format. It stands as one of the most popular televised sports in terms of its live TV audience<sup>11</sup>. What sets live sports apart from other television programming is its inherent unpredictability and immediacy. While scripted shows or prerecorded events can be broadcast live, the essence of live sports lies in the fact that every viewer experiences the event simultaneously, without any prior knowledge of the outcome. In the realm of Formula One, this essence of liveness is particularly pronounced. The event itself, its transmission, and the audience's reception of it all unfold in real-time, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and anticipation. This interplay between the event and its viewers, with no one having a privileged position over another, encapsulates the true essence of live sports broadcasting<sup>12</sup>.

The evolution of visual and audio representations in live sports broadcasting has sparked discussions regarding the true nature of experiencing a sporting event. Particularly, there is a debate surrounding the impact of television on the essence of live sports. Some researchers contend that television fails to offer an authentic or equitable experience compared to physically attending an event. This argument stems from the fact that broadcasters selectively curate various aspects of the event and employ diverse visual and narrative techniques to convey it to viewers. Critics of televised sports argue that this curated presentation may distort the raw essence of the event, potentially skewing perceptions or omitting crucial details<sup>13</sup>. However, despite these concerns, many viewers find that televised sports effectively meet their expectations. Television networks meticulously orchestrate these broadcasts, strategically positioning them as spectacles in their own right. Through careful planning and production, televised sporting events are crafted to captivate audiences, delivering an engaging and immersive viewing experience that resonates with fans worldwide. Thus, while debates persist about the authenticity of televised sports, there is no

---

<sup>10</sup> Noble, J., & Hughes, M. (2004). *Formula One racing for dummies*. Wiley Pub.

<sup>11</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). *Formula One as Television*. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 387-411). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>12</sup> Hoehn, T., & Lancefield, D. (2003). *Broadcasting and Sport*. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 19(4), 552–568.

<sup>13</sup> Marriott, S. (1996). *Time and time again: live television commentary and the construction of replay talk*. *Media, Culture & Society*, 18(1), 69-86.

denying the profound impact of television in shaping the modern sports-watching experience<sup>14</sup>.

It is crucial to establish a precise understanding of what we mean when we refer to the spectacle of a live television sporting event. Spectacle is inherently intertwined with live television media events, particularly televised sports contests. However, despite its frequent mention in scholarly discourse regarding sports, the term itself often lacks explicit definition, leading to ambiguity<sup>15</sup>.

Broadly speaking, when we discuss the spectacle in the context of sporting events, we can delineate between two distinct definitions. Firstly, there is the spectacle as observed within the framework of a specific mediated event or instance within the broader realm of sports. This definition focuses on the tangible, observable elements of spectacle. It encompasses the visual and narrative components of sports presentation, including commentary, visual effects, post event analysis, and overall production values. Essentially, it encapsulates the spectacle as perceived by viewers during a live event or broadcast. Conversely, the second definition of spectacle extends beyond the immediate event and delves into the broader social, cultural, and systemic influences that shape the landscape of sports. This definition encompasses overarching narratives, ideologies, and power dynamics within the sporting world. It delves deeper into societal constructs and norms that influence how sports are organised, consumed, and perceived. For instance, it may include discussions about the commercialisation of sports, the role of the media, the influence of sponsors, and broader cultural attitudes toward athleticism and competition<sup>16</sup>.

Understanding this nuanced difference in definition proves paramount when delving into the status of Formula One. Initially, Formula One emerged as a pure sport, devoid of any media spotlight, where enthusiasts gathered solely to indulge their passion for racing. Organised independently from the television world, it operated within its own sphere, untouched by the realm of mass media. However, a significant turning point occurred in the 1960s when Formula One underwent a profound transformation, transitioning into a spectacle in the first definition of the word. At the forefront of this stood Bernie Ecclestone, a pivotal figure whose approach reshaped the sport's landscape. Ecclestone's strategic manoeuvres propelled Formula One from its rudimentary form of high-speed racing to a grandiose media extravaganza. Undoubtedly, Ecclestone stands as the driving force behind Formula One's pivotal access to television broadcasts and the inception of what we now recognise as the Formula One media event—a spectacle<sup>17</sup>.

---

<sup>14</sup> Whannel, G. (1993). Sport and popular culture: The temporary triumph of process over product. *Innovation: the European journal of social science research*, 6(3), 341-349.

<sup>15</sup> Horne, J. (2022). Sport, Spectacle, and Mega-Events. *The Oxford Handbook of Sport and Society*, 194.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> Ciolfi Ms, J. L., & Stuart Dr, S. (2013). Organisational succession in F1: An analysis of Bernie Ecclestone's roles as CEO of Formula One management. *International Journal of Motorsport Management*, 2(1), 1.

The significance of the second definition of spectacle becomes paramount with Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One. Since its inception in 1950, the sport has boasted a substantial fan base, but it wasn't until 2017/2018 that it experienced an explosive surge in popularity, reaching unprecedented fan bases and engagement levels<sup>18</sup>. Coincidentally, this surge aligns with the entry of Liberty Media Corporation, a mass media company, who secured the rights to F1 in early 2017. Liberty Media's projects have seen them orchestrate pivotal changes and initiatives within the sport; indeed, the objectives were clearly delineated: a global expansion and commercialisation of the sport. This vision extended beyond traditional boundaries. The aim was to tap into previously unexplored markets, younger demographics, American viewership, and the digital sphere—a realm Formula One had previously overlooked. Since entering the Formula One scene, Liberty Media has launched a profound commercialisation of the sport. The primary goal has been to enhance the entertainment value of Formula One; enticing new fans while preserving the sport's essence<sup>19</sup>. A paramount focus for Liberty Media has been the expansion of F1's digital footprint, solidifying its presence across various social media platforms. Beyond digital strategies, Liberty Media has actively shaped the sport by introducing new sporting and technical regulations. These changes aim to enhance competitiveness, elevate the spectacle of racing, and foster closer competition among teams. Under the stewardship of Liberty Media, significant shifts have occurred in the executive management of F1, with fresh faces assuming key roles in managing and promoting the sport<sup>20</sup>.

Liberty Media swiftly implemented this vision for Formula One, resulting in significant changes to the sporting operations. However, this deliberate departure from convention has not been without its detractors, with some viewers expressing concerns that Formula One's evolution may come at the expense of the traditional race experience. This tension between innovation and tradition underscores the complex dynamics at play in Formula One's ongoing transformation and highlights the need for a nuanced understanding of its evolving identity and fan engagement strategies<sup>21</sup>. The arrival of Liberty Media marked a pivotal moment for Formula One. The transformative changes introduced by Liberty Media, coupled with the influx of younger drivers and unprecedented digital access, ushered in an entirely new demographic of fans. This shift gave rise to a whole new demographic, not only

---

<sup>18</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 11(1), 43-59.

<sup>19</sup> Clarkson, T. (Host). (2020, October). Chase Carey on his role in shaping F1's future and guiding the sport through a global pandemic [Audio podcast, Episode 107]. In *F1-Beyond the Grid*.

<sup>20</sup> Cooper, J. (2021). How liberty media and content creators transformed f1 for the masses. Retrieved 16 April 2024 Drive Tribe.

<https://drivetribe.com/p/how-liberty-media-and-content-creatorsGFu1JtZLSAirpx8DxzQZg?iid=X3yBM5slQ5OhAtD8xs0J6g>

<sup>21</sup> Hussain, G., Naz, T., Shahzad, N., & Bajwa, M. J. (2021). Social Media Marketing in Sports and using social media platforms for sports fan engagement. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government* Vol, 27(06)

within the sport itself but also in the realm of communication and marketing strategies employed. What used to be a traditional Sunday race, has found itself surrounded by a Netflix series, special event race weekends, overtake awards, drivers of the day, and numerous other innovations<sup>22</sup>. This deliberate action to add more on top of the race has raised concerns that it has strayed too far at the expense of the traditional race experience. With Liberty Media's overhaul of Formula One's structure, presentation, and aspirations, concerns arose regarding the overall spectacle, particularly in the broader societal and cultural context. These changes had the potential to reshape cultural attitudes towards Formula One, raising questions about its traditional identity and values. The evolution initiated by Liberty Media sparked debates about the essence of Formula One as a spectacle and its place in the contemporary sports landscape<sup>23</sup>.

## Literature review

Exploring the literature on Formula One under Liberty Media's tenure, along with examining fan perceptions and the ramifications of this takeover, reveals intriguing insights. Much of the existing literature on Formula One tends to focus heavily on the scientific and engineering dimensions of the sport. Consequently, this meant juxtaposing literature from other sporting domains to contextualise the case of Formula One effectively. Furthermore, it was imperative to explore broader themes associated with the transition toward spectacle, including the concept of globalisation, the intricate relationship between sport and media, and understanding the concept and role of fans and sports fandom. These overarching themes provide critical context for understanding the evolving landscape of Formula One under Liberty Media's stewardship and shed light on the complex interplay between commercial interests, media dynamics, and fan engagement within the sport.

### *Dynamics of formula one*

Much research has been done about the broader dynamics of rule enforcement within Formula One. The sport has known corruption and cheating scandals throughout its history. While historical markers such as the 2008 McLaren and Alonso cheating scandal were present<sup>24</sup>, post-2017 witnessed a more blatant dismissal of established rules according to

---

<sup>22</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*. <https://hstalks.com/article/7847/a-formula-for-success-how-formula-one-racing-embra/>

<sup>23</sup> Dolles, H., & Raghunathan, K. (2024). Entrepreneurs and commercial ownership of sport events—the business development of Formula One 1. In *Research Handbook on Major Sporting Events* (pp. 179-194). Edward Elgar Publishing.

<sup>24</sup> Zaksaitė, S. (2016). Manipulation of competitions in Formula-1: Where policy ends and cheating begins. *The International Sports Law Journal*.

Zaksaitė<sup>25</sup>. Notably, cases emerged where rules were manipulated to achieve 'better racing,' or, as authors such as Zheng, Gorse and Chadwick argue, better entertainment<sup>26</sup>. Instances include regulatory changes targeting dominant teams like Mercedes or controversial rule alterations during races<sup>27</sup>. An example is the ban of DAS, a system invented by Mercedes that gave them considerable competitive advantage, outlawed in order to bring the racing closer together. This evolution in the regulatory landscape marked a transformation, prompting a closer examination of Formula One's governance and the cascading impact of such shifts, a dimension less explored in existing literature. Whilst there are many articles about individual scandals, there is not much research on the increase that has happened since 2017<sup>28</sup>.

### *Fan behaviour*

Undoubtedly, the most significant transformation following Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One lies in the demographic makeup of Formula One fans. Therefore, it is paramount to delve into the existing literature on fan behavior. Within the realm of sports fandom research, fans are frequently depicted as inherently resistant or transgressive. However authors such as Sturm and McKinney highlight how crucial it is to critically examine this perspective within the context of today's mediatised and commodified sports landscape<sup>29</sup>. The focus on new media-enabled sport fan practices, challenges the prevailing notion of fan resistance or transgression. As Samra and Wos explain, this emphasis overlooks the reality of a fan's role as a consumer within heavily mediated and commodified sports environments. In contexts like Australia and New Zealand, where the rugby league enjoys immense popularity, fans are immersed in a culture where consumption of merchandise and media is intertwined with fandom. Similarly, in Formula One, a sport funded by transnational corporations, fans engage not only through media consumption but also through strategic purchases and displays of fan capital<sup>30</sup>. Thus, rather than passive consumers or mere billboards for corporate branding, fans exhibit reflexivity and strategic engagement with the sport and its associated culture.

---

[https://www.academia.edu/106398754/Manipulation\\_of\\_competitions\\_in\\_Formula\\_1\\_where\\_policy\\_ends\\_and\\_cheating\\_begins](https://www.academia.edu/106398754/Manipulation_of_competitions_in_Formula_1_where_policy_ends_and_cheating_begins)

<sup>25</sup> Gorse, S., & Chadwick, S. (2010). Conceptualising corruption in sport: Implications for sponsorship programmes. *The European Business Review*, 4, 40-45.

<sup>26</sup> Zheng, A. (2023). After abu dhabi: Restoring integrity and accountability in formula 1 (SSRN Scholarly Paper 4430392). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4430392>

<sup>27</sup> Appendix J . Specific regulations for series production Cars. Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/site-search>

<sup>28</sup> Zaksaitė, S. (2016). Manipulation of competitions in Formula-1: Where policy ends and cheating begins. *The International Sports Law Journal*.

[https://www.academia.edu/106398754/Manipulation\\_of\\_competitions\\_in\\_Formula\\_1\\_where\\_policy\\_ends\\_and\\_cheating\\_begins](https://www.academia.edu/106398754/Manipulation_of_competitions_in_Formula_1_where_policy_ends_and_cheating_begins)

<sup>29</sup> Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).

<sup>30</sup> Samra, B., & Wos, A. (2014). Consumer in Sports: Fan typology analysis. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 6(4-1), 263-288. <https://doi.org/10.2478/joim-2014-0050>

The notion of "fan capital" theorised by Bourdieu and expanded on by Sturm, underscores the importance of the knowledge and cultural literacy amassed by fans in the sports domain. This extends beyond mere material consumption to encompass the depth of understanding and engagement fans have with the games and players they follow. Applying this to Formula One, that has undergone a major demographic shift, could potentially lead to interesting results<sup>31,32</sup>.

Duffett explains that Fandom implies a dynamic and heterogeneous nature. Fans' access to and creation of sports-related knowledge through new media platforms play a crucial role in shaping contemporary fandom practices<sup>33</sup>. Central to this understanding is what Bourdieu called the concept of "performative consumption," which highlights the strategic and reflexive nature of fan behavior. While fans actively consume sports-related content and merchandise, their engagement is not passive but rather involves strategic choices and symbolic performances that reflect their identity and affiliation with the sports community. While fans may engage in practices that challenge dominant narratives or norms, these actions are often embedded within broader consumeristic frameworks<sup>34</sup>.

There is an intricate relationship between sports fandom, consumption practices, and the evolving landscape of capitalism in the digital age<sup>35</sup>. Firstly, authors such as Johnson, Chou, Mastromartino and Zhang explain that sports fandom exists within a context characterised by both material and immaterial consumption. While much attention is often directed towards the immaterial aspects of fan behavior in the online sphere, such as knowledge exchange and digital interactions, it is crucial to recognise that access to these resources is not universally distributed. Rather, access to both material goods, like tickets and merchandise, and immaterial goods, such as online content and communities, is stratified based on factors like economic capital and existing knowledge<sup>36</sup>. Hedlund expands that in a consumer economy, value is generated through the production and consumption of goods, necessitating a constant cycle of production to sustain demand. However, the advent of the internet has introduced new dynamics to this system, offering limitless opportunities for interaction and engagement with sports content. This interaction, whether through reading blogs, watching highlight videos, or participating in fantasy sports leagues, contributes to the

---

<sup>31</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>

<sup>32</sup> Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).

<sup>33</sup> Duffett, M. (2013). The fan community: Online and offline. In *Understanding fandom: An introduction to the study of media fan culture*. (pp.235-355). Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

<sup>34</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>

<sup>35</sup> Stevens, C. S. (2010). You are what you buy: Postmodern consumption and fandom of Japanese popular culture. *Japanese Studies*, 30(2), 199-214.

<sup>36</sup> Johnson, L. M., Chou, W. H. W., Mastromartino, B., & Zhang, J. J. (2020). Sport fan consumption: Contemporary research and emerging trends. *Handbook of Research on the Impact of Fandom in Society and Consumerism*, 149-170.

generation of value for various stakeholders, particularly through online advertising revenue<sup>37</sup>.

While a plethora of literature has shed light on the perceptions and preferences of younger audiences, with a particular emphasis on the influential role of social media, there remains a notable gap in the discourse concerning older audiences. Despite the abundance of online content tailored to and consumed by the younger demographic, the perspectives and preferences of older audiences have largely remained unexplored<sup>38</sup>. Moreover, while this literature has underscored the success of the digital realm in attracting younger audiences, it fails to delve into the current perception and retention rates for sport. As attention spans wane and disillusionment with sports fandom looms in this new era, understanding the dynamics of fan engagement across age groups becomes increasingly imperative.

### *Sport Fandom*

The concept of sport fandom is complex and multifaceted, often eluding a precise definition despite numerous studies aimed at understanding it. However, contemporary research from individuals such as Hirshon frequently examines sport fandom within the framework of social identity theory<sup>39</sup>. This framework suggests that identities are formed through self-categorisation and subsequent association with social groups<sup>40</sup>. In the context of sports, fan identities develop as individuals align themselves with specific sports or teams, integrating into the larger community of supporters associated with those entities. Crucially, the relationship between fans themselves distinguishes fandom from mere fanship. Fanship as explained by researchers such as Osborne, Watkins and Coombs<sup>41</sup> refers to the direct connection between an individual fan and the sport or team, devoid of broader social interactions<sup>42</sup>. In contrast, fandom involves the communal aspect of belonging to a group of supporters and engaging in shared experiences and interactions with other fans. In addition to the psychological and social drivers outlined by social identity theory, Bodet, Hirshon and others identified two additional factors contributing to the development of sport fandom: environmental identification and team-related identification<sup>43</sup>. Environmental identification

---

<sup>37</sup> Hedlund, D. P. (2017). Creating value through membership and participation in sport fan consumption communities. In *Value co-creation in sport management* (pp. 60-81). Routledge.

<sup>38</sup> Palermo, A., & Delaine, G. (2023). Formula One on social networks: a successful strategy. *ZER: Revista de Estudios de Comunicación= Komunikazio Ikasketen Aldizkaria*, 28(54), 13-29.

<sup>39</sup> Hirshon, N. (2020). Social identity theory in sports fandom research. In *Multidisciplinary perspectives on media fandom* (pp. 172-191). IGI Global.

<sup>40</sup> Harwood, J., & Roy, A. (2005). Social identity theory and mass communication research. In J. Harwood & H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup communication* (pp. 189–211). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

<sup>41</sup> Osborne A. C., Coombs D. S. (2013). Performative sport fandom: An approach to retheorizing sport fans. *Sport in Society*, 16(5), 672–681.

<sup>42</sup> Watkins, B. A. (2014). Social Identification and social media in Sports: Implications for sport brands. In *Routledge handbook of sport and new media* (pp. 200-210). Routledge.

<sup>43</sup> Bodet G., Bernache-Assollant I. (2011). Consumer loyalty in sport spectatorship services: The relationships with consumer satisfaction and team identification. *Psychology and Marketing*, 28(8), 781–802. <https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1002/mar.20412>

relates to a fan's historical exposure to a team, influenced by circumstances such as socialisation, geographic proximity, or affinity with the team's stadium. On the other hand, team-related identification pertains to the emotional connection fans develop based on various factors such as team performance, player attributes, and organisational characteristics<sup>44</sup>.

The induction of newcomers into fandom is shaped by a combination of socialisation processes and circumstantial factors, including geographic location. This suggests that while social interactions and group dynamics play a significant role in fostering fandom, external influences such as geographical proximity also contribute to the formation of fan identities and allegiances. Within the social identity framework, consumption is often highlighted as a crucial component of fandom. This pertains to the consumption of mass media related to the sport or team, which is considered a distinct effect of sport fandom by researchers such as Wann<sup>45</sup>. Expanding on this concept, Crawford and De Kosnik demonstrated how media consumption correlates directly with the continuum of fan identification<sup>46</sup>. Their research indicated that the choice of media channels (such as television, digital platforms, social media, or print), along with feelings of national identity, can be predicted by the type of fandom, as determined by self-categorisation and level of identification<sup>47</sup>. Applying this perspective to Formula One becomes particularly interesting when taking into account the whole new demographic of fans arriving that were targeted for their youth and presence on social media platforms. This insurge of new fans potentially challenges the norms established within the existing sport fandom.

However, Giulianotti introduced a different perspective by proposing that the hyper-commodification of the modern sports market has significantly altered the nature of fandom<sup>48</sup>. He categorised sport spectators into four distinct groups – supporter, follower, fan, and flâneur – based on the motivations behind their relationship with a team and their level of identification. Supporters, rooted in tradition and characterised by high identification levels, align most closely with the social identity framework. On the other hand, fans with a consumer orientation, referred to as consumer/hot fans, demonstrate their allegiance through product consumption. Followers represent individuals who maintain a favorable interest in the sport and actors, demonstrating implicit or explicit awareness of the identities and communities associated with them. They exhibit a more detached and less emotionally invested relationship with the sport. Flâneurs, categorised as consumer/cool, establish their

---

<sup>44</sup> Wann, D. L., Melnick, M. J., Russell, G. W., & Pease, D. G. (2001). *Sport fans: The psychology and social impact of spectators*. Routledge.

<sup>45</sup> Wann, D. L. (2012). Chapter 20-The Causes and Consequences of Sport Team Identification: Chapter taken from *Handbook of Sports and Media* ISBN: 978-0-203-87367-0. Routledge Online Studies on the Olympic and Paralympic Games, 1(46), 358-382.

<sup>46</sup> Crawford, G. (2004). Sport fan communities. In *Consuming Sport*. Routledge.

<sup>47</sup> De Kosnik, A. (2012). Fandom as free labor. In *Digital labor* (pp. 98-111). Routledge.

<sup>48</sup> Giulianotti, R. (2002). Supporters, followers, fans, and flâneurs: A taxonomy of spectator identities in football. *Journal of sport and social issues*, 26(1), 25-46.



identification with virtual relationships, particularly through interactions with media such as television and the Internet. Giulianotti's framework represents a reorientation of fandom around the dual axes of cultural tradition and market consumption. This nuanced understanding acknowledges the diverse ways in which individuals engage with sports, ranging from deeply rooted cultural affiliations to more consumer-driven relationships shaped by market dynamics.

Furthermore, Toffoletti demonstrates that emotional investment plays a pivotal role in engaging fans in sports. Building a sense of community and fostering genuine connections with players can significantly boost viewership<sup>49</sup>. This concept, when applied to Formula One, reveals interesting dynamics. The sport actively encourages blind support for drivers, urging fans to invest deeply in their chosen personalities<sup>50</sup>. In essence, Formula One stands at the intersection of embracing and challenging trends in sports engagement, making it a compelling case study in navigating the evolving landscape of viewer preferences.

### *Globalisation in Sport*

Formula One stands as one of the few sports played on a truly worldwide stage, with flagship events occurring constantly. This unparalleled frequency sustains constant engagement and underscores the sport's pervasive influence<sup>51</sup>. The global nature of Formula One contributes to its widespread popularity, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. The consistent presence of events establishes an ongoing narrative, capturing the attention of fans globally and fostering a unique sense of anticipation and camaraderie<sup>52</sup>.

The concept of globalisation has had profound effects on sports and the sports industry, provoking scholars such as Donnelly to examine how global and local forces interact to shape the evolution of sports within different cultural contexts<sup>53</sup>. Initially, scholars explored this dynamic through the lens of a 'global-local nexus,' highlighting the intersection of global influences with local societies and cultures. This framework allowed for an understanding of how sports were transformed as they encountered global actors and trends<sup>54</sup>. However, some scholars criticised this approach for oversimplifying the relationship between the global and local, often portraying the local as a reactionary force against the global. In response to these critiques, researchers introduced the concept of 'glocalisation.' Glocalisation

---

<sup>49</sup> Toffoletti, K. (2017). Identities, performances and pleasures. In *Women Sport Fans*. Routledge.

<sup>50</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). The 'star in the car': Formula One stardom, driver agency and celebrity culture. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 519-556). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>51</sup> Murray, J. (2019). Fan Identification in Professional Sport. *Sport Management Undergraduate*, 1–21. [https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/sport\\_undergrad/156/](https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/sport_undergrad/156/)

<sup>52</sup> Houlihan, B. (2008). Sport and globalisation. *Sport and society: A student introduction*, 553-537.

<sup>53</sup> Donnelly, P. (1996). The local and the global: Globalisation in the sociology of sport. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 20(3), 239-257.

<sup>54</sup> Shin, N., & Peachey, J. W. (2021). Understanding the global–local nexus in the context of the Olympic Games: Implications for managing community development through sport megaevents. *Journal of Sport Management*, 36(1), 82-95.

emphasises the complex and nuanced interactions between the global and local, viewing them not as binary opposites but as existing along a continuum<sup>55</sup>. This perspective, well defined by Roudametof<sup>56</sup> recognises that global forces can shape local contexts, and vice versa, leading to hybrid forms of cultural expression and identity. Subsequent studies delved deeper into the concept of glocalisation, seeking to understand how the global and local interact within specific sporting contexts. These studies provided empirical insights into the ways in which sports are “glocalised”, or adapted to fit local cultural norms and preferences while still retaining elements of global influence<sup>57</sup>. Overall, the concept of glocalisation offers a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between globalizing forces and local contexts within the realm of sports. Applying this theory to Formula One becomes interesting, as the sport takes place in nearly 20 different countries; the “glocalisation” effect is interesting to confront it with. Moreso with the US expansion undergone recently.

One aspect not extensively covered in literature, is the cost of Formula One races. Some countries pay substantial sums to host races, and scheduling decisions impact iconic tracks. Jensen, Cobbs and Groza have pointed out that the Hockenheim racetrack in Germany, once a staple, is no longer on the calendar, while the US gained two races in the last two years<sup>58</sup>. The influence of money and political considerations in racing isn't thoroughly explored. This expansion raises concerns about the sport's priorities, as newer tracks with big names and events may compromise the actual racing experience. The intertwining of commercial interests and political considerations exposes Formula One to the complexities of various landscapes, potentially sacrificing the essence of true competition for profit-driven motives<sup>59</sup>. This aligns with our original theory and raises questions about the sport's balance between commercial viability and the integrity of competition.

### *The Sports/Media relation*

According to Frandsen, the professional sports industry operates within a complex microeconomy, with sports teams, media outlets, and sponsors constituting key stakeholders. Traditionally, these stakeholders had well-defined roles, but the advent of new media and communication technologies has reshaped the sports/media complex<sup>60</sup>. Sports clubs have embraced new media platforms, such as club channels and websites, to directly engage with

---

<sup>55</sup> Andrews, D. L., Batts, C., & Silk, M. (2014). Sport, glocalisation and the new Indian middle class. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 17(3), 259-276.

<sup>56</sup> Roudometof, V. (2016). Theorizing glocalisation: Three interpretations I. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 19(3), 391-408.

<sup>57</sup> Andrews, D., & Ritzer, G. (2007). The Global in the Sporting Glocal. In R. Giulianotti & R. Robertson (Eds.), *Globalisation and Sport* (pp. 28–45). Blackwell.

<sup>58</sup> Jensen, J. A., Cobbs, J., & Groza, M. D. (2014). The niche portfolio strategy to global expansion: The influence of market resources on demand for Formula One racing. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 27(4), 247-261.

<sup>59</sup> Jones, C. W., Byon, K. K., & Huang, H. (2019). Service quality, perceived value, and fan engagement: Case of Shanghai Formula One racing. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 28(2), 63-76.

<sup>60</sup> Frandsen, K. (2014). Mediatisation of Sports. In K. Lundby (Ed.), *Mediatisation of Communication* (pp. 525–543). Mouton de Gruyter.

fans, bypassing traditional media channels. Moreover, fans are no longer passive consumers but active producers of sports content, leveraging digital technologies to create and share their own perspectives on sports events<sup>61</sup>.

Indeed, the literature from researchers such as Lefever exposes the changing dynamics between sports organisations and media corporations, highlighting how traditional boundaries between the two have become less distinct. This transformation is driven by a shift in the economic landscape of sports, moving from a reliance on ticket sales to a model focused on media rights, sponsorships, and merchandising<sup>62</sup>. In this new paradigm, corporate interests play a significant role in reshaping the structure and presentation of sports competitions, particularly evident in motorsport. Motorsport, as a case in point, has undergone a process of mediatisation, where it is reconceptualised as a mass-mediated spectacle serving the commercial objectives of various stakeholders. This restructuring involves numerous actors, including race promoters, teams, marketing agencies, sponsors, advertisers, apparel manufacturers, and travel agencies<sup>63</sup>. Central to this transformation is the strategic management and exploitation of media rights, which have emerged as critical assets for both sports organisations and media enterprises. Indeed, Beedie and Craid explain how the symbiotic relationship between sports and media has evolved, with a shift towards a model driven by media rights, sponsorship, and merchandising<sup>64</sup>. Motorsport serves as a prime example of this mediatisation, where the product is repackaged to cater to commercial interests. Advancements in digital technology have further blurred the lines between sports and media businesses, enabling sports organisations to leverage digital platforms for new revenue streams<sup>65</sup>.

Expanding the scope to encompass the broader landscape of sports, Hutchins and Rowe have underscored the importance of the realm of digital livestreaming. The focal point of this exploration was the distinctive digital presence of Formula One, epitomised by the dedicated F1TV app. This aspect added a fascinating layer, presenting a departure from the conventional models adopted by many other sports in the digital streaming domain<sup>66</sup>. The emergence of the F1TV app marked a distinct departure from the prevalent trend in sports broadcasting. Unlike many other sports, Formula One opted for a specialised approach,

---

<sup>61</sup> Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2009). From broadcast scarcity to digital plenitude: The changing dynamics of the media sport content economy. *Television & New Media*, 10(4), 354-370.

<sup>62</sup> Lefever, K., & Lefever, K. (2012). Sports/media complex in the new media landscape. *New Media and Sport: International Legal Aspects*, 7-30.

<sup>63</sup> Hutchins, B., Li, B., & Rowe, D. (2019). Over-the-top Sport: Live Streaming Services, Changing Coverage Rights Markets and the Growth of Media Sport Portals. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(7), 975-994.

<sup>64</sup> Beedie, P., & Craig, P. (2010). Chapter 10 Sport and the media Sport sociology. *Learning Matters*.

<sup>65</sup> Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2012). *Sport beyond television: The internet, digital media and the rise of networked media sport*. Routledge.

<sup>66</sup> Kariyawasam, K., & Tsai, M. (2017). Copyright and live streaming of sports broadcasting. *International Review of Law, Computers & Technology*, 31(3), 265-288.

providing a platform exclusively dedicated to its content. This strategic move highlighted a deliberate shift towards a more tailored, niche viewing experience, allowing most fans to immerse themselves in comprehensive coverage of Formula One events without the need for a broader subscription to a general sports channel<sup>67</sup>. What is intriguing is that many, such as Gants and Lewis, dismissed such apps as unviable, citing numerous challenges predominantly the fact that individuals would not be interested in paying a subscription for only one specific type of content<sup>68</sup>.

F1TV's success in subscriptions rates raises intriguing questions about the changing dynamics of sports consumption in the digital age. Particularly noteworthy is Formula One's journey from lagging behind in digital media to becoming a trailblazer under Liberty Media's stewardship. This transformation underscores the sport's innovative strides, positioning it as a paradigm for others to emulate<sup>69</sup>. The juxtaposition of streaming models highlights the shifting landscape of sports consumption in the digital era. By delving into Formula One's foray into digital live streaming, we not only gain insights into its pioneering spirit but also contemplate the broader implications and future trajectories of sports broadcasting. The strategic decision to offer a singular, sport-specific streaming service underscored Formula One's recognition of its distinct fanbase and the value of delivering content in a whole new way. Sahin, Demirsel and Adamhis showed how this provided valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of digital sports consumption and the strategic considerations that different sports entities employ to engage their viewers in the contemporary media landscape<sup>70</sup>.

This led to discovering the concept of 'watcher empowerment,' emphasizing the importance of making the sport seem attainable, developed by scholars such as Picone<sup>71</sup>. Contrary to this idea, Formula One's essence lies in its perceived exclusivity. Unlike sports such as football, where fans are actively involved through cheers and engagement, Formula One drivers are portrayed as almost mythical figures. They exist in a realm of unattainability, a narrative that separates them from the average person. They are not marketed as regular people with exceptional talent; instead, they are presented as high-performance athletes who have undergone rigorous training and substantial financial investment to reach their elite

---

<sup>67</sup> F1TV Knowledgebase 2023. (n.d.). Retrieved 13 May 2024, from [https://support.formula1.com/s/article/2023-What-is-F1-TV?language=en\\_US](https://support.formula1.com/s/article/2023-What-is-F1-TV?language=en_US)

<sup>68</sup> Gantz, W., & Lewis, N. (2014). Sports on traditional and newer digital media: Is there really a fight for fans?. *Television & New Media*, 15(8), 760-768.

<sup>69</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*. <https://hstalks.com/article/7847/a-formula-for-success-how-formula-one-racing-embra/>

<sup>70</sup> Şahin, E., Demirsel, M. T., & Adam, A. A. (2020). The effect of social media on sports marketing: Konyaspor Football Club case. *İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 12(1), 79-94.

<sup>71</sup> Picone, I. (2017). Conceptualizing media users across media: The case for 'media user/use' as analytical concepts. *Convergence*, 23(4), 378-390.

status<sup>72</sup>. This unattainability contributes to the sport's 'entertainment' factor, creating a sense of distance that allows fans to almost forget the drivers are human<sup>73</sup>. The sociology of sports encompasses theories on the social construction of sports, demonstrating how cultural, historical, and social factors shape the significance and meanings attributed to different sports<sup>74</sup>. This extends to comprehending how certain sports are valued or marginalised within a society, influencing how sports present themselves<sup>75</sup>.

## Research Question

Within the literature, a profound transformation in the role of fans emerges with the dawn of the digital age, paralleled by significant shifts in the administration of sports, as media platforms assume greater prominence. Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One stands as a pivotal moment, catalyzing substantial changes within the sport's organisation and fanbase. What makes this convergence of events particularly intriguing is the simultaneous multi-dimensional shift occurring within the sport itself and in the broader context of societal trends. While existing literature offers invaluable insights into sport fandom and the evolving sociology of sports in the media age, a noticeable gap persists, especially concerning Formula One. This gap extends to Formula One's divergence from certain theoretical norms and its remarkable success in others. Moreover, Formula One's inherently international character provides a compelling framework for analysis. While there is much discourse surrounding the globalisation of sports, scant attention is given to a sport already deeply rooted in internationalism and seeking a more local expansion. Liberty Media's endeavor to attract a new audience has largely succeeded, but it brings forth a fresh set of challenges. The sociological interplay between fandom and consumer behavior becomes pivotal, influenced by a myriad of factors and compounded by the interventions orchestrated by Liberty Media. What is lacking in the literature is a comprehensive analysis of fan perceptions and reactions to these transformative developments, offering insights into the implications and ramifications of Liberty Media's actions for sport fandom and sociology as a whole.

Delving into the second definition of spectacle offers profound insights into how it permeates beyond the surface, deeply influencing the organisation, consumption, and perception of sports. Through the lens of commercialisation, we witness a transformative shift in broader cultural attitudes and power dynamics within the sporting realm. Liberty

---

<sup>72</sup> Jenkins, M., Pasternak, K., & West, R. (2016). Overview and Formula 1 experience. In *Performance at the limit: Business lessons from Formula 1® motor racing*. (pp. 1- 28) Cambridge University Press.

<sup>73</sup> Watkins, B. A. (2014). Social Identification and social media in Sports: Implications for sport brands. In *Routledge handbook of sport and new media* (pp. 200-210). Routledge.

<sup>74</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport journal*, 5(2), 153-161.

<sup>75</sup> Vaugrand, H. (2001). Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Marie Brohm: their schemes of intelligibility and issues towards a theory of knowledge in the sociology of sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 36(2), 183-201.

Media's acquisition of Formula One serves as a quintessential example, triggering seismic changes across every aspect of how the sport is experienced, understood, and viewed.

Under Liberty Media's stewardship, Formula One underwent a metamorphosis from a traditional sporting pursuit into a more entertainment-driven endeavour. This prompts a critical inquiry:

**In what manner has Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One altered its essence from a sport to a spectacle, and to what extent does the fan perception of this transition diverge from objective reality?**

This leads to the central hypothesis that : **Formula One has transitioned from a pure sporting event to a spectacle, a notion that is widely agreed upon by fans.**

To thoroughly examine and validate this hypothesis, it is important to look into all other inquiries that it implies. Indeed, it leads us to look into:

**H1:** Formula One was primarily a sport in its earlier iterations, Liberty Media planned to change that.

**H2:** The strategic decisions made by Liberty Media, whether originating internally or influenced by external factors, played an important role in this evolution of sport to spectacle, reshaping Formula One's landscape.

**H3:** The influx of new fans, largely driven by the popularity of "Drive to Survive," has significantly altered the demographic makeup of Formula One enthusiasts. However, there is a general consensus among these fans that the show has had largely negative effects on the sport.

**H4:** A majority of fans strongly believe that Formula One has transformed into a spectacle. This at the cost of sporting integrity, resulting in a compromise to the quality of racing.

Scrutinizing the nuances of Formula One's evolution under Liberty Media's ownership underscores the transition from a mere media event to a captivating spectacle. Moreover, examining potential dissonance between subjective fan perceptions and empirical changes within Formula One illuminates the sociological dimensions of this transition and its far-reaching implications for the motorsport cultural landscape.

## Methodology

To address the hypothesis comprehensively, a nuanced approach using both quantitative and qualitative analysis was used. The target sample for this survey were individuals who identified themselves as Formula One enthusiasts. The spectrum for who identified as a Formula One enthusiast was intentionally broad to ensure a diverse

representation of Formula One fans. To counteract any potential bias towards younger respondents who are predominantly present on these forms of social media, this survey was shared in areas more likely to reach older Formula One fans<sup>76</sup>. This approach enabled us to construct a panoramic view of Formula One fans' collective perspectives and insights.

Recognizing the importance of reaching a broad and varied audience, social media platforms were used as the primary channels of distribution<sup>77</sup>. Notably, the platforms Facebook, Reddit, and Tumblr were primarily used as they allowed specific engagement with Formula One centric communities. Given the objective of engaging dedicated fans rather than casual viewers, platforms like Tumblr and Reddit emerged as pivotal. Tumblr, in particular, emerged as a significant contributor, generating a substantial portion of our responses. This was evidenced by the remarkable traction our survey gained, with Tumblr analytics indicating over 200 clicks—a testament to the platform's resonance within the Formula One fan community<sup>78</sup>. Another method employed was to encourage survey participants to share the questionnaire with individuals they knew who might also meet the criteria, utilizing a word-of-mouth approach to expand our reach. In essence, these methodological decisions were driven by a commitment to capturing the multifaceted perspectives of Formula One enthusiasts across various demographics, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of their collective sentiments and experiences.

Subsequently, careful consideration was given to the type of personal information to request. Given the anonymity of the survey and the potentially sensitive nature of the questions, we strictly collected relevant data to respect respondents' privacy. Therefore, we limited our inquiries to age, gender, and occupation, while also providing the option to abstain from answering. Furthermore, a disclaimer explaining how the data would be used and a guarantee of anonymity was present at the beginning of the survey.

The questionnaire was designed to solicit fans' opinions on the current state of the sport and the commercial strategies implemented by Liberty Media. We aimed to gauge the extent to which fans perceive these changes, assess their sentiments and explore their beliefs regarding the impact on the sport's essence.

To discern prevailing trends in fan perspectives, a primarily quantitative analysis was used, as facilitated by the questionnaire<sup>79</sup>. This method allowed us to efficiently capture a

---

<sup>76</sup> Lynn, P. (2017, April). From standardised to targeted survey procedures for tackling non-response and attrition. In *Survey Research Methods* (Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 93-103).

<sup>77</sup> Opoku, A., Ahmed, V., & Akotia, J. (2016). Choosing an appropriate research methodology and method. In *Research methodology in the built environment* (pp. 32-49). Routledge.

<sup>78</sup> Register—Login. (n.d.). Tumblr. Retrieved 13 May 2024, from [https://www.tumblr.com/login?redirect\\_to=%2Fblog%2Fannies0102%2Fblaze%2Fcampaigns](https://www.tumblr.com/login?redirect_to=%2Fblog%2Fannies0102%2Fblaze%2Fcampaigns)

<sup>79</sup> Asenahabi, B. M. (2019). Basics of research design: A guide to selecting appropriate research design. *International Journal of Contemporary Applied Researches*, 6(5), 76-89.

large volume of responses and ascertain widespread sentiments of self identified Formula One enthusiasts. However, this survey operated within the realms of two distinct theoretical frameworks simultaneously. Initially, it aligned with the positivist perspective, where the aim was to empirically test hypotheses and uncover overarching patterns or relationships through empirical analysis<sup>80</sup>. However, it also embraced elements of constructivism, which emphasises individual perspectives and subjective interpretations. After testing the initial hypothesis, our focus shifted towards exploring the nuanced meanings and interpretations that individuals attribute to the dynamics within Formula One<sup>81</sup>. Indeed, to be able to properly analyse this perspective we also had to adopt a qualitative aspect to the survey<sup>82</sup>.

To effectively capture this multifaceted approach, we employed three question types: open-ended inquiries, yes/no responses, and multiple-choice questions. Open-ended questions provided respondents with the opportunity to articulate their opinions and experiences in a detailed and flexible manner, thus yielding rich qualitative insights. Yes/no responses offered straightforward binary options, facilitating quick quantitative analysis while maintaining clarity. Multiple-choice questions provided structured options, enabling us to standardise responses, capture diverse opinions and preferences, and strike a balance between flexibility and structure. This methodological diversity allowed us to comprehensively explore the complex interplay between objective observations and subjective interpretations within the context of Formula One.

To ensure a comprehensive exploration of fan perspective into Formula One, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that the questions were separated into three distinct categories. The first category scrutinised fan profiles, recognizing the importance of having sociological information and fan characteristics for each individual.<sup>83</sup> Transitioning to the second category, current opinions of the state of Formula One were evaluated, by tailoring questions to resonate with fans' expertise and experiences. This was achieved by combining general and specific inquiries to capture overarching trends while probing deeper into specific events or personalities when needed. Finally, to provide a comprehensive view of fan perspectives on the evolving landscape of the sport, our third category focused on the new era of Formula One ushered in by Liberty Media, aiming to capture fans' sentiments regarding the changes since 2017. Structured questions explored various facets of this transformation, ranging from spectator experience to regulatory changes. By crafting the questionnaire to encompass these three categories, a holistic and detailed understanding of fans' opinions on

---

<sup>80</sup> Park, Y. S., Konge, L., & Artino Jr, A. R. (2020). The positivism paradigm of research. *Academic medicine*, 95(5), 690-694.

<sup>81</sup> Lee, C. J. G. (2012). Reconsidering constructivism in qualitative research. *Educational Philosophy and theory*, 44(4), 403-412.

<sup>82</sup> De Leeuw, E. D., Hox, J., & Dillman, D. (2012). *International handbook of survey methodology*. Routledge.

<sup>83</sup> Osborne A. C., Coombs D. S. (2013). Performative sport fandom: An approach to retheorizing sport fans. *Sport in Society*, 16(5), 672-681



Formula One were captured, ranging from sociological dynamics to current controversies and future directions.

The questionnaire is long and contains a variety of questions, this could lead to a lower response rate as indicated by research into the effects of questionnaire length on response rates. Initially, the expectations for the sample size were modest, leading us to anticipate fewer responses<sup>84</sup>. Consequently, it was decided to develop a more extensive survey to ensure a robust dataset for analysis. This decision allows us to gather ample data and content for thorough analysis<sup>85</sup>. However the survey far exceeded initial expectations, amassing 571 responses. This unanticipated influx necessitated immediate adjustments. Given the survey's substantial length of 55 questions, conducting a comprehensive analysis within the allocated timeframe proved unfeasible. Consequently, strategic decisions were made to ensure a thorough yet manageable examination. To facilitate a rigorous analysis, responses were capped at 500, affording sufficient time for meticulous review and interpretation. While the allure of analysing every response proved strong, the decision to selectively choose questions was imperative for a comprehensive analysis, in accordance with the research's overarching objectives. Consequently, a strategic choice was made to refine the analysis, resulting in the exclusion of certain questions from this thesis. A total of 37 questions were omitted, leaving 18 for examination. Among these 18, 6 focused on respondent characteristics. Of the remaining 12, 4 were open-ended, while the remainder consisted of multiple-choice or yes/no queries, facilitating thorough examination and analysis. These 18 questions also stayed representative of our categories, with 6 establishing fan characteristics, 5 focused on opinions about the current state of Formula One and 7 pertaining to fan sentiments about this new era. Furthermore, within the subset of 500 responses, stringent criteria were established, including the exclusion of individuals who did not respond to the sociological/fan characteristic questions. This refinement yielded an average of 474 responses, although this figure may vary depending on the specific question. This approach aimed to maintain the integrity and reliability of the analysis. Ultimately, all decisions were guided by the imperative of facilitating a comprehensive analysis of the chosen questions<sup>86</sup>.

Among these questions were those eliciting yes/no responses, which facilitated the creation of insightful graphs, and multiple-choice inquiries, offering adaptable data for cross-referencing to uncover potential trends<sup>87</sup>. Additionally, we had created open-ended questions, each yielding an extensive array of responses. Analyzing these responses required

---

<sup>84</sup> Herzog, A. R., & Bachman, J. G. (1981). Effects of questionnaire length on response quality. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 45(4), 549. <https://doi.org/10.1086/268687>

<sup>85</sup> Ibid

<sup>86</sup> De Leeuw, E. D., Hox, J., & Dillman, D. (2012). *International handbook of survey methodology*. Routledge.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid

the development of a systematic methodology, as a single open-ended question often yielded approximately 25 pages of text. We refined our analysis methodology, focusing on extracting essential elements from each response. This involved reducing each response to its core by preserving all but the adjectives and descriptive elements. All while ensuring the preservation of the respondent's intent. These refined excerpts were then aggregated and visualised through word clouds, providing a concise overview of prevalent themes within the responses<sup>88</sup>. This combined approach, coupled with a comprehensive review of all responses, allowed us to explore diverse perspectives and gain a nuanced understanding.

## Preview of the structure

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, it is important to first delve into historical evolution and intrinsic identity. Understanding Formula One's roots and its transformation into a global media event under Ecclestone's stewardship lays a crucial foundation for appreciating the significance of Liberty Media's acquisition and its strategic vision for the sport.

Expanding upon this historical backdrop, this thesis will proceed to examine the multifaceted factors contributing to the ongoing transition within Formula One. This entails an examination of the envisioned expansion of the sport presented by Liberty Media, alongside an analysis of the new commercialization strategies and the reception within the F1 community. Additionally, we will scrutinize external pressures faced by Liberty Media, including sponsorship dynamics and the geopolitical landscape in which Formula One operates, as well as the evolving expectations of the fanbase.

Proceeding further, an examination of the Formula One fandom becomes paramount. This entails an exploration of the demographic makeup of Formula One enthusiasts, assessing the survey's representational accuracy. Furthermore, we will evaluate the impact of the acclaimed series "Drive to Survive," credited with ushering in a new wave of fans, and the reputation it has adopted.

In its final segment, this thesis will examine the prevailing perceptions surrounding Formula One. This will involve a meta-reflection on the survey's popularity and its implications for the sentiments and perspectives of Formula One aficionados. Subsequently, it will examine the perception that Formula One is evolving into more of a spectacle than a sport, juxtaposing it with the insights gleaned from fan responses. Moreover, we will elucidate how this transition could potentially influence the essence of racing itself. Finally, this thesis will conclude with a case study of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, serving as a poignant illustration of the central argument woven throughout our exploration.

---

<sup>88</sup> Ibid

# Chapter 1 : Unveiling Formula One's sporting Essence: Liberty Media's Impact in Perspective

## I. Tracing Formula One's Journey: From Sporting Origins to Global Triumph

### A. Grassroot Days: Formula One's Beginnings as a Sporting Event

During the beginning phase of Formula One, the composition of the grid predominantly comprised individuals categorised as privateers and enthusiasts<sup>89</sup>. This group epitomised the foundational ethos of grassroots racing, a concept that, in simple terms, provides entry access to amateur racers and contains just about anything that has a motor. It helps provide drivers with experience to add to their portfolio to propel themselves up the ranks. Grassroots racing provides viewers with constant fierce action on the track. It is not just the racing that sets it apart. The pure passion and raw devotion of motorsports provides an electric atmosphere to be around; indeed it is characterised by a fervent devotion to speed and competition<sup>90</sup>. In stark contrast to the contemporary landscape of Formula One, which is dominated by highly structured and corporatised teams, the early grid was populated by independent racers who were distinguished by their individualistic approaches to the sport.

The racing context of this era was characterised by a palpable sense of national identity, as privateers and enthusiasts competed under the backing of their respective countries' colors, thereby infusing each event with a heightened significance beyond mere sporting rivalry. Moreover, the ethos of self-reliance and innovation underscored the artisanal nature of early Formula One, as participants meticulously crafted their own vehicles, often in modest workshop settings. This era was marked by a distinctive do-it-yourself (DIY) mindset, wherein racers exhibited a remarkable degree of resourcefulness and ingenuity in the fabrication of their racing machines. Such endeavors were not only a testament to the technical prowess of the individuals involved but also fostered a sense of camaraderie and mutual support within the racing community<sup>91, 92</sup>.

Miles, B (1954). *An early F1 car: Goodwood Road and Racing*



<sup>89</sup> Jenkins, M. (2010). Technological discontinuities and competitive advantage: A historical perspective on Formula 1 motor racing 1950–2006. *Journal of Management Studies*, 47(5), 884-910.

<sup>90</sup> Harrington, M., Cuskelly, G., & Auld, C. (2000). Career volunteering in commodity intensive serious leisure: Motorsport events and their dependence on volunteers/amateurs. *Society and Leisure*, 23(2), 421-452.

<sup>91</sup> Stuart, G. "1950 vs 2020: Cars, drivers, safety and pit stops – how F1 has changed in 70 years," *Formula 1*, 2020. Retrieved 9 May 2024 <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.1950-vs2020-cars-drivers-safety-and-pitstops-how-f1-has-changed-in-70years.62ITx6LIIY3qgzTctXgz1j.html>

<sup>92</sup> Image: Miles, B. The seven best F1 cars of the 1950s (List) | GRR. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.goodwood.com/grr/f1/the-seven-best-f1-cars-of-the-1950s/>

Despite the inherent challenges associated with racing bespoke vehicles, these individuals approached each competition with determination, often defying the odds to achieve commendable feats. Their tenacity and willingness to navigate the complexities of amateur racing against better-resourced adversaries contributed significantly to the rich tapestry of Formula One's historical narrative<sup>93</sup>. While contemporary Formula One has undergone profound transformations, embracing advanced technologies and professionalised structures, the legacy of the early racing aficionados endures as a foundational cornerstone of the sport. Their pioneering spirit and unwavering commitment to the pursuit of speed continue to resonate within the annals of Formula One history, serving as a source of inspiration for subsequent generations of racers and race watchers alike.

During its early stages, Formula One struggled to attract a substantial fan base. The ambiance around the track primarily consisted of a tight-knit community comprising family and friends of the participants, along with dedicated car enthusiasts, engineers, and fellow racers<sup>94</sup>. However, as the sport progressed and gained momentum, more individuals started to attend races. Despite this growing attendance, the fervent enthusiasm and impassioned support that characterise Formula One today were notably absent during its formative years. Central to the concept of sport fandom is the presence of something to follow and root for, people want to rally behind an individual, a team or a narrative<sup>95</sup>. However, the early era of Formula One lacked the organisational structure and accessibility necessary to fully engage fans. Consequently, it proved challenging for individuals to become emotionally invested in the sport. Rather than boasting legions of fans devoted to specific drivers or teams, the early Formula One era attracted a demographic more intrigued by automobiles and the remarkable engineering feats showcased on the track<sup>96</sup>. This emphasis on technical prowess and innovation overshadowed the individual narratives and rivalries that often fuel fan fervor in modern Formula One.

These early years of Formula One were marked by a distinct absence of the media and commercial influences that would later come to dominate the sport<sup>97</sup>. Moreover, the haphazard nature of Formula One's organisation during its formative years further underscores its origins as a sporting event rather than a spectacle. Races were often run inconsistently, with fluctuating numbers of teams and cars per race, and independently organised events contributing to a sense of unpredictability and amateurism. The limited

---

<sup>93</sup> Tremayne, D., & Hughes, M. (1998). *The concise encyclopedia of formula one*. Dempsey Parr.

<sup>94</sup> Li, B., Gao, T., Ma, S., Zhang, Y., Acarman, T., Cao, K., ... & Wang, F. Y. (2023). *From Formula One to Autonomous One: History, Achievements, and Future Perspectives*. *IEEE Transactions on Intelligent Vehicles*.

<sup>95</sup> Osborne A. C., Coombs D. S. (2013). Performative sport fandom: An approach to retheorizing sport fans. *Sport in Society*, 16(5), 672–681

<sup>96</sup> Jenkins, M. (2010). Technological discontinuities and competitive advantage: A historical perspective on Formula 1 motor racing 1950–2006. *Journal of Management Studies*, 47(5), 884-910.

<sup>97</sup> Haynes, R., & Robeers, T. (2020). *The Need for Speed? A Historical Analysis of the BBC's Post-war Broadcasting of Motorsport*. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 40(2), 407–423.

media coverage during this period further emphasises the sport's status as a niche pursuit rather than a global spectacle. Broadcasts were sporadic, often consisting of highlight packages or delayed coverage, with commentators providing commentary from remote studio locations rather than trackside<sup>98</sup>.

However, the landscape of Formula One began to shift dramatically in the late 1960s with the introduction of tobacco and other sponsor liveries adorning the cars, alongside increased involvement from car manufacturers. This marked the beginning of a transformation wherein Formula One evolved from a grassroots pursuit into a highly commercialised, and organised sporting event<sup>99</sup>. Even as Formula One began to gain traction in the media, it was not until the mid-1970s, propelled by the star power of drivers like James Hunt and commercial sponsorship, that consistent interest and coverage were established. By the 1990s, Formula One had become explicitly corporate in its makeup, design, and operation, reflecting a departure from its origins as a pure sporting competition. The influx of corporate sponsorship and the integration of commercial interests fundamentally altered the dynamics of the sport, making the race a media event<sup>100</sup>. Despite this, it took until 1996 for the BBC to provide comprehensive live coverage of an entire Formula One season, underscoring the sport's gradual transition from a patchwork race to a mainstream organised sporting event driven by media and commercial interests<sup>101</sup>.

## B. Bernie Ecclestone's Legacy: The Sport's Transformation into Global Media Event

Bernie Ecclestone's profound impact on the evolution of Formula One into the global phenomenon it is today cannot be overstated<sup>102</sup>. As a towering figure in the sport's history, Ecclestone played a pivotal role in shaping Formula One's commercial landscape and propelling its transformation into a multi-billion-dollar industry<sup>103</sup>. His journey in Formula One began as a racing driver in the late 1950s, although he later transitioned into team management, overseeing drivers like Stuart Lewis-Evans and Jochen Rindt. In 1972, Ecclestone acquired the Brabham team, which he led for 15 years<sup>104</sup>. During the late 1960s, Formula One operated in a significantly less organised manner compared to today's streamlined spectacle. However, pivotal changes were on the horizon with the FIA's approval

---

<sup>98</sup> Ibid

<sup>99</sup> Tremayne, D., & Hughes, M. (1998). *The concise encyclopedia of formula one*. Dempsey Parr.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid

<sup>101</sup> Whannel, G. (1986) An unholy alliance: notes on television and the remaking of British sport 1965–86. *Leisure Studies* 5/2, pp.129–145.

<sup>102</sup> Stuart, S. A. (2018). Bernie Ecclestone: Formula One's Entrepreneurial Ringmaster. In E. Bayle & P. Clastres (Eds.), *Global Sport Leaders: A Biographical Analysis of International Sport Management* (pp. 363–394). Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>103</sup> Tremayne, D., & Hughes, M. (1998). *The concise encyclopedia of formula one*. Dempsey Parr.

<sup>104</sup> Hamilton M, Brawn R, (2020) *Formula 1 Official History*. Welbeck Publishing Group

of direct sponsorship, opening doors for teams to harness the sport's commercial potential. Despite expectations for a unified effort from the Formula 1 Constructors Association (F1CA) to seize this opportunity, such a coordinated initiative failed to materialise<sup>105</sup>. This period marked the beginning of Ecclestone's pivotal role in reshaping Formula One's commercial landscape, laying the groundwork for the sport's monumental growth in the decades to come.

It was in this climate of untapped commercial potential that Ecclestone, then the owner of the Brabham team, along with Max Mosley, a part-owner of a different team, proposed a groundbreaking solution in 1972. Recognizing the need for organised commercial dealings and logistical management, they offered to take charge of these aspects on behalf of the teams, in exchange for a fee<sup>106</sup>. Thus, the Formula One Constructors Association (FOCA) was born, formally established in 1974. Under Ecclestone's leadership, FOCA swiftly became the voice and driving force behind the interests of non-factory-backed teams, comprising all teams except Ferrari, Renault, and Alfa Romeo. By assuming the role of chief executive in 1978, Ecclestone cemented his position as the architect of Formula One's commercial revolution, forever altering the trajectory of the sport's history<sup>107</sup>.<sup>108</sup>

Unknown. (1972) *Austrian GP start*.  
Motosportimages.com



The primary objective of this association was to professionalise the organisation of Formula One and assert control over the sport's commercial rights. Not surprisingly, FOCA found itself at odds with the motorsport governing body, FISA (Fédération Internationale du Sport Automobile, a part of the FIA), and even threatened to initiate a rival championship<sup>109</sup>. Tensions reached a critical point, leading to a significant dispute that persisted until 1981. It was during this period that FOCA successfully secured the right to negotiate television contracts for both the races and the teams. This achievement marked a pivotal turning point, allowing teams to claim a more substantial share of the commercial revenues, including television rights and prize money. The resolution of this conflict culminated in the signing of

---

<sup>105</sup> Ibid

<sup>106</sup> Ciolfi Ms, J. L., & Stuart Dr, S. (2013). Organisational succession in F1: An analysis of Bernie Ecclestone's roles as CEO of Formula One management. *International Journal of Motorsport Management*, 2(1), 1.

<sup>107</sup> Tremayne, D., & Hughes, M. (1998). *The concise encyclopedia of formula one*. Dempsey Parr.

<sup>108</sup> Image: Formula 1 images: Austrian gp (1972) - lat images. (n.d.). Motosportimages.Com. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from

[https://www.motosportimages.com/photos/?race\\_type\\_id=54&year=1972&source=LAT&event\\_id=8630&p=2](https://www.motosportimages.com/photos/?race_type_id=54&year=1972&source=LAT&event_id=8630&p=2)

<sup>109</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). Formula One as Television. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 387-411). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

the First Concorde Agreement. This groundbreaking accord not only ensured the participation of all teams in every race but also provided much-needed stability to the championship. With this agreement in place, Formula One entered a new era characterised by increased professionalism and financial security for its stakeholders<sup>110</sup>.

Recognizing the untapped potential of the sport, Ecclestone capitalised on his role as the head of FOCA to streamline Formula One into a unified world championship series. Among his most notable contributions was his approach to negotiating television rights for Formula One. Through strategic negotiations, Ecclestone secured exclusive broadcasting agreements with networks across the globe<sup>111</sup>. Indeed, thanks to the Concorde Agreement - a contract between the FIA, the Formula One teams and the Formula One Group which dictates the terms by which the teams compete in races, and how the television revenues and prize money is shared - the commercial development of Formula One experienced a significant boost. This agreement facilitated key advancements, such as convincing major European broadcasters to broadcast all championship races rather than negotiating rights on a piecemeal basis<sup>112</sup>. Previously, many races received only highlights or were not broadcast at all. However, after signing a three-year deal with the European Broadcasting Union (EBU)—an alliance of ninety-two mainly public service broadcasters—in 1982, consistent live coverage with commentary became the norm<sup>113</sup>. With guaranteed television exposure and rising sponsorship rates, Ecclestone's influence continued to grow. This was evidenced by the extension of the EBU agreement for an additional five years in 1985. Ecclestone's stature in the sport was further solidified when he assumed the roles of vice-president of promotional affairs for the FISA and administrator for the Second Concorde Agreement in 1987<sup>114</sup>. Under the terms of the Second Concorde Agreement, which Ecclestone played a pivotal role in negotiating, teams received 47% of the revenues, with 30% allocated to the FIA and 23% to Formula One Promotions and Administration (FOPA). FOPA, established in 1987, was owned and operated by Ecclestone, who relinquished his role as team owner that same year. This restructuring of revenue distribution marked a significant milestone in the commercial evolution of Formula One, further solidifying Ecclestone's legacy as a transformative figure in the sport<sup>115</sup>.

---

<sup>110</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 571-592). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>111</sup> Stuart, S. A. (2018). Bernie Ecclestone: Formula One's Entrepreneurial Ringmaster. In E. Bayle & P. Clastres (Eds.), *Global Sport Leaders: A Biographical Analysis of International Sport Management* (pp. 363-394). Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>112</sup> Haynes, R., & Robeers, T. (2020). The Need for Speed? A Historical Analysis of the BBC's Post-war Broadcasting of Motorsport. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 40(2), 407-423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0143968.5.2019.1628418>

<sup>113</sup> Ibid

<sup>114</sup> Haynes, R., & Robeers, T. (2020). The Need for Speed? A Historical Analysis of the BBC's Post-war Broadcasting of Motorsport. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 40(2), 407-423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0143968.5.2019.1628418>

<sup>115</sup> Tremayne, D., & Hughes, M. (1998). *The concise encyclopedia of formula one*. Dempsey Parr.

While acknowledging Bernie Ecclestone's significant influence in shaping Formula One into the global spectacle it is today and enhancing the sport's popularity, it would be remiss not to address the controversies and missteps that have marked his tenure<sup>116</sup>. Despite his pivotal role in elevating Formula One's commercial landscape and securing lucrative broadcasting deals, Ecclestone's legacy is also tarnished by a series of controversies and questionable actions. From political controversies over tobacco sponsorship to allegations of bribery and corruption, Ecclestone's career has been marred by ethical lapses and legal entanglements. Moreover, his dreadful remarks on sensitive issues such as race and politics have sparked outrage and condemnation, underscoring the need for accountability and scrutiny. While Ecclestone's contributions to Formula One cannot be overlooked, it is essential to recognise the negative aspects of his legacy and strive for transparency and integrity within the sport's governance<sup>117</sup>.

Bernie Ecclestone's pivotal role in shaping Formula One into the global phenomenon it is today cannot be overstated. Without his vision and actions, the sport would not have reached the heights of popularity and commercial success it enjoys today<sup>118</sup>. However, as his influence waned in later years, it became evident that he struggled to adapt to the changing landscape of the digital age<sup>119</sup>. Ecclestone's reluctance to embrace digital marketing and modern media strategies hindered Formula One's ability to connect with younger audiences and capitalize on emerging technologies. This resistance to change, coupled with his dreadful actions and remarks, led to a decline in Formula One's relevance and appeal during the latter stages of his tenure. While Ecclestone's contributions are undeniable, his reluctance to evolve ultimately became a detriment to the sport's continued growth and prosperity<sup>120</sup>.

## II. Liberty Media's Acquisition: Transformative Vision and Implications for Formula One's Future

---

<sup>116</sup> Stuart, S. A. (2018). Bernie Ecclestone: Formula One's Entrepreneurial Ringmaster. In E. Bayle & P. Clastres (Eds.), *Global Sport Leaders: A Biographical Analysis of International Sport Management* (pp. 363–394). Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid

<sup>118</sup> Whannel, G. (1986) An unholy alliance: notes on television and the remaking of British sport 1965–86. *Leisure Studies* 5/2, pp.129–145.

<sup>119</sup> Frandsen, K. (2014). Mediatisation of Sports. In K. Lundby (Ed.), *Mediatisation of Communication* (pp. 525–543). Mouton de Gruyter.

<sup>120</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 571-592). Cham: Springer International Publishing.



## A. Liberty Media and the Shift in Formula One dynamics

Professional sport operates within a unique public relations landscape where the mass media holds considerable sway over how the sport is perceived by its audience<sup>121</sup>. Unlike other industries, the public image of a sport is largely shaped by media coverage, placing the sport's governing bodies and organisations in a position where direct control over their image is limited<sup>122</sup>. In response to this dynamic, sports public relations practitioners have developed strategies to influence media coverage, with a primary focus on facilitating the work of sports journalists and broadcasters to frame events in a favorable light. The framing of live sport events, in particular, is crucial as it directly impacts how audiences perceive and engage with the sport. Live announcers play a pivotal role in interpreting and commenting on the action as it unfolds, shaping the narrative and overall experience for viewers<sup>123</sup>. A positively framed live sport event not only benefits the broadcaster by capturing and retaining large audiences, which can be monetised through advertising, but also presents an opportunity for the sport organisation to reach a wide audience in a positive manner<sup>124</sup>.

The acquisition of Formula One by Liberty Media Corporation becomes particularly intriguing within this context<sup>125</sup>. Formula One, as a global motorsport spectacle, represents a significant platform for reaching large audiences during live broadcasts. The strategic acquisition by Liberty Media not only underscores the company's interest in expanding its presence in the sports media landscape but also highlights the potential for leveraging Formula One's live events to enhance brand visibility and engagement<sup>126</sup>. At the time of the acquisition, despite its recent decline, Formula One stood as one of the premier sports franchises globally, while Liberty Media, its primary stakeholder, was relatively unknown, making the takeover all the more interesting<sup>127</sup>.

Indeed, the acquisition of Formula One by Liberty Media made for some interesting changes. First of all, it marked a significant shift in the relationship between sports franchises

---

<sup>121</sup> Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2009). From broadcast scarcity to digital plenitude: The changing dynamics of the media sport content economy. *Television & New Media*, 10(4), 354-370.

<sup>122</sup> Frandsen, K. (2014). Mediatisation of Sports. In K. Lundby (Ed.), *Mediatisation of Communication* (pp. 525–543). Mouton de Gruyter.

<sup>123</sup> Pedersen, P. M., Laucella, P., Geurin, A., & Kian, E. (2020). *Sociological Aspects of Sport communication. Strategic sport communication*. 337-377 Human Kinetics Publishers.

<sup>124</sup> Park S.-H., Mahony D., Kim Y. K. (2011). The role of sport fan curiosity: A new conceptual approach to the understanding of sport fan behavior. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 46–56.

<sup>125</sup> Liberty Media Corporation. Retrieved 25th November 2023. (2017, January 23). Liberty media corporation completes acquisition of Formula 1. Liberty Media Corporation.

<https://www.libertymedia.com/news/detail/305/liberty-media-corporation-completes-acquisition-of-formula-1>

<sup>126</sup> Andrews, D. (2004). Speaking the Universal 'language of entertainment': News Corporation, Culture and the Global Sport Media Economy. In D. Rowe (Ed.), *Critical Readings: Sport, Culture and the Media* (pp. 99–128). Open University Press.

<sup>127</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 571-592).

and media conglomerates<sup>128</sup>. While Liberty Media's core business activities primarily revolve around media distribution, particularly in the music industry, its foray into the realm of sports ownership underscores the blurring boundaries between sports organisations and media entities<sup>129</sup>. The acquisition of Formula One by Liberty Media not only reshapes the landscape of sports media but also introduces intriguing intersections between the sociology of sport and other fields such as business, entertainment, and consumerism<sup>130</sup>. While sports are often treated as a relatively autonomous space, it is important to recognise that they are embedded within a broader system of practices and consumptions, each influencing and shaping the other. Indeed, sporting consumptions cannot be studied independently of food consumptions for example, or leisure consumptions in general<sup>131</sup>.

Traditionally, studies of sporting practices have focused on the dynamics within the realm of sports itself. However, the takeover by Liberty Media opens up new avenues for cross-referencing the sociology of sport with other disciplines. For instance, examining the business strategies and corporate decisions made by Liberty Media in managing Formula One can shed light on the intersection of sports and business, revealing how economic forces influence sporting practices and vice versa<sup>132</sup>. Similarly, the entertainment aspect of Formula One, amplified through media coverage and spectator experiences, offers insights into the sociology of entertainment. Understanding how audiences engage with Formula One races, both in person and through various media platforms, leads to a whole different way of tackling the sport<sup>133</sup>. Moreover, the acquisition prompts reflection on the sociology of consumerism, as Formula One represents a prime example of a global sporting spectacle driven by consumer demand<sup>134</sup>.

There exists a complex interplay between supply and demand in the realm of sporting practices, illustrating how the distribution of these practices is shaped by the interaction between two interconnected spaces: the supply of available sports and the demand for

---

<sup>128</sup> Maguire, J. A. (2011). The global media sports complex: Key issues and concerns. *Sport in Society*, 14(7-8), 965-977.

<sup>129</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 571-592). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>130</sup> Evens, T., Iosifidis, P., Smith, P., Evens, T., Iosifidis, P., & Smith, P. (2013). The Sports-Media-Business Complex. *The Political Economy of Television Sports Rights*, 13-30.

<sup>131</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153-161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>

<sup>132</sup> Hutchins, B., Li, B., & Rowe, D. (2019). Over-the-top Sport: Live Streaming Services, Changing Coverage Rights Markets and the Growth of Media Sport Portals. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(7), 975-994.

<sup>133</sup> Sturm, D. (2014). A Glamorous and High-tech Global Spectacle of Speed: Formula One Motor Racing as Mediated, Global and Corporate Spectacle. In K. Dashper, T. Fletcher, & N. McCullough (Eds.), *Sports Events, Society and Culture* (pp. 68-82). Routledge.

<sup>134</sup> Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).

participation in these sports<sup>135</sup>. On the supply side, there exists a diverse array of sports programs or activities, each characterised by its unique technical properties and relational structures. These technical properties refer to the inherent characteristics of each sport, including the physical skills and abilities required for participation<sup>136</sup>. Additionally, sports are defined in relation to one another within the broader landscape of available options. The supply of sports is not static but rather dynamic, influenced by societal factors such as cultural trends, technological advancements, and institutional support<sup>137</sup>. As the new owner of Formula One, Liberty Media holds considerable influence over the organisation and promotion of the sport, including decisions regarding the scheduling of races, the broadcasting of events, and the marketing of the sport to audiences worldwide<sup>138</sup>. These decisions directly impact the supply of Formula One as a sporting product, shaping the options available to fans and participants. Moreover, the strategic initiatives and investments by Liberty Media in Formula One can influence the technical properties and relational structures of the sport. For example, the introduction of new technologies, changes to race formats, or alterations to the rules and regulations can impact how Formula One is experienced by participants and spectators alike<sup>139</sup>.

Conversely, on the demand side, individuals possess sporting dispositions, which are shaped by their position within the social hierarchy and their previous experiences with sports. These dispositions are not fixed but are instead relational and structurally determined, influenced by factors such as social class, gender, ethnicity, and geographical location<sup>140</sup>. The demand for sports is not only influenced by individual preferences but also by the societal context and the availability of sporting opportunities<sup>141</sup>. Indeed, the acquisition may also have implications for the sporting dispositions of individuals. Changes in the management and promotion of Formula One under Liberty Media's ownership could influence how the sport is perceived and valued by different demographic groups. For instance, efforts to broaden the appeal of Formula One to new audiences or to enhance the fan experience may impact the demand for participation in the sport<sup>142</sup>.

---

<sup>135</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>

<sup>136</sup> Ibid

<sup>137</sup> Baillet, D. (2002). Les grands thèmes de la sociologie du sport. *Les grands thèmes de la sociologie du sport*, 204-226.

<sup>138</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 571-592). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>139</sup> Park S.-H., Mahony D., Kim Y. K. (2011). The role of sport fan curiosity: A new conceptual approach to the understanding of sport fan behavior. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 46–56.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid

<sup>141</sup> Pedersen, P. M., Laucella, P., Geurin, A., & Kian, E. (2020). *Sociological Aspects of Sport communication. Strategic sport communication*. 337-377 Human Kinetics Publishers.

<sup>142</sup> Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2009). From broadcast scarcity to digital plenitude: The changing dynamics of the media sport content economy. *Television & New Media*, 10(4), 354-370.

The interaction between supply and demand is dynamic and reciprocal. The supply of sports programs influences the demand for participation by providing individuals with opportunities for engagement and shaping their preferences. Similarly, the demand for sports influences the supply by creating a market for certain activities and driving innovation and adaptation within the sports industry<sup>143</sup>.

Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One offers the opportunity of a new era, ripe with transformative potential that could completely change the way the sport is perceived and engaged with. In navigating the intricate dance between supply and demand within this domain, each decision made by Liberty Media holds the power to catalyze a cascade of possibilities<sup>144</sup>.

Indeed, with the newfound control acquired by the company, Liberty Media possesses the agency to reshape the landscape of Formula One<sup>145</sup>, altering the supply available to fans and participants alike. They have the capacity to fundamentally redefine the supply side dynamics. Yet, the ramifications extend far beyond mere adjustments to the supply of Formula One. Each alteration has the potential to reverberate throughout the ecosystem, influencing the demand for the sport in multifaceted ways. Whether through the introduction of innovative technologies, the cultivation of new fan experiences, or the strategic expansion into untapped markets, Liberty Media's initiatives can inspire shifts in consumer preferences and behaviors.

## B. Liberty Media's Vision: Revolutionizing Formula One for Popularity and Marketability

Ecclestone's management of Formula One during his later years was marred by declining revenue and a loss of connection with the public, particularly the younger generation. The sport was perceived as an exclusive "old boys club," out of touch with the realities of the 21st century<sup>146</sup>. Ecclestone's famous 2014 statement dismissing the importance of reaching the younger audience highlighted this disconnect, "*I don't know why people want to get to the so-called 'young generation'. Why do they want to do that? Is it to sell them something? Most of these kids haven't got any money. I'm not interested in tweets, Facebook and whatever this nonsense is. I'd rather get to the 70-year-old guy who's got plenty of cash*"<sup>147</sup>. The sport

---

<sup>143</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>

<sup>144</sup> Ibid

<sup>145</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 571-592).

<sup>146</sup> Ibid

<sup>147</sup> Exclusive: F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone on his billion-dollar brand | Analysis. (n.d.). Campaign Asia. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.campaignasia.com/article/exclusive-f1-boss-bernie-ecclestone-on-his-billion-dollar-brand/392088>

experienced a significant decrease in fans, with a 40% drop observed in 2016 compared to eight years prior. Formula One was criticised as boring, attributed to the lack of diversity among winners, especially during the 2010s<sup>148</sup>.

The succession from Ecclestone to Chase Carey as CEO and Executive chairman of Formula One Group within the realm of Liberty Media signified a notable departure from Ecclestone's conventional strategies<sup>149</sup>. With Carey, an experienced media executive boasting tenures at renowned entities like News Corporation, DirecTV, 21st Century Fox, and Sky, at the helm, Formula One embraced a modernised approach to media engagement<sup>150</sup>. This pivotal transition, orchestrated by Liberty Media, stands as the most significant management overhaul within the Formula One Group since Ecclestone's stewardship began in the late 1970s. Such a transformation underscores the evolving dynamics between sports entities and media conglomerates, offering a fresh landscape for marketing, promotion, digital rights, and social media integration within the sport<sup>151</sup>.

Following the acquisition, Liberty Media articulated clear objectives for Formula One's transformation. Their primary aim was twofold: firstly, to breathe new life into the championship, revitalizing its popularity, and secondly, to reinvigorate a fan base that had been dwindling and aging over time<sup>152</sup>. Indeed, Carey stated during an interview: *"it is about building the live experience at these races, which are tremendous events in many ways - one of the biggest to occur in a city and a country in which they do occur. There is a tremendous opportunity to make that event much bigger, broader, and appeal to a much larger audience, to have related things throughout the week, to have other entertainment things - **sport is entertainment!**"*<sup>153</sup>. For Liberty Media, the mission is straightforward: to elevate Formula One into an entertainment powerhouse and restore it to its rightful place of prominence. A crucial initial step in this endeavor was the establishment of the company's inaugural marketing division, a significant departure from the approach under Ecclestone's tenure<sup>154</sup>.

---

<sup>148</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). Formula One as Television. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 387-411). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>149</sup> Liberty Media Corporation. Retrieved 25th November 2023. (2017, January 23). Liberty media corporation completes acquisition of Formula 1. Liberty Media Corporation.

<https://www.libertymedia.com/news/detail/305/liberty-media-corporation-completes-acquisition-of-formula-1>

<sup>150</sup> Clarkson, T. (Host). (2020, October). Chase Carey on his role in shaping F1's future and guiding the sport through a global pandemic [Audio podcast, Episode 107]. In *F1-Beyond the Grid*.

<sup>151</sup> Hutchins, B., Li, B., & Rowe, D. (2019). Over-the-top Sport: Live Streaming Services, Changing Coverage Rights Markets and the Growth of Media Sport Portals. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(7), 975-994.

<sup>152</sup> Chase Carey on how F1 can crack U.S. market. (2017, October 18). ESPN.Com.

[https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/\\_/id/21060354/formula-one-ceo-chase-carey-how-f1-crack-us-market-facebook-youtube-second-grand-prix](https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/_/id/21060354/formula-one-ceo-chase-carey-how-f1-crack-us-market-facebook-youtube-second-grand-prix)

<sup>153</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 571-592). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>154</sup> Bustad, J. J., & Andrews, D. L. (2023). The circus comes to town: Formula 1, globalisation, and the uber-sport spectacle. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 595-617). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

With this pivotal move, the strategic roadmap for Formula One's evolution began to take shape, branching out into various avenues for growth and engagement.

Following Liberty Media's takeover, it took less than a year for the sport's new owners to initiate a comprehensive rebranding effort for the series<sup>155</sup>. This overhaul encompassed a range of elements, including a fresh logo, updated TV graphics, new fonts, an innovative audio signature for team radio clips, and even a newly composed theme song. Opinions may vary on whether the rebrand represents an improvement over the previous identity<sup>156</sup>, but one thing is certain: Formula One now possesses a markedly clearer visual identity in 2022 compared to 2017. This transformation extends beyond Formula One alone, encompassing Formula 2 and Formula 3 as well. Consequently, all three tiers of racing now exhibit a cohesive branding for the first time in the sport's history<sup>157, 158</sup>.

(2024). Screenshot of Old (left) and New (right) Logo. <https://www.formula1.com/>



Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One marks a significant convergence between media distribution infrastructure and sports franchises. While the company's core revenue streams stem from its activities in the music industry, its foray into Formula One underscores a broader trend of blurring boundaries between sports organisations and media entities<sup>159</sup>. Indeed, the intertwining of sports and media conglomerates is prominently illustrated by corporate integrations such as Qatar Sports Investments control over Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) in Ligue 1 football and the global beIN Media network<sup>160</sup>. As the lines between media and sports entities have become less defined, tensions have arisen between organisations that own sports content and those that rely on it for media distribution. This shift has led to a dynamic where sports entities find themselves balancing their role as content creators with the demands of media companies seeking to use sports content for their own purposes<sup>161</sup>.

<sup>155</sup> Sturm, D. (2014). A Glamorous and High-tech Global Spectacle of Speed: Formula One Motor Racing as Mediated, Global and Corporate Spectacle. In K. Dashper, T. Fletcher, & N. McCullough (Eds.), *Sports Events, Society and Culture* (pp. 68–82). Routledge.

<sup>156</sup> F1 formula 1 logo review critique. (n.d.). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://thefutur.com/content/f1-formula-1-logo-review-critique>

<sup>157</sup> Formula 1: Rebrand | wieden+kennedy. (n.d.). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.wk.com/work/formula-1-rebrand/>

<sup>158</sup> Image: F1—The official home of formula 1® racing. (2024, February 29). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. <https://www.formula1.com/en.html>

<sup>159</sup> Lefever, K., & Lefever, K. (2012). Sports/media complex in the new media landscape. *New Media and Sport: International Legal Aspects*, 7-30.

<sup>160</sup> Saint-Germain, Q. S. I. and A. P. agree landmark strategic partnership and investment deal in P. (n.d.). Qatar sports investments and arctos partners agree landmark psg deal. beIN SPORTS. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.beinsports.com/en-mena/football/ligue-1/articles/qatar-sports-investments-and-arctos-partners-agree-landmark-psg-deal-psg-2023-12-07>

<sup>161</sup> Wenner, L. A., & Billings, A. C. (Eds.). (2017). *Sport, media and mega-events*. London: Routledge.

However, in Europe, instances of media groups owning sports teams have historically been limited due to the comparatively lower profitability of teams compared to those in the United States. Key instances of media groups venturing into sports team ownership include Berlusconi's Mediaset acquiring AC Milan in 1987 and Canal+ acquiring Paris Saint-Germain in 1991. However, in the early 2000s, several broadcasters, including BSkyB, NTL, Granada/ITV, and Canal+, divested their stakes in various football teams due to the realisation that owning a sports organisation was not particularly profitable<sup>162</sup>.

This trend is evident in the strategies adopted by these major sports franchises, which increasingly involve the development of branded television networks, mobile applications, and streaming platforms<sup>163</sup>. These initiatives cater predominantly to paying fans, thereby extracting additional commercial value while asserting greater control over content distribution. In essence, the acquisition of Formula One by Liberty Media exemplifies the evolving landscape of the sports media market, where traditional distinctions between sports and media businesses are becoming increasingly obsolete<sup>164</sup>.

Liberty Media's clarity regarding their goals for Formula One was unmistakable. However, they did recognise the dual responsibility of revitalizing the sport while also respecting its rich heritage. This recognition underscores the importance of striking a delicate balance between innovation and tradition<sup>165</sup>. Chase Carey, Formula One chairman at the time, emphasised the need for caution in this endeavour: *"you have to be careful that you don't gimmick-up the sport, that you're recognising the importance of history and the importance of what has made this sport special, but not let that become a straightjacket that doesn't enable you to consider changes that may truly enhance the sport for fans"*<sup>166</sup>. Carey's statement encapsulates Liberty Media's stated approach to managing Formula One's evolution. They spoke of understanding the importance of preserving traditions while remaining open to changes that genuinely enhance the sport for fans. This requires a nuanced understanding of Formula One's identity and values, as well as a commitment to innovation that respects its heritage. It is this sentiment that they are now accused of failing to respect.

---

<sup>162</sup> Hoehn, T., & Kastrinaki, Z. (2012). Broadcasting and sport: value drivers of TV right deals in european football. URL: [http://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/120130/Hoehn\\_Kastrinaki\\_Sports\\_Rights\\_Feb\\_2012.pdf](http://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/120130/Hoehn_Kastrinaki_Sports_Rights_Feb_2012.pdf).

<sup>163</sup> Hutchins, B., Li, B., & Rowe, D. (2019). Over-the-top Sport: Live Streaming Services, Changing Coverage Rights Markets and the Growth of Media Sport Portals. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(7), 975–994.

<sup>164</sup> Lefever, K., & Lefever, K. (2012). Sports/media complex in the new media landscape. *New Media and Sport: International Legal Aspects*, 7-30.

<sup>165</sup> Liberty Media Corporation. Retrieved 25th November 2023. (2017, January 23). Liberty media corporation completes acquisition of Formula 1. Liberty Media Corporation.

<https://www.libertymedia.com/news/detail/305/liberty-media-corporation-completes-acquisition-of-formula-1>

<sup>166</sup> Carey warns against F1 history being "straightjacket"; for change. Retrieved 7 May 2024 (2020, October 14). <https://www.autosport.com/fl/news/carey-warns-against-fl-history-being-straightjacket-for-change-4978190/4978190/>

# Chapter 2: Understanding Formula One's Evolution: Factors Driving the Transition from Media Event to Global Spectacle

## I. Formula One's U.S. Expansion: Implications for the Sport's Future

### A. Americanizing Formula One: A Strategic Push to Captivate the U.S. Market

The transition of Formula One ownership from Bernie Ecclestone and CVC Capital Partners, both European entities, to Liberty Media, a US-based company, marked a significant shift in the sport's management and strategic direction<sup>167</sup>. While previous owners were undoubtedly cognisant of the potential value in expanding Formula One's popularity in the United States, Liberty Media made it a clear priority from the outset. Recognizing the immense revenue and growth opportunities in the US market, Liberty Media dedicated substantial resources and effort towards expanding Formula One's presence in the country<sup>168</sup>.

Indeed, in the United States, sports hold a central and revered position in society, ingrained deeply within the cultural fabric. Americans demonstrate a remarkable dedication to sports, investing considerable time and financial resources into various sporting events and activities. Sports serve as a cornerstone of American identity and lifestyle. Sports in America are not just a pastime; they represent a fundamental aspect of American culture. Children grow up surrounded by sports, with participation in athletic activities starting from an early age. This cultural immersion extends beyond mere recreation, as sports become intertwined with various facets of American life<sup>169</sup>. One significant aspect of the sports culture in the US is its impact on education. Scholarships and opportunities for higher education often hinge on athletic prowess, with many students relying on sports scholarships to access quality education. As a result, sports are incredibly important as they offer a pathway to opportunities that would otherwise not be possible for many<sup>170</sup>.

---

<sup>167</sup> Dolles, H., & Raghunathan, K. (2024). Entrepreneurs and commercial ownership of sport events—the business development of Formula One 1. In *Research Handbook on Major Sporting Events* (pp. 179-194). Edward Elgar Publishing.

<sup>168</sup> Bustad, J. J., & Andrews, D. L. (2023). The circus comes to town: Formula 1, globalisation, and the uber-sport spectacle. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 595-617). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>169</sup> Michener, J. A. (2014). Children and Sports. In *Sports in America* (pp. 104-135). Dial Press.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid



Sports play a vital role in maintaining social stability and order, aligning with the principles of structural-functionalism<sup>171</sup>. Sports serve as a cohesive force that brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of belonging and shared identity among fans and participants alike. Whether it is cheering for a local team or participating in recreational leagues, sports provide opportunities for social interaction and bonding, strengthening social ties within communities. Through organised sports programs and events, communities are able to organise and coordinate collective activities, enhancing social cohesion and solidarity. Whether it is participating as amateur athletes or engaging as avid fans, sports offer Americans a shared experience that transcends social and cultural divides<sup>172</sup>. Furthermore, within the framework of symbolic interactionism, sports are understood as powerful symbols that shape social identities, values, and interactions in American society<sup>173</sup>. The significance of sports extends beyond mere physical activity, as they carry deep symbolic meaning and cultural significance. For many Americans, sports serve as symbols of national pride, regional identity, and community belonging. Whether it is wearing team jerseys, attending games, or participating in tailgating rituals, individuals engage in sports-related activities to express their allegiance and affiliation with particular teams or communities. Moreover, sports provide a platform for symbolic interactionism, where individuals negotiate meanings, roles, and relationships through their engagement with sports-related symbols, rituals, and traditions<sup>174</sup>.

The profound significance of sports in American life extends beyond mere participation or spectatorship—it encompasses a deeply ingrained culture of devotion and dedication. In the United States, the consumption of sports is a fervent and committed pursuit that permeates various aspects of daily life. American sports fans demonstrate an unparalleled level of dedication and loyalty to their teams, akin to religious fervor. They invest significant time, effort, and resources into supporting their chosen teams, reflecting a deep emotional attachment and sense of belonging<sup>175</sup>.

The American sports landscape is dynamic and diverse, offering a multitude of options for fans to engage with their favorite sports and teams. While motorsport has long been a prominent feature of American culture, particularly through the popularity of NASCAR and other racing series, Formula One has historically faced challenges in establishing a strong foothold in the market, presenting a significant opportunity for Liberty Media to tap into a

---

<sup>171</sup> Loy, J. W., & Booth, D. (2000). Functionalism, sport and society. *Handbook of sports studies*, 8-27.

<sup>172</sup> Michener, J. A. (2014). Sports and Upward Escalation. In *Sports in america* (pp. 162-195). Dial Press.

<sup>173</sup> Armstrong, K. L. (2007). Self, Situations, and Sport Consumption: An Exploratory Study of Symbolic Interactionism. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 30(2).

<sup>174</sup> Ibid

<sup>175</sup> Smolianov, P., Zakus, D. H., & Gallo, J. (2014). Ideal-type model for an integrated elite and mass sport system. In *Sport Development in the United States*. Routledge.

vast and untapped demographic of sports enthusiasts<sup>176</sup>. By breaking into the American market, Liberty Media can unlock a wealth of opportunities, including increased viewership, sponsorship deals, and revenue streams. The untapped potential of American motorsport fans presents a lucrative market for Formula One, offering a chance to expand its fan base and enhance its global brand presence<sup>177</sup>. Furthermore, the shift towards digital media and streaming platforms provides a convenient avenue for reaching American audiences and engaging them with Formula One content. With the right marketing strategies and promotional efforts, Liberty Media can leverage the power of digital media to connect with fans and cultivate a vibrant community of Formula One enthusiasts in the United States. In essence, the American market represents a goldmine of opportunity for Formula One, offering the chance to tap into a passionate and dedicated fan base that is hungry for more racing content<sup>178</sup>.

One of Liberty Media's key initiatives was to understand the importance of aligning Formula One with American culture to make it more relatable and appealing to US audiences. They employed strategies to make the sport more personable, fostering connections between fans and drivers through behind-the-scenes content, interviews, and storytelling. By bringing the human side of Formula One to the forefront and spotlighting the personalities behind the wheel, the sport underwent a transformation, becoming not just a spectacle, but a relatable and compelling narrative for American viewers. This evolution was further reinforced by the launch of "Drive to Survive," a docu series that showcases the lives of drivers, offering an intimate glimpse into the high-stakes world of Formula One. Strategically promoted to the US audience, "Drive to Survive" proved to be a resounding success, drawing in impressive viewership numbers and igniting widespread interest in the sport<sup>179</sup>.

Additionally, Liberty Media actively worked to integrate Formula One into the American sporting landscape by strategically hosting races in the US. By bringing more races to American soil, they provided fans with ample opportunity to experience live racing firsthand, fostering a sense of connection and belonging within the US market<sup>180</sup>. This adaptation to the

---

<sup>176</sup> Howell, M., & Miller, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Motorsports and American Culture: From Demolition Derbies to NASCAR*. Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid

<sup>178</sup> Jensen, J. A., Cobbs, J., & Groza, M. D. (2014). The niche portfolio strategy to global expansion: The influence of market resources on demand for formula one racing. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 27(4), 247–261. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2014./>

<sup>179</sup> Nielsen. (2022, May5). Driven to watch: How a sports docuseries drove U.S. fans to Formula 1. Retrieved 16 April 2024

<https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2022/driven-to-watch-how-a-sports-docuseries-drove-u-s-fans-to-formula-1/>

<sup>180</sup> Bustad, J. J., & Andrews, D. L. (2023). The circus comes to town: Formula 1, globalisation, and the uber-sport spectacle. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 595-617). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

American way of doing things marked a significant shift from how the sport was presented previously.

## B. The Superbowlification of a Grand Prix

Attending sports events is a cornerstone of American sports culture, with fans flocking to stadiums and arenas to cheer on their teams in person. For many, attending games is not just a recreational activity but a cherished tradition and a source of communal celebration<sup>181</sup>. In the realm of American sports culture, spectacle reigns supreme; from the grandeur of the Super Bowl to the excitement of major championships like the U.S. Open and the Masters, fans expect nothing less than a larger-than-life experience. This penchant for spectacle extends to motorsport as well, with iconic races like the Daytona 500 and the Indianapolis 500 standing as the pinnacle events of the racing calendar. These races are not merely competitions; they are spectacles that captivate audiences and draw in fans from across the country. Just as the Super Bowl transforms into a star-studded affair with celebrities, performers, and fans converging on the stadium, the Daytona 500 and the Indianapolis 500 also command attention with their self-described electrifying atmosphere and larger-than-life festivities<sup>182</sup>.

In the modern United States, the Super Bowl stands as an unparalleled cultural phenomenon, creating the most significant communal experience nationwide. The magnitude of its viewership surpasses that of attendance at religious services, voter turnout in elections, or participation in traditional holidays<sup>183</sup>. The Super Bowl has evolved into a cornerstone of American national culture, captivating audiences across the country and transcending demographic boundaries. Some scholars argue that Super Bowl Sunday has attained the status of a *de facto* national holiday, serving as a celebratory ritual that encapsulates American values and aspirations, touching upon themes ranging from affluence and patriotism to violence and excess. The widespread observance of this event underscores its significance as a communal ritual that unites diverse segments of American society<sup>184</sup>.

Television plays a central role in facilitating this collective experience, serving as the primary medium through which citizens engage with the culminating spectacles of the football season. Through televised broadcasts, viewers across the country are connected to

---

<sup>181</sup> Hopsicker, P. M. (2017). 'Superbowling': Using the super bowl's yearly commentary to explore the evolution of a sporting spectacle in the american consciousness. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 34(1–2), 23–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2017.1334644>

<sup>182</sup> Warren, G. S. (2020). Mega Sports Events Have Mega Environmental and Social Consequences. *Missouri Law Review*, 85(2), 496–524.

<sup>183</sup> Tainsky, S. (2010). Television broadcast demand for National Football League contests. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 11(6), 629–640.

<sup>184</sup> Hopsicker, P., & Dyreson, M. S. (2006). Super Bowl Sunday: An American Holiday?. *Encyclopedia of American Holidays and National Days*, 1, 30-55.

the event, transcending geographic boundaries to participate in a shared cultural phenomenon. This reliance on television as a conduit for communal engagement underscores the profound influence of media in shaping collective identities and fostering national cohesion<sup>185</sup>.

However, the Super Bowl's pervasive influence within US culture, coupled with its global dissemination through television, thrusts this mega-event into discussions surrounding the broader Americanisation of the world. Television, a cultural juggernaut pioneered and refined in the United States, frequently becomes a target for critics of American cultural hegemony<sup>186</sup>. The concept of "SuperBowlification" emerges as a fitting addition to the lexicon of American imperialism, alongside terms like Disneyfication, symbolizing the proliferation of American cultural norms and values on a global scale. This phenomenon reflects the ongoing impact of the American empire in shaping global cultural landscapes and underscores the complex interplay between media, commerce, and cultural imperialism in the contemporary era<sup>187</sup>.

While the Super Bowl remains primarily an American phenomenon, Formula One, in contrast, boasts a distinctly international appeal. Indeed, Formula One seeks to invert the Super Bowl's trajectory by making significant strides in the American market. Thanks to the many studies on why the SuperBowl is so popular in the US, there is already a laid out strategy to follow<sup>188</sup>. Indeed, they just need to embrace "SuperBowlification", which signifies adopting the spectacle and grandeur synonymous with mega-events like the Super Bowl. By capitalizing on the allure of such extravagant spectacles and integrating elements of Super Bowl culture into its own brand, Formula One can resonate more deeply with American audiences as well as offering a different sort of show for the regular viewers<sup>189</sup>.

In 2022, Formula One took a significant step toward realizing its ambition with the debut of the Miami Grand Prix. This inaugural event marked a pivotal moment in Formula One's strategy to establish a stronger presence in the United States. The Miami Grand Prix not only showcased the racing but also incorporated elements of local culture and flair, further enhancing its appeal to American spectators. They adopted the concept of "glocalisation", however they went from global and infused the local rather than the other way round<sup>190</sup>. Indeed, the race took on a festival like aspect, offering performances from big

---

<sup>185</sup> Maguire, J. A. (2011). The global media sports complex: Key issues and concerns. *Sport in Society*, 14(7-8), 965-977.

<sup>186</sup> Weatherill, S. (2000). Resisting the pressures of Americanisation: the influence of European Community law on the European sport model. *Willamette J. Int'l L. & Dis. Res.*, 8, 37-73

<sup>187</sup> Ibid

<sup>188</sup> Martin, C. R., & Reeves, J. L. (2001). The whole world isn't watching (but we thought they were): The Super Bowl and United States solipsism. *Sport in Society*, 4(2), 213-236.

<sup>189</sup> Dyreson, M. (2018). The super bowl as a television spectacle: Global designs, glocal niches, and parochial patterns. In *A Half Century of Super Bowls*. Routledge.

<sup>190</sup> Andrews, D., & Ritzer, G. (2007). The Global in the Sporting Glocal. In R. Giulianotti & R. Robertson (Eds.), *Globalisation and Sport* (pp. 28–45). Blackwell.

artists such as Ed Sheeran<sup>191</sup>. It also offered what was called a “grid celebration”, an event where drivers were introduced to the crowd backed by an orchestra and surrounded by cheerleaders. However, amidst the opulence and fanfare, adjustments to the traditional format drew scrutiny. The revised schedule mandated drivers to be on the grid 23 minutes prior to

Unknown. (2023). *Driver presentation Miami GP*.  
Getty Images



the start, an extension from the customary 16 minutes, thereby disrupting their pre-race routines. George Russell, a Mercedes driver and Director of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association that represents all current Formula 1 racers stated, “*I guess it is the American way of doing things, doing sport (...) It is distracting because, you know, we were on the grid for half an hour in our overalls in the sun. I don't think there's any other sport in the world that 30 minutes before you go out to do your business that you're out there in the sun, all the cameras on you, and making a bit of a show of it. I can appreciate that in the entertainment world, but as I said, we only want the best for the sport.*” Other drivers also took the opportunity to state their disapproval in their post race media commitments<sup>192</sup>. Despite the controversies that marred its inception, the Miami Grand Prix emerged as a resounding success on American soil, attracting a substantial viewership while concurrently sustaining its established baseline<sup>193</sup>. Buoyed by the triumph of this inaugural event, Formula One forged ahead with its expansion endeavors by introducing the Las Vegas Grand Prix in 2023.<sup>194</sup>

However, the Las Vegas Grand Prix was not devoid of tumult, as it became entangled in a web of controversies from its outset. Reports surfaced regarding the mistreatment of workers during the buildup to the race, casting a shadow over the event's organisational integrity<sup>195</sup>. Moreover, the safety of drivers was compromised due to inadequate preparations on the track, exemplified by the failure to properly secure drain covers. This oversight

<sup>191</sup> EClifford@dolphins.com. (2024, March 26). Hard rock announces star-studded performances featuring ed sheeran & john summit for hard rock beach club at 2024 formula 1 crypto. Retrieved 9 May 2024. Formula 1 Crypto.Com Miami Grand Prix.<https://f1miamigp.com/news/press-release/hard-rock-beach-club-performances/>

<sup>192</sup> F1—2022 miami grand prix—Post-race press conference transcript. (2022, May 9). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/news/f1-2022-miami-grand-prix-post-race-press-conference-transcript>

<sup>193</sup> Miami GP attracts largest live audience in US TV history. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/miami-grand-prix-attracts-f1s-largest-live-audience-in-united-states.1TZioGIIUvFHEEsQ7qz304>

<sup>194</sup> Image: (N.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.eurosport.fr/geoblocking.shtml>

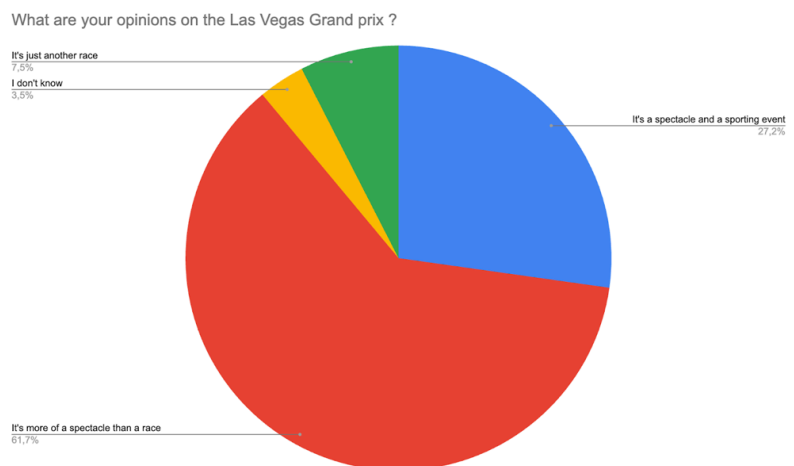
<sup>195</sup> Richards, G. (2023, November 14). F1 apologises to Las Vegas for disruption caused by new night race. Retrieved 6 May 2024 The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/nov/14/f1-apology-las-vegas-greg-maffei-disruption-night-race-complaints>

culminated in an incident during practice, wherein a dislodged drain cover was propelled into Carlos Sainz's car, inflicting significant damage and underscoring the imperative of rigorous safety protocols in motorsport events<sup>196</sup>.

Vegas further embraced the entertainment aspect of the sport, featuring its own rendition of driver presentations alongside additional extravagant events, such as chauffeuring racers to the podium in a limousine post-race<sup>197</sup>. However, concerns arose regarding Liberty Media's ability to maintain the balance between innovation and tradition, a commitment they had pledged to uphold. Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc, when prompted for his perspective, stated, *“Of course, there has been a lot of show already with the opening ceremony. But we must not forget that it is a beautiful sport but you must also attract new people to this beautiful sport. (...) But we always have to keep the DNA of the sport which is the most important”*. Max Verstappen, who had been most critical of the race, added, *“99% show, and 1% sporting event”*<sup>198</sup>. There was a noticeable surge in discourse suggesting that Liberty Media was veering excessively towards the spectacle aspect of Formula One, potentially jeopardizing the essence of the racing itself<sup>199</sup>. This sentiment was also present in the survey conducted for this research. Participants were asked to express their views on the event, with response options ranging from "it is just another race" to "it is more of a spectacle than a race" and "it is a spectacle and a sporting event," alongside an "I don't know" option. Out of the 474 responses collected, a

**Figure 1: Las Vegas GP Opinions**



substantial 61.7% indicated that, in their perception, the Grand Prix leaned more towards being a spectacle than a racing event. Conversely, only a mere 7.5% regarded it as just another race. This statistical breakdown and analysis of the creation of these events vividly underscores the prevailing

<sup>196</sup> Richards, G. (2023, November 17). Las Vegas GP practice descends into farce after drain covers damage cars. Retrieved 6 May 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/nov/17/las-vegas-gp-opening-practice-cancelled-after-cars-damaged-by-drain-covers>

<sup>197</sup> Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://f1tv.formula1.com>

<sup>198</sup> F1—2023 las vegas grand prix—Post-race press conference transcript. Retrieved 23rd April 2024 (2023, November 19). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/news/f1-2023-las-vegas-grand-prix-post-race-press-conference-transcript>

<sup>199</sup> Haring, B. (2023, November 18). Embattled f1 las vegas grand prix is fighting bad press and manhole problems. Retrieved 6 May 2024 Deadline. <https://deadline.com/2023/11/embattled-f1-las-vegas-grand-prix-fighting-bad-press-manhole-problems-1235618027/>

discourse surrounding the Grand Prix and highlights the overarching concerns regarding the balance between spectacle and sport in Formula One under Liberty Media's stewardship. Indeed, with these changes it is possible to note the more prominent place that spectacle is taking up.

## II. Commercializing Formula One: From Elite Club to Mainstream Sport

### A. A New Era of Fan Engagement: Formula One's Innovative Commercial Strategy

Liberty Media wasted no time in launching an ambitious commercial strategy for Formula One, tackling both immediate challenges and long-term goals head-on<sup>200</sup>. With viewership and profits on the decline, a rapid turnaround was in order<sup>201</sup>. Their plan was carefully crafted to achieve a range of important objectives. First and foremost was the need to thoroughly understand Formula One's diverse audience. The objective being to align the companies changes with what fans wanted<sup>202</sup>. This meant substantial research and direct engagement with fans to learn about their desires and interests in the sport. Simultaneously, a major upheaval of broadcasting arrangements was enacted. Underlining the understanding that media partnerships were crucial for expanding Formula One's global reach<sup>203</sup>. This strategy also embraced new approaches not typically seen in Formula One. It recognised the importance of social dynamics, data analytics, and creating exciting events to breathe new life into the sport. Perhaps the biggest challenge was cracking the American market, which had proven tricky in the past. While previous leadership had struggled to make a significant impact in the US, Liberty Media was determined to change that. The strategies were specifically to appeal to American audiences, aiming to carve out a successful niche in this lucrative market.

One of the pivotal maneuvers executed by Liberty Media in this comprehensive commercial strategy to elevate Formula One's global appeal was a meticulous overhaul of

---

<sup>200</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 11(1), 43-59.

<sup>201</sup> Evens, T., Tickell, S., & Næss, H. E. (2023). Ecclestone out, Liberty Media in: A Look into the Shifting Ownership Structure of Formula One. In *The History and Politics of Motor*

<sup>202</sup> Bodet G., Bernache-Assollant I. (2011). Consumer loyalty in sport spectatorship services: The relationships with consumer satisfaction and team identification. *Psychology and Marketing*, 28(8), 781–802. <https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1002/mar.20412>

<sup>203</sup> Frandsen, K. (2014). Mediatisation of Sports. In K. Lundby (Ed.), *Mediatisation of Communication* (pp. 525–543). Mouton de Gruyter

broadcasting arrangements<sup>204</sup>. Despite prevailing apprehensions regarding the future trajectory of television, the medium retains paramount significance both as a content sharing platform and as a canvas for integrating cutting-edge technological innovations, particularly within the realm of sports content<sup>205</sup>. The relationship between Formula One and television has served as a vital revenue stream, with lucrative broadcasting rights constituting a cornerstone of the sport's financial framework<sup>206</sup>. Moreover, Formula One's televised broadcasts play a pivotal role in fostering audience engagement and cultivating collective social experiences. The live aspect of televised sports, coupled with Formula One's depiction as a glamorous, high-tech spectacle of speed, has ingrained the sport within the fabric of fan rituals and communal viewing experiences<sup>207</sup>. Whether gathering to watch races together or indulging in solitary enjoyment, Formula One's televised broadcasts serve as a unifying force for enthusiasts worldwide. Satellite and pay television platforms have played a central role in Formula One's global outreach strategies, gradually supplanting free-to-air content in favor of subscription-based models<sup>208</sup>. This transition, while reflective of evolving consumption patterns, has also underscored Formula One's traditional ambivalence towards embracing digital media possibilities and transformations<sup>209</sup>.

In the context of British broadcasting history, Formula One had nearly six decades of free-to-air coverage, predominantly through the BBC or ITV channels. However, the landscape shifted in the late 2000s with the advent of shared broadcasting rights between Sky Sports and the BBC in 2012. This arrangement saw Sky Sports providing comprehensive live coverage of all sessions, while the BBC curated select race broadcasts, signaling a paradigm shift in Formula One's televised presence. This arrangement between the BBC and Sky marked a significant inflection point in British broadcasting history, precipitating a monumental shift towards pay television that reverberated globally<sup>210</sup>. This transition was underscored by the transfer of Formula One broadcasting rights from the BBC to Channel 4 due to financial constraints. Channel 4 subsequently offers only race highlights with the exception of the British Grand Prix that has live coverage. Subsequently, Sky Sports emerged as the exclusive purveyor of live Formula One content in a landmark £1 billion deal from 2019 to 2024, consolidating the sport's presence behind a predominantly subscription-based

---

<sup>204</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). Formula One as Television. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 387-411). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>205</sup> Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2012). *Sport beyond television: The internet, digital media and the rise of networked media sport*. Routledge.

<sup>206</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). Formula One as Television. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 387-411). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid

<sup>208</sup> Noble, J. (2021, May 19). The pay TV vs free-to-air conflict at the heart of modern F1. *Motorsport.com*. <https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/the-pay-tv-vs-free-to-air-conflict-at-the-heart-of-modern-f1/6510753/>

<sup>209</sup> Ciolfi Ms, J. L., & Stuart Dr, S. (2013). Organisational succession in F1: An analysis of Bernie Ecclestone's roles as CEO of Formula One management. *International Journal of Motorsport Management*, 2(1), 1.

<sup>210</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). Formula One as Television. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 387-411). Cham: Springer International Publishing.



paywall. This trend towards satellite television exclusivity was mirrored across the globe, with countries like France (via Canal Plus) and Italy (via Sky Italia) adopting similar pay TV-only arrangements orchestrated by Liberty Media<sup>211</sup>.

In addition to this broadcasting strategy, Liberty Media focused on understanding the audience better. This involved diverging from solely relying on experts' opinions, which was the norm during Ecclestone's time, and instead, started directly engaging with fans to learn about their preferences<sup>212</sup>. In fact, for the first three months of Liberty Media's ownership, the main goal was to connect with fans and figure out what they wanted<sup>213</sup>. This shift to using data to understand fans' interests marked a significant change. An important aspect of this approach was recognizing the importance of different fan groups, especially younger individuals who hadn't been given much attention before. Liberty Media understood that reaching out to younger fans was crucial for the sport's growth<sup>214</sup>.

Furthermore, fans expressed a strong desire for heightened immersion and deeper insights into Formula One racing, prompting Liberty Media to enact significant changes. In the past, strict rules limited what content could be shared and discussed, making it harder for fans to engage fully. Liberty Media aimed to change this by being more open with content sharing, giving fans more access and insight into the sport<sup>215</sup>. This shift endeavoured to make Formula One more inclusive and engaging for everyone who followed it. Relaxing content restrictions and overhauling graphical representations were initial steps toward enhancing accessibility and engagement. Yet, recognizing the evolving landscape of fan expectations, Liberty Media pursued a strategic partnership with Amazon Web Services (AWS). This collaboration facilitated the collection of extensive data sets encompassing driver performances and race dynamics. Through the deployment of advanced sensor technologies and camera systems across tracks and vehicles, an unprecedented volume of race-related data was amassed<sup>216</sup>. This data not only served as a performance optimisation tool for teams but also afforded fans exclusive insights into the sport. The resulting wealth of data-driven content heralded a transformative shift in the Formula One viewing experience, offering fans a comprehensive and immersive engagement platform. From intricate race analyses to behind-the-scenes

---

<sup>211</sup> Ibid

<sup>212</sup> Misra A. (2021, July 19). Marketing strategy that revived the fate of Formula one. The Strategy Story. <https://thestrategy.com/2021/07/19/formula-one-marketing-strategy/>

<sup>213</sup> Mohammadkazemi, R. (2015). Sports marketing and social media. In Handbook of research on integrating social media into strategic marketing (pp. 340-358). IGI Global. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287406899\\_Sports\\_Marketing\\_social\\_Media](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287406899_Sports_Marketing_social_Media)

<sup>214</sup> Hussain, G., Naz, T., Shahzad, N., & Bajwa, M. J. (2021). Social Media Marketing in Sports and using social media platforms for sports fan engagement. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government* Vol, 27(06).

<sup>215</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 11(1), 43-59.

<sup>216</sup> Liberty Mutual video | re:Invent 2021 | AWS. (n.d.). Amazon Web Services, Inc. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://aws.amazon.com/solutions/case-studies/liberty-mutual-2021-reinvent-video/>

revelations, this augmented informational landscape enriched the scientific discourse surrounding Formula One while elevating spectator experiences<sup>217</sup>.

Another significant change they made was introducing a budget cap starting in 2021<sup>218</sup>. This cap set a limit on the amount of money teams could spend on developing their cars, with the aim of leveling the playing field and allowing all teams to progress equally. However, implementing the budget cap hasn't been without its challenges. Many of the “poorer” teams are still struggling, while the richer ones get to benefit from all their previous purchases and better facilities. Furthermore, some teams were caught breaching the cap, sparking debates about the consequences and punishments that ensued<sup>219</sup>.

Through these various strategies Liberty Media began changing the way the race was watched in two ways. Firstly by putting it behind a paywall. Secondly and arguably most important, they created a race watching experience that allowed substantially more engagement and accessibility, allowing the audience to access data about the cars and what the drivers were doing as well as offering viewing options from regular coverage to the ability to switch to driver cameras, viewing the action from their perspective.

However, the linchpin of the overarching strategy revolved around amplifying Formula One's digital footprint. Recognizing the burgeoning influence of social media platforms, Liberty Media sought direct engagement with fans by augmenting its presence across these channels. The objective was twofold: to foster a closer affinity between fans and the sport, and to furnish a dynamic platform for immersive fan experiences<sup>220</sup>.

## B. Digital Revolution: Transforming Formula One's Presence in the Digital Sphere

In 2021, Formula One surged as the fastest-growing sport across major social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, and Twitch, witnessing an impressive follower growth. With a cumulative total of 49.1 million followers, F1 experienced a remarkable 40% surge compared to the previous year, solidifying its position as the most engaging sport globally in 2021. Notably, video views skyrocketed by

---

<sup>217</sup> Ibid

<sup>218</sup> Anderson, G. (2022, February 1). Gary Anderson: How the cost cap will really hit teams and F1 retrieved 13 April 2024. The Race. <https://the-race.com/formula-1/gary-anderson-how-the-cost-cap-will-really-hit-teams-and-f1/>

<sup>219</sup> Timeline: How the fia cost cap story unfolded as red bull and aston martin enter agreements over breaches | formula 1®. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 13 December 2023, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/timeline-how-the-fia-cost-cap-story-unfolded.6yAhD5hKoRuUTqhU1wYuGY>

<sup>220</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 11(1), 43-59.

50%, reaching 7 billion during this period. Moreover, total engagement across all digital platforms surged by 74%, reaching a remarkable 1.5 billion interactions<sup>221</sup>.

In February of 2017, Liberty Media took a significant step by officially relaxing social media restrictions within Formula One, paving the way for teams to freely share clips of drivers, track footage, and other content<sup>222</sup>. This marked the beginning of a strategic shift aimed at capturing the attention of a younger and more diverse audience—a necessity for the sport's growth and longevity. Indeed, when Liberty Media completed its acquisition of Formula One, the sport was facing significant challenges. Global viewership and fan engagement were on the decline, and the sport had experienced sponsorship losses. It struggled to keep pace with the rapidly evolving digital media landscape and the changing patterns of media consumption<sup>223</sup>. In this regard, Liberty Media played a pivotal role in revitalizing Formula One. They addressed the declining audience figures and succeeded in boosting viewership, albeit primarily attributed to their efforts to modernise marketing strategies and adapt to the digital age. Liberty Media identified two target demographics for the sport: the existing, loyal fan base, which skewed slightly older, and a new, younger audience. This strategic approach facilitated the ability to tailor the strategies to engage with both segments of the fan base<sup>224</sup>.

The approach taken by Liberty Media in utilizing social media mirrors that of other major sports leagues, such as the NBA, who have embraced digital platforms to foster greater fan engagement. Indeed, the NBA has been particularly adept at leveraging social media to connect with fans, as evidenced by Commissioner Adam Silver's analogy: *"We analogise our strategy to snacks versus meals. If we provide those snacks to our fans on a free basis, they're still going to want to eat meals — which are our games. There is no substitute for the live game experience. We believe that greater fan engagement through social media helps drive television ratings."*<sup>225</sup> This quote encapsulates the essence of the strategy employed by sports leagues in the digital age—recognizing the value of social media as a tool to complement, rather than replace, the live game experience. By offering fans enticing "snacks" of content on social platforms, leagues can cultivate a deeper connection with their audience and ultimately drive viewership of the main event—the games themselves. With Liberty Media's embrace of social media, Formula One has embarked on a similar journey to enhance fan

---

<sup>221</sup> Bustad, J. J., & Andrews, D. L. (2023). The circus comes to town: Formula 1, globalisation, and the uber-sport spectacle. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 595-617). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>222</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 11(1), 43-59.

<sup>223</sup> Misra A. (2021, July 19). Marketing strategy that revived the fate of Formula one. *The Strategy Story*. <https://thestrategystory.com/2021/07/19/formula-one-marketing-strategy/>

<sup>224</sup> Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).

<sup>225</sup> Gross, C. V. and D. (n.d.). NBA Commissioner Adam Silver has a game plan. *Strategy+business*. Retrieved 8 May 2024, from <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/NBA-Commissioner-Adam-Silver-Has-a-Game-Plan>

engagement and ensure the sport remains relevant and appealing in an ever-evolving media landscape<sup>226</sup>.

Indeed, the literature supports the notion that sports organisations are uniquely positioned to benefit from the power of social media for enhanced fan engagement. By leveraging their existing fan bases and prominent platforms, sports organisations have the potential to transform the way supporters interact with teams, athletes, and fellow fans. Social media has facilitated deeper connections among fans, enabling sport to become an even more integral part of their lives<sup>227</sup>. However, despite the significant investment made by sports clubs in fostering online engagement, there remains a noticeable gap in truly understanding their fan base. While clubs aim to maintain control over their brand, they are challenged with building an interactive presence that effectively resonates with their increasingly empowered fan community<sup>228</sup>. Many clubs have been slow to fully embrace meaningful social media interactions with supporters. As a result, academic research on fan engagement, particularly within the realm of social media, has received limited attention. Existing studies often focus on offline interactions and transactional behaviors, neglecting the nuanced behaviors and motivations associated with online engagement<sup>229</sup>.

In this regard, Liberty Media's strategic foresight proved instrumental, as the company allocated significant resources toward meticulously understanding their fan base. By undertaking comprehensive research to gain insights into fan motivations and behaviors, Liberty Media was able to develop a digital presence that aptly reflected the intricacies of fan engagement dynamics. Indeed, Liberty Media succeeded in effecting a digital transformation that surpassed mere digitisation; it achieved digitalisation. Unlike digitisation, which primarily entails the conversion of analog content into digital formats, digitalisation encompasses a broader phenomenon involving the integration of digital technologies into social processes of interaction, organisation, and communication<sup>230</sup>.

Formula One successfully established a significant online presence by implementing a strategy formulated under Liberty Media's guidance. Indeed, this approach was characterised by that dual focus: catering to the needs of existing fans while also attracting younger

---

<sup>226</sup> Bodet G., Bernache-Assollant I. (2011). Consumer loyalty in sport spectatorship services: The relationships with consumer satisfaction and team identification. *Psychology and Marketing*, 28(8), 781–802. <https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1002/mar.20412>

<sup>227</sup> Hussain, G., Naz, T., Shahzad, N., & Bajwa, M. J. (2021). Social Media Marketing in Sports and using social media platforms for sports fan engagement. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government* Vol, 27(06).

<sup>228</sup> Witkemper, C., Blaszk, M., & Chung, J. (2016). Establishing a Typology of Social Media Uses in the Sport Industry: A Multidimensional Scaling Study. *Communication & Sport*, 4(2), 166-186.

<sup>229</sup> Acar, O., & Puntoni, S. (2016). Customer empowerment in the digital age. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 56, 4–8. doi:10.2501/JAR-2016-007

<sup>230</sup> Gobble, M. M. (2018). Digitalisation, digitisation, and innovation. *Research-Technology Management*, 61(4), 56–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.2018.1471280>

audiences or newcomers to the sport, all while trying not to fracture the established fandom<sup>231</sup>. To address the preferences of loyal fans, Formula One devised tactics aimed at delivering more in-depth insights into the sport. This involved enhancing broadcast coverage, producing enriched YouTube content, and offering F1 TV streaming services, providing fans with an immersive behind-the-scenes experience. The introduction of F1 TV represented a significant milestone, granting fans unprecedented access to exclusive content and insights into the inner workings of the sport. The service represents the FIA Formula 1 World Championship's proprietary "over the top" streaming service, offering Formula One enthusiasts an immersive viewing experience. The service is structured into two distinct tiers, F1 TV Pro stands as the premium offering, affording subscribers access to live coverage of every Formula One race throughout the season. Additionally, subscribers obtain the streaming of all track sessions for each Grand Prix, alongside access to onboard cameras and team radios, providing an unprecedented level of insight into the racing action. F1 TV Pro also holds an exclusive live timing feature, enabling viewers to access real-time telemetry and monitor driver tire usage history during races.

In contrast, F1 TV Access serves as a more economical alternative, providing subscribers with on-demand access to a plethora of Formula One content. However, unlike its premium counterpart, F1 TV Access does not include live coverage of races. Both tiers provide subscribers with access to an enormous amount of content, including documentaries, shows, behind-the-scenes moments, and race analyses. Additionally, it boasts an extensive archive with over 2000 hours of Formula One footage, covering every Grand Prix since 1981<sup>232</sup>. This comprehensive collection ensures that subscribers can immerse themselves in the rich history of the sport. It gives them plenty of content and a feeling of accessibility that allows them to feel more engaged which translates through more invested consumption<sup>233 234</sup>.

2024. Screenshot of F1 TV interface.  
f1tv.formula1.com



Furthermore, Formula One embarked on initiatives targeting younger demographics and attempting to attract newcomers to the sport. This included the creation of content such as the docuseries "Drive to Survive" and the development of an eSports game. Furthermore,

<sup>231</sup> Brown, K. A., Billings, A. C., Murphy, B., & Pusan, L. (2018). Intersections of fandom in the age of interactive media: eSports fandom as a predictor of traditional sport fandom. *Communication & Sport*, 6(4), 418-435.

<sup>232</sup> Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://f1tv.formula1.com>

<sup>233</sup> Park S.-H., Mahony D., Kim Y. K. (2011). The role of sport fan curiosity: A new conceptual approach to the understanding of sport fan behavior. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 46–56

<sup>234</sup> Image: Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://f1tv.formula1.com>

interactive features to actively engage fans throughout the race were created such as voting for the favorite “driver of the day” during races<sup>235</sup>.

The interventions spearheaded by Liberty Media have yielded notable successes in reversing declining audience figures and bolstering viewership metrics within Formula One. In 2019, the global cumulative television audience went up to 1.9 billion, the highest since 2012. Moreover, the tally of unique viewers surged to 471 million, marking a substantial increase from 352 million recorded in 2017<sup>236</sup>. The ascendancy of Formula One's digital platforms further underscores its resurgence, with a remarkable uptick of followers across digital platforms, particularly on websites such as Instagram and Twitter. This surge reaffirms Formula One's stature as the fastest-growing entity among all major sports competitions worldwide. Notably, video views and impressions on Formula One's core digital platforms nearly doubled during this period, attesting to the efficacy of digital engagement strategies implemented by Liberty Media<sup>237</sup>. However, despite these remarkable strides, challenges persist, notably with the live streaming platform F1 TV. While this platform holds significant promise for expanding coverage, its potential remains curtailed by pre-existing contractual obligations with broadcasters and pay-television operators<sup>238</sup>. These constraints highlight the intricate web of commercial arrangements that necessitate careful navigation to optimise the reach and accessibility of Formula One content.

### C. Fan Perspectives: Understanding the impact of these changes in Formula One

The shift in Formula One's approach to fan engagement represented a significant departure from previous practices, marking a new era of interaction and empowerment towards fans<sup>239</sup>. This innovative approach garnered positive perceptions from fans, who appreciated the newfound level of engagement and accessibility offered by Formula One. Moreover, the success of this strategy is evident in the substantial increase in the percentage of younger fans actively participating in and engaging with the sport. According to the 2021 global Formula One Fan survey run by Motorsport Network that garnered 167,302 responses, there has been a notable rise in the number of young fans, many of whom are active users of social media platforms and mobile apps associated with the sport. This demographic shift

---

<sup>235</sup> Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*.

<https://hstalks.com/article/7847/a-formula-for-success-how-formula-one-racing-embra/>

<sup>236</sup> Ibid

<sup>237</sup> Ibid

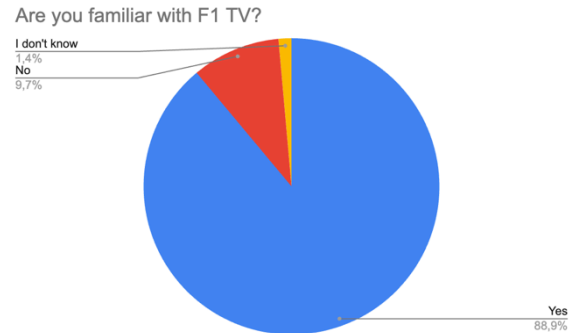
<sup>238</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). Formula One as Television. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 387-411). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>239</sup> Acar, O., & Puntoni, S. (2016). Customer empowerment in the digital age. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 56, 4-8. doi:10.2501/JAR-2016-007

underscores the effectiveness of Formula One's efforts to adapt to changing consumer preferences and embrace digital platforms for fan outreach and interaction<sup>240</sup>.

The survey created for this research paper included a section dedicated to exploring respondents' perceptions of Formula One content, with a particular emphasis on the popularity and appeal of F1 TV. To the question “Are you familiar with F1 TV?” among the 425 respondents, a substantial majority, comprising 88.9%, indicated their familiarity with F1 TV. Conversely, only a small fraction, totaling 9.7%, stated that they were not familiar with the service. Of the 88.9% familiar with F1 TV, a noteworthy 39% expressed openness to either being current subscribers or considering subscribing in the future, amounting to 143 respondents. However, a significant portion, constituting 46.9%, conveyed their reluctance towards becoming subscribers. Meanwhile, 13.6% of respondents expressed a potential interest in subscribing if given the opportunity. These findings suggest that while a considerable portion of respondents are aware of F1 TV, there remains a notable gap in its adoption and utilisation. Despite its recognition, the service has yet to gain ubiquitous presence among consumers, with a significant proportion still hesitant or uninterested in subscribing.

**Figure 2:** Familiarity with F1 TV



**Figure 3:** Interest in F1 TV subscription cross referenced with familiarity

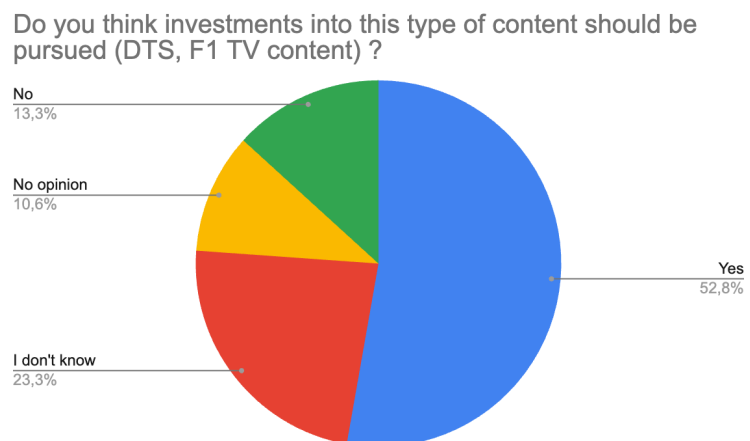
x	Are you/would you be a subscriber?				Total général
	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	
familiar with F1 TV				2	2
I don't know	1	2	2	1	6
No	2	9	27	1	39
Yes	1	50	172	143	366
<b>Total général</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>413</b>

When it comes to investments in digitalised content, the responses tend to be more positive. To the question "do you think investments into this type of content should be pursued (DTS, F1 TV content)?" 423 responses were obtained. 46 respondents chose to use the "other" option and provide additional details. For simplicity, the analysis below will focus on the remaining 378 responses, which selected options such as "I don't know," "no," "no opinion," and "yes." The responses from the "other" section will be analyzed separately. Out of 378 respondents, 52.8% expressed the view that investments in this type of content, such

<sup>240</sup> Bradley, C. (2021). Formula 1 in 2021 Global fan insight into the world's largest annual sporting series Retrieved 7 April 2024(2005-2021) (Global Fan Survey, p. 58). Motorsport Network. <https://cdn-1.motorsport.com/survey/2021/2021-f1-global-fan-survey-motorsportnetwork.pdf>

as DTS and F1 TV, should be continued. Conversely, only 13.3% declared themselves unfavorable towards such investments, while 10.6% did not hold a firm opinion, and 23.3% remained uncertain.

**Figure 4:** Opinions on pursuit of content



This digitalisation was specifically targeted towards younger individuals. As 'digital natives,' this entire strategy was tailored to resonate with them<sup>241</sup>. Therefore, it would be intriguing to analyze these responses in relation to the age demographics of the respondents. Notably, a significant majority of respondents fell into the younger category, with 78% of the 378 participants being under the age of 28. Among this age group, 43.6% expressed favorable views towards the pursuit of this type of content, while only 10.5% opposed it. Given that the younger demographic comprises the majority of the survey, these proportions align with expectations. Conversely, among older generations, only 12 individuals above the age of 40 expressed favorability. Twenty-eight respondents stated that they were uncertain or had no opinion, while only four were firmly against it. Based solely on these responses, it appears that the digitalisation of Formula One did not strongly resonate with older demographics. However, it is important to note that these conclusions should be interpreted cautiously due to the limited sample size. Further research with a larger and more diverse sample would be necessary to validate these findings conclusively.

**Figure 5:** Interest in subscription crossreferenced by age of respondents

	<18	18-28	29-39	40-50	51-61	62-72	73+	Total général
I don't know	6	62	6	2	8	2	2	88
No	3	37	6	1	1	2		50
No opinion	5	17	4		6	4	4	40
Other	5	36	5					46
Yes	12	153	22	4	3	5		199
<b>Total général</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>423</b>

We mentioned previously that the survey also provided an alternative option, which garnered responses from an additional 10.8% of the respondents, totaling 46 individuals. Among these, 34 individuals stated that while they support the pursuit of this type of content, it should remain true to the essence of the sport and uphold authenticity. Several respondents expressed appreciation for F1 TV documentaries, shows, and behind-the-scenes footage, but

<sup>241</sup> Hussain, G., Naz, T., Shahzad, N., & Bajwa, M. J. (2021). Social Media Marketing in Sports and using social media platforms for sports fan engagement. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government* Vol, 27(06).



many voiced concerns regarding sensationalised shows like "Drive to Survive." Overall, the sentiment suggests a desire for authentic content that captures the essence of Formula One while steering clear of overly dramatised portrayals. The responses underscored the importance of accuracy in content creation<sup>242</sup>. While generally receptive to the idea of more content, respondents emphasised the need for purposeful content. One respondent articulated this sentiment by suggesting, *"We should have meaningful content from the drivers and the team regarding the sport, serving as a starting point for many new fans."* However, there were notable reservations among other respondents. Some individuals expressed uncertainty, acknowledging the potential value of additional content for the sport but expressing concerns about false narratives or manufactured content. Others were more unequivocal in their opposition, outright rejecting the idea of more showmanship in Formula One. As one respondent succinctly put it, *"No, F1 doesn't need more show; it should be a sport first and foremost."* These perspectives highlight a desire for authenticity and a preference for content that prioritises the integrity and essence of Formula One as a sport.

Only a small minority of respondents mentioned Liberty Media, and their comments were largely critical. One respondent expressed *"I think it depends on the goal of the sport. Liberty quite clearly wants to squeeze as much money out of F1 as they can, but that's come at the expense of the integrity of the sport, as well as the teams and drivers themselves. They've become bona fide celebrities, which is perhaps something nobody really expected. I also think that as long as Liberty's main goal is to make more and more money, they won't be able to focus on the core elements of the sport."* This sentiment was echoed by other respondents who mentioned Liberty Media, painting a consistent picture of the company as profit-driven and potentially indifferent to the sport's best interests or the creation of compelling content. Liberty Media's management approach seems to be viewed unfavorably by these respondents, who perceive it as prioritizing financial gain over the integrity and essence of Formula One.

When analyzing these 46 responses, aside from the 5 individuals who expressed uncertainty, a clear theme emerges: there is an underlying anxiety that Formula One is struggling to strike the right balance between being a sport and being entertainment. Respondents expressed concerns that the sport's emphasis on maximizing profits and creating entertainment may be overshadowing its core identity as a competitive sporting event. Out of these responses, 41 fell into the age category of under 28, with the remaining 5 respondents aged between 29-39. This distribution suggests that while the younger audience views digitalisation positively, they also harbor concerns about its consequences and the delicate balance between entertainment and sport. Interestingly, this apprehension was previously

---

<sup>242</sup> Bodet G., Bernache-Assollant I. (2011). Consumer loyalty in sport spectatorship services: The relationships with consumer satisfaction and team identification. *Psychology and Marketing*, 28(8), 781–802. <https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1002/mar.20412>

mainly attributed to older, long-term viewers of the sport<sup>243</sup>. These responses suggest that while a digitalisation of Formula One is generally well received and even encouraged, there is a broader concern among fans about the direction Formula One is heading, with many feeling that the integrity and authenticity of the sport risk being compromised in favor of commercial interests and spectacle.

### III. External Forces at Play: Factors Influencing Formula One's Evolution

#### A. The Power of Brands and Sponsorships: Shaping Formula One's Identity

The evolution of Formula One's sponsorship landscape reflects broader trends towards commercialisation and globalisation within the sport. Historically, Formula One teams relied primarily on a few key sponsors, often automotive or technology companies with direct ties to the industry<sup>244</sup>. However, as the sport has become increasingly commercialised and globalised, the sponsorship landscape has undergone significant transformation<sup>245</sup>. In 2023 the sport surpassed the milestone of over 300 corporate sponsors over half of which are American<sup>246</sup>. One notable change is the visible densification and cluttering of sponsorship branding on Formula One cars and driver uniforms. Indeed, today sponsors are prominently featured on every available surface of the car, creating a mobile billboard effect. Similarly, drivers' uniforms have evolved into highly visible platforms for sponsor branding, with logos



and insignias from a diverse array of companies adorning much of fabric<sup>247</sup>.<sup>248</sup>

McLaren (2024). *MCL 38 presentation*. mclaren.com

<sup>243</sup> Bustad, J. J., & Andrews, D. L. (2023). The circus comes to town: Formula 1, globalisation, and the uber-sport spectacle. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 595-617). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>244</sup> Dewhirst, T., & Lee, W. B. (2023). The Shifting Landscape of Sponsorship Within Formula 1. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 413-441). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid

<sup>246</sup> Interview: How F1 sponsorship reflects the changing face of the audience. Retrieved 4 May 2024 (2023, December 15).

<https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/interview-how-f1-sponsorship-reflects-the-changing-face-of-the-audience/10558025/>

<sup>247</sup> Chadwick, S., Widdop, P., & Burton, N. (2022). Soft power sports sponsorship—A social network analysis of a new sponsorship form. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 21(2), 196-217.

<sup>248</sup> Image: McLaren formula 1 team. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.mclaren.com/racing/formula-1/>

This proliferation of sponsorship branding reflects the competition for visibility and exposure in an increasingly crowded marketplace. With Formula One's global reach and massive audience, sponsors recognise the value of associating their brands with the sport and its star drivers. As a result, teams and drivers are able to secure lucrative sponsorship deals with a wide range of companies, spanning industries such as automotive, hospitality, fashion, consumer goods, and more<sup>249</sup>. For example, the uniform of seven-time Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton serves as a testament to the extensive network of sponsors involved in the sport. From Petronas and Mercedes-Benz to Puma, Tommy Hilfiger, and Monster Energy, Hamilton's uniform is adorned with logos from a diverse roster of names. This collection of high-profile sponsors not only provides financial support to teams and drivers but also contributes to the spectacle and commercial appeal of Formula One as a global sporting phenomenon<sup>250 251</sup>.

MercedesamgF1. (2023). *Here's that Lewis content you ordered.* Instagram.com



For brands seeking to establish a broad association with Formula One, global partnerships offer a comprehensive way to align with the sport's overarching brand identity. These partnerships often involve prominent branding across various Formula One properties, including race circuits, broadcast coverage, and digital platforms. By becoming a global partner of Formula One, brands leverage the sport's international appeal and prestige to enhance their own global visibility and reputation<sup>252</sup>.

Alternatively, brands may opt for more targeted sponsorships with specific Formula One teams. These partnerships allow companies to align their brand with a particular team's identity, performance, and fan base. Team sponsorships offer opportunities for prominent branding on race cars, driver uniforms, and team facilities, as well as exclusive access to team events and hospitality experiences. By partnering with a specific team, brands can cultivate deeper connections with fans and capitalize on the unique attributes and characteristics of that

---

<sup>249</sup> Jensen, J. A., Cobbs, J. B., Albano, B., & Tyler, B. D. (2021). Analyzing price premiums in international sponsorship exchange: What drives marketing costs in formula one racing?. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 61(1), 44-57.

<sup>250</sup> Jensen, J.A., & Cobbs, J. Analyzing return-on-investment in sponsorship: Modeling brand exposure, price and ROI in Formula One racing. *Journal of Advertising Research*, (2014). . Available at: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2322589>

<sup>251</sup> Image: Instagram. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from [https://www.instagram.com/p/CaXWB3YtL\\_R/?utm\\_medium=share\\_sheet&epik=dj0yJnU9ZVp4TEZtTk83S1](https://www.instagram.com/p/CaXWB3YtL_R/?utm_medium=share_sheet&epik=dj0yJnU9ZVp4TEZtTk83S1)

<sup>252</sup> Dewhirst, T., & Lee, W. B. (2023). *The Shifting Landscape of Sponsorship Within Formula 1*. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 413-441). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

team's brand. However, in this new age of commercialisation, brands must be wary of how they present themselves. As fans and sport fandoms have considerably more power than before, understanding and catering to them has become increasingly important<sup>253</sup>. Indeed, this was exemplified by the sponsorship of Mercedes by Kingspan. This partnership was highly criticised due to the role Kingspan insulation played in the tragedy of the Grenfell tower fire. Fans immediately shared their displeasure, writing letters to relevant authorities. A week later, the partnership was terminated<sup>254</sup>. This era has been characterised by a high level of consumption by fans as an expression of their love and support. If a sponsor gets it right, they can reap substantial benefits<sup>255</sup>.

One of the key attractions of sponsoring Formula One is the sport's extensive calendar of events and year-round engagement opportunities. With a racing season that spans well over nine months and includes races on multiple continents, Formula One provides sponsors with numerous opportunities to activate their partnerships and engage with fans around the world. From race weekends and fan festivals to promotional events and digital campaigns, sponsors have ample opportunities to showcase their brand and connect with Formula One's global audience<sup>256</sup>.

The influence of brands in Formula One is pervasive, recently extending to the very names of the teams themselves. Currently, the majority of Formula One teams include brand names as part of their official team titles, underscoring the deep integration of sponsorship and branding within the sport. Examples include **Oracle** Red Bull Racing, Mercedes-**AMG PETRONAS** Formula One Team, and **MoneyGram** Haas F1, among others<sup>257</sup>.

An example highlighting the significant role of brands in Formula One is Ferrari's sponsorship deal with HP, leading to a modification of the team name to Scuderia Ferrari HP. This change, announced on the 24th of April 2024, carries substantial weight considering Ferrari's storied history, strong identity, and pride in its heritage. Ferrari is renowned for maintaining a consistent aesthetic and identity across its cars and branding, emphasizing continuity and tradition<sup>258</sup>. Thus, the inclusion of the HP brand name in the team title signifies

---

<sup>253</sup> Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).

<sup>254</sup> Mercedes and Kingspan agree to end F1 deal with immediate effect. (2021, December 8) Retrieved 2 May 2024. <https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/mercedes-kingspan-terminate-f1-sponsorship-deal/6863376/>

<sup>255</sup> Ibid

<sup>256</sup> Kretchmer, S. B. "Advertainment: The Evolution of Product Placement as a Mass Media Marketing Strategy." *Journal of Promotion Management*, 2004, 10, 37–54.

<sup>257</sup> F1—The official home of formula 1® racing. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en.html>

<sup>258</sup> Essere Ferrari: Why does the Scuderia inspire passion in racing fans like no other team? | Formula 1®. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/essere-ferrari-why-does-the-scuderia-inspire-passion-in-racing-fans-l-ike-no.47Kr88abvjZ5EiitqSdHIY>

the considerable influence that brands wield in shaping the identity and representation of Formula One teams.

Indeed, this evolution of team names in Formula One reflects a broader concern regarding the delicate balance between entertainment and the essence of the sport. With the emergence of branded team names such as **Visa Cash App RB** and **Stake F1 Team Kick Sauber**, there is apprehension among fans and enthusiasts that the sport is being uprooted from its traditional roots. Historically significant team names like Alfa Romeo and Ferrari carry with them a rich legacy and heritage deeply intertwined with the sport's history. As these iconic names are gradually overshadowed by corporate branding, it indicates a broader shift toward commercialisation and the prioritisation of corporate interests over the sport's intrinsic values<sup>259</sup>. While sponsorship deals and brand partnerships are integral to the financial sustainability of Formula One teams, there is a fine line between embracing commercial opportunities and preserving the sport's heritage. The concern is that an overemphasis on commercialisation may detract from the essence of Formula One, leading to a loss of authenticity and identity that could prove challenging to reverse.<sup>260</sup>

VisacashappRB. (2024).  
*Old (bottom) and New  
(top) car.*  
visacashapprb.com



## B. Host Countries: The Influence of Race Locations on Formula One

In examining the global dynamics of Formula One, it is imperative to acknowledge the considerable influence wielded by host countries on the sport. While Formula One undoubtedly brings substantial economic advantages to host nations, the reciprocal relationship between the sport and its hosts extends beyond mere financial transactions<sup>261</sup>. Host countries, particularly those with significant financial resources, possess the leverage to negotiate favorable terms with Formula One Management (FOM) regarding their placement within the race calendar. This strategic positioning allows them to maximise the exposure and

<sup>259</sup> Dewhirst, T., & Lee, W. B. (2023). The Shifting Landscape of Sponsorship Within Formula 1. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 413-441). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>260</sup> Image: Visa cash app rb formula one team. (2024, January 18). <https://www.visacashapprb.com/en/>

<sup>261</sup> Mourão, P. (2017). The political economy of formula one. In P. Mourão (Ed.), *The Economics of Motorsports: The Case of Formula One* (pp. 239-269). Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-60249-7\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-60249-7_7)

appeal of their events, thereby attracting larger audiences, heightened media coverage, and potential sponsors<sup>262</sup>.

Furthermore, host countries retain the authority to impose regulatory constraints on Formula One events held within their jurisdictions. These regulations may encompass restrictions on advertising and sponsorship, particularly concerning industries such as alcohol and tobacco. Consequently, certain sponsors may face limitations on their visibility or even outright bans on their logos at race circuits<sup>263</sup>. This dynamic is evident in the fluctuating livery of teams like Stake F1, who are required to alter their branding throughout the season to comply with varying national regulations. Stake is an online casino, there are a few countries on the calendar this season that ban gambling. The 2024 season is anticipated to witness Stake F1 adopting a full "Kick" livery in certain races to adhere to these legal requirements while continuing to generate revenue from advertising partnerships<sup>264</sup>.

Stake F1 team (2024).  
*Racing action.*  
Instagram.com



The inclusion of races in regions known for oil production, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, on the Formula One season calendar has drawn increasing attention and scrutiny, particularly regarding the phenomenon of "sportswashing". This term refers to the practice whereby countries with controversial human rights records or political agendas seek to enhance their reputation and divert attention from internal issues through the hosting of major sports events<sup>266</sup>. These events, often televised internationally and attracting significant media coverage, offer a platform for governments to showcase their countries in a positive light, promoting images of modernity, progress, and international engagement. The term gained prominence in the early 21st century as authoritarian regimes and countries facing criticism over their human rights practices increasingly sought to use sports events as vehicles for public relations and image-building efforts. Examples include the 2022 Qatar World Cup, and the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, hosted by Russia. In both cases, the hosting countries faced accusations of human rights violations and suppression of dissent, yet sought to portray

<sup>262</sup> Friedman, M., & Wallace, B. (2023). Circuits of Capital: The Spatial Development of Formula One Racetracks. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 619-640). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

<sup>263</sup> Storm, R. K., Jakobsen, T. G., & Nielsen, C. G. (2020). The impact of Formula 1 on regional economies in Europe. *Regional studies*, 54(6), 827-837.

<sup>264</sup> Sauber won't use Stake name at every F1 race. Retrieved 7th May 2024 (2024, February 6). <https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/sauber-wont-use-stake-name-every-f1-race/10572928/>

<sup>265</sup> Image: Instagram. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from [https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fstakef1team%2F&is\\_from\\_rle](https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fstakef1team%2F&is_from_rle)

<sup>266</sup> Sturm, D. (2023). Processes of Greenwashing, Sportwashing and Virtue Signalling in Contemporary Formula One: Formula Façade? In H. Naess & S. Chadwick (Eds.), *The Future of Motorsports: Business, Politics and Society* (pp. 167–182). Routledge.

themselves as modern, progressive nations through their hosting of major international sporting events<sup>267</sup>.

F1 driver Hamilton has been vocal about the sport's responsibility to address human rights issues and raise awareness during events in countries with such concerns. His comments during a press conference at the Jeddah Grand Prix in 2023 emphasised the need for Formula One to leverage its platform to make a positive impact. *“I still feel that, as a sport going to places with human rights issues such as this one, the sport is duty bound to raise awareness and try to leave a positive impact. And I feel like it needs to do more. What that is, I don't have all the answers. But I think we always need to do more to raise awareness for things that people are struggling with.”*<sup>268</sup>

Hamilton's advocacy extends beyond verbal statements; he has demonstrated his commitment to social issues by using his public platform creatively. For instance, in countries where LGBTQIA+ rights are restricted, Hamilton has worn a special rainbow-themed helmet as a form of protest. However, it is worth noting that Formula One's regulations now prohibit drivers from making political, religious, or personal remarks without prior approval, limiting what drivers are allowed to do<sup>269</sup>. This policy was implemented following instances where Hamilton and others, like Sebastian Vettel, used their attire to advocate for change.<sup>270</sup>

Screenshot. (2024). 2021 Qatar GP. fltv.formula.1.com



Mercedes AMG petronas. (2020). *Say her name*. Facebook.com



Isakovic, A. (2020). *Taking the knee*. Instagram.com



<sup>267</sup> Chadwick, S. (2023). Formula 1 in the Gulf Region: The Fast and the Furious. In *The Future of Motorsports* (pp. 13-23). Routledge.

<sup>268</sup> Fia thursday press conference—2023 saudi arabia grand prix | formula 1®. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 19 April 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/fia-thursday-press-conference-saudi-arabia.idgA3rohAKN8G6Hyyd1Lh>

<sup>269</sup> Appendix 17.1 . Driver declarations and Undertakings. Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/site-search>

<sup>270</sup> Image: Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://fltv.formula1.com>

Log in or sign up to view. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.facebook.com/login/>

Instagram. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2F>

Shortly after this regulation was introduced Sebastian Vettel wore a T-shirt with a message about the potential impact of climate change on Miami at the inaugural Miami Grand Prix. When questioned if his attire constituted a political statement, Vettel clarified that it was a message of concern about the environmental future of Miami, a sentiment he deemed as deeply human rather than political. While this statement is true it is also a way to circumvent these regulations. He expressed his unease about the juxtaposition of festivities in Miami with the stark reality of climate change, Vettel highlighting the disconnect between the celebratory atmosphere and the impending environmental challenges facing the city. Despite acknowledging the excitement surrounding the race, Vettel emphasised the importance of acknowledging uncomfortable truths and advocating for meaningful action to combat climate change<sup>271, 272</sup>. Vettel's remarks underscored a perceived gap between Formula One's commitment to positive advocacy, including environmental initiatives, and the perceived inadequacy of its efforts in addressing climate change. His and Hamilton's actions underscore the tension between individual expression and the regulations imposed by Formula One. While drivers may feel compelled to speak out on social issues, they are constrained by the sport's rules. These rules were said to be created so that all fans may enjoy Formula One and not be “subjected” to campaigns. It is worth noting that Formula One has been criticised for its lack of activism and dedication to creating change<sup>273</sup>.

Illman, K. (2022). *Miami 2060, 1st grand prix under water, act now or swim later.* kymillman.com



The incident during the Jeddah Grand Prix in 2022 shed light on another important aspect of the relationship between Formula One races and the influence of host countries, prompting concerns among fans regarding the prioritisation of commercial interests over safety. An attack on an Aramco oil depot near Jeddah, just kilometers away from the circuit, raised serious safety concerns among drivers, teams, and Formula One officials<sup>274</sup>. During practice sessions the emergence of black smoke heightened apprehensions about the feasibility of continuing the event in such circumstances. Despite the alarming situation, the

<sup>271</sup> Mee, L. (2023, April 14). Sebastian vettel warned of miami floods ahead of first race as circuit sits underwater. Retrieved 10 April 2024 F1 Briefings: Formula 1 News, Rumors, Standings and More. <https://www.si.com/fannation/racing/f1briefings/news/sebastian-vettel-warned-of-miami-floods-ahead-of-first-race-as-circuit-sits-underwater-lm22>

<sup>272</sup> Image: Kym illman—Youtuber | f1 photographer. (n.d.). Kym Illman. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.kymillman.com/>

<sup>273</sup> Lights out: How formula one enables human rights violations in the middle east. Retrieved 15 April 2024 (2022, November 17). Towson University Journal of International Affairs. <https://wp.towson.edu/iajournal/2022/11/16/lights-out-how-formula-one-enables-human-rights-violations-in-the-middle-east/>

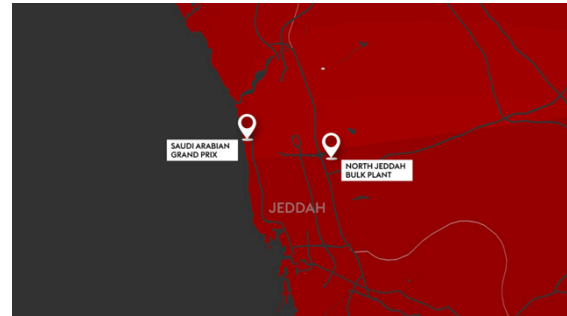
<sup>274</sup> Saudi Arabian Grand Prix will go ahead after missile attack. Retrieved 19 April 2024 (2022, March 25). BBC Sport. <https://www.bbc.com/sport/formula1/60880598>



organisers decided to proceed with the race as planned. However, an emergency meeting was called between the drivers, team principals, and Formula One CEO Stefano Domenicali<sup>275</sup>. The Grand Prix Drivers' Association went on to hold an additional meeting between

Morlidge, M. (2022) *Distance from the circuit*. Skysports.com

just the drivers that continued until 2:30 am local time.<sup>276</sup> They went on to release the statement “Yesterday was a difficult day for Formula One and a stressful day for us Formula One drivers. Perhaps it is hard to comprehend if you have never driven an F1 car on this fast and challenging Jeddah track, but on seeing the



smoke from the incident it was difficult to remain a fully focused race driver and erase natural human concerns. Consequently we went into long discussions between ourselves, with our team principals, and with the most senior people who run our sport. A large variety of opinions were shared and debated and, having listened not only to the Formula 1 powers but also to the Saudi government ministers who explained how security measures were being elevated to the maximum, the outcome was a resolution that we would practice and qualify today and race tomorrow.<sup>277</sup>”

Amidst these deliberations, rumors regarding potential consequences for drivers if they refused to race were spread and treated seriously by reporters such as the BBC and SkySports. Speculations included the possibility of being denied exit visas to leave the country, adding a layer of complexity and pressure to an already tense situation<sup>278</sup>. Ultimately, the drivers were persuaded to participate in the race, although the decision came after prolonged discussions and negotiations. The incident underscored the delicate balance between safety considerations and commercial interests in Formula One, raising questions about the extent of influence wielded by host countries and the owners of Formula One in determining the fate of races. This highlighted the risk of more compromises being made to ensure the continuity of events, highlighting the need for greater transparency and accountability in such matters<sup>279</sup>.

<sup>275</sup> Richards, G. (2022, March 26). Saudi Arabian Grand Prix to go ahead as planned despite Houthi missile attack. Retrieved 19 April 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/mar/25/saudi-arabian-grand-prix-at-risk-of-cancellation-after-houthi-missile-attack>

<sup>276</sup> Image: Saudi Arabian Grand Prix to continue as planned after attack at oil depot near Jeddah circuit. (n.d.). Sky Sports. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12040/12574973/>

<sup>277</sup> Saudi Arabian GP: F1 drivers back event to continue despite concerns after attack at Jeddah oil depot. (n.d.). Sky Sports. Retrieved 19 April 2024, from <https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12433/12575340/saudi-arabian-gp-f1-drivers-back-event-to-continue-despite-concerns-after-attack-at-jeddah-oil-depot>

<sup>278</sup> Ibid

<sup>279</sup> Friedman, M., & Wallace, B. (2023). Circuits of Capital: The Spatial Development of Formula One Racetracks. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 619-640). Cham: Springer International Publishing

Unknown. (2023). *Jeddah pre race conference*. Motorsportimages.com



When asked their thoughts the following year drivers gave mixed opinions, Kevin Magnussen stated during the press conference that “*Yeah, last year was pretty ‘special’, I would call it. None of us enjoyed it but I think we... it is a different situation now, there’s a different political... there’s a ceasefire between the two parties that were involved last year and I think that gives some confidence. I think anyway from my part there’s not much to do. We go to these places and we just have to deal with it the best we can*”.

Esteban Ocon added, “*Obviously we trust FOM and the organisation to keep us safe. Obviously, it was scary what happened last year. None of us wants to ever experience something like that. But, we trust everyone around to put us in a safe situation to race.*” When prompted for his thoughts, Hamilton, who is known for speaking up about various issues simply said, “*Not much really to add. All the opposite to everything they said* » He did not elaborate on exactly what he meant, saying he preferred not to get into it, simply adding, “*So, hopefully everyone has a safe weekend and hopefully everyone gets home safe afterwards. That’s as much as we can do, right?*”<sup>280</sup> <sup>281</sup>

These situations prompt discussions regarding the extent of influence host countries wield over Formula One and the limitations imposed on drivers' freedom of expression. The banning of certain statements to avoid offending host countries and big sponsors raises concerns about the sport's direction and the implications of such restrictions. While Formula One may justify these actions as a matter of protocol, fans perceive them as indicators of the sport's increasing alignment with certain interests, potentially at the expense of safety<sup>282</sup>.

Although no major incidents occurred at the Jeddah Grand Prix, it served as a troubling example to many fans of the prevailing ethos that "the show must go on." Similar concerns arose during the Las Vegas Grand Prix following drain cover incidents, where questions about track safety persisted despite the race proceeding. Likewise, at the Japanese Grand Prix, the presence of a tractor on the track during a yellow flag raised alarms about driver safety. While these incidents may not directly result from host country decisions, fans

<sup>280</sup>F1—2023 saudi arabian grand prix—Thursday press conference transcript. Retrieved 19th April 2024 (2023, March 16). Federation Internationale de l’Automobile.

<https://www.fia.com/news/f1-2023-saudi-arabian-grand-prix-thursday-press-conference-transcript>

<sup>281</sup> Image: Images. (n.d.). Motorsportimages.Com. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from [https://www.motorsportimages.com/photos/?race\\_type\\_id=&search=jeddah+2023](https://www.motorsportimages.com/photos/?race_type_id=&search=jeddah+2023)

<sup>282</sup> Mourão, P. (2017). The political economy of formula one. In P. Mourão (Ed.), *The Economics of Motorsports: The Case of Formula One* (pp. 239–269). Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-60249-7\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-60249-7_7)

observe them with growing apprehension, fearing the potential consequences of prioritizing spectacle over safety or integrity in Formula One.

### C. The importance of Fan Retention: Objectives and Implications in Formula One's Evolution

The 2021 global survey underscores a significant aspect of fan engagement in Formula One, revealing that while three-quarters of fans reside in countries hosting Grand Prix events, fewer than 20% have attended races within the past five years<sup>283</sup>. The shift in Formula One's commercial strategies under Liberty Media has profound implications for fan retention. As the sport endeavors to broaden its audience and attract casual and younger viewers, it confronts the challenge of balancing the preservation of its traditional identity with the pursuit of new fan engagement. Fan retention stands as a paramount concern for Liberty Media, recognizing that without a dedicated fan base, the vitality of the sport is compromised<sup>284</sup>. Research indicates that fan retention hinges on cultivating a profound sense of belonging and significance among supporters. Fans must perceive themselves as integral contributors to the sport, their presence acknowledged and valued by the governing entities. Equally crucial is ensuring that fans continue to derive enjoyment from the sport, thereby sustaining their engagement over time<sup>285</sup>.

Sport fans represent a culturally diverse and globally dispersed audience, exhibiting unique consumer behaviors and preferences. Their unwavering commitment to their favorite teams or drivers is unparalleled in comparison to other industries. While other industries face challenges such as declining brand loyalty in various sectors, sports enthusiasts demonstrate remarkable loyalty and devotion, even towards teams with a history of underperformance<sup>286</sup>. However, it is crucial to recognise that sport consumers encompass a spectrum of values, attitudes, and behaviors. Not all fans exhibit the same level of passion or fanaticism, nor are they uniformly loyal to historical traditions. Some individuals attend sporting events regularly, while others participate only on special occasions. Similarly, fan engagement varies, with some preferring in-person experiences while others opt for digital platforms or television broadcasts<sup>287</sup>.

---

<sup>283</sup> Bradley, C. (2021). Formula 1 in 2021 Global fan insight into the world's largest annual sporting series Retrieved 7 April 2024(2005-2021) (Global Fan Survey, p. 58). Motorsport Network. <https://cdn-1.motorsport.com/survey/2021/2021-f1-global-fan-survey-motorsportnetwork.pdf>

<sup>284</sup> Milne, G.R., McDonald, M.A., Sutton, W.A., & Kashyap, R. (1996). A niche-based evaluation of sport participation patterns. *Journal of Sport Management*, 10, 417–434.

<sup>285</sup> Gray, G. T., & Wert-Gray, S. (2012). Customer retention in sports organisation marketing: examining the impact of team identification and satisfaction with team performance. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 36(3), 275-281.

<sup>286</sup> Pegoraro, A. (2013). Sport fandom in the digital world. In *Routledge handbook of sport communication* (pp. 248-258). Routledge.

<sup>287</sup> Kolbe, R. H., & James, J. D. (2000). An identification and examination of influences that shape the creation of a professional team fan. *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, 2(1), 23-38.

Recognizing the paramount importance of these factors, Liberty Media will want to tailor its strategies accordingly. By prioritizing initiatives that foster a sense of community and inclusivity within the Formula One ecosystem, Liberty Media seeks to fortify the bond between fans and the sport. Moreover, by actively soliciting and incorporating fan feedback, the organisation endeavors to ensure that the fan experience remains enriching and fulfilling.

Sports consumers, in particular, form deep psychological connections with specific teams, demonstrating persistent and resistant emotional ties. Consumers often perceive themselves as part of the team, indicating a strong psychological commitment<sup>288</sup>. Fans exhibit behaviors characteristic of loyal consumers, including repeat purchase or patronage and a steadfast insistence on maintaining their relationship with brands or products. Self-identified fans often point to their consistent consumption patterns as evidence of their fandom. In essence, fandom is defined by both repeated consumption and a deep emotional bond with the objects of fanaticism, mirroring typical consumer loyalty behavior<sup>289</sup>. They play a crucial role in the success of sports organisations, as larger fan bases attract sponsors. Furthermore, through this consumption based legitimacy sports gain financial investment, showing that fan retention and engagement should be a priority. Fans represent the demand nodes in this ecosystem, and variations in demand based on spectator characteristics are well recognised<sup>290</sup>. Liberty Media are well aware of this, and have been successful in expanding the sport's demographic and attracting both more fans and more sponsors.

The transition towards appealing to a wider demographic risks making longer term fans who have been drawn to Formula One for its rich history and technical intricacies feel alienated. Fan retention concerns extend to fears that Liberty Media may prioritise the globalisation of Formula One and the acquisition of new fans over the preservation of the sport's intrinsic essence. Instances such as the Last Vegas Grand Prix, characterised by exorbitantly priced tickets and extravagant events akin to mega-spectacles, have fueled apprehensions. The phenomenon of "Superbowlification" observed at such events prompts concerns that similar trends may permeate other Grand Prix races, or lead to the cancellation of traditional races in favor of locations offering higher financial incentives<sup>291</sup>.

These apprehensions all come back to the perception that Formula One's emphasis on commercialisation and entertainment may eclipse its core identity as a motorsport rooted in tradition and competition. Fans worry that the allure of lucrative deals with host countries and

---

<sup>288</sup> Trail, G. T., & James, J. D. (2001). The motivation scale for sport consumption: Assessment of the scale's psychometric properties. *Journal of sport behavior*, 24(1).

<sup>289</sup> Ibid

<sup>290</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>

<sup>291</sup> All GP contracts | This is how long GP's will stay in F1. Retrieved 4 May 2024 (2024, May 11). *RacingNews365*. <https://racingnews365.com/f1-gp-contracts>

the prospect of catering to affluent audiences could jeopardise Formula One's authenticity and integrity. With Liberty Media stating their dedication to the US expansion and the arrival of the events that were the Las Vegas and Miami Grand Prix, fans have raised concerns about the sport's fidelity to its roots and the values cherished by its longstanding fan base. Liberty Media is acutely cognisant of the delicate balance required in navigating the evolution of Formula One, as reflected in the earlier statement about treading the line between innovation and tradition. Inherent in this approach is a conscientious effort to make decisions that resonate with the broadest possible audience while preserving the sport's rich legacy<sup>292</sup>.

The challenge lies in striking a balance that accommodates the interests of both longstanding enthusiasts and new followers. Maintaining this delicate balance is paramount for Formula One's enduring prosperity. It entails implementing strategies that not only attract fresh viewership but also cultivate a steadfast commitment from existing fans. Ultimately, by remaining attuned to the evolving preferences of its diverse fan base while honoring its foundational principles, Formula One can ensure its enduring appeal and longevity in the ever-evolving landscape of global motorsport<sup>293</sup>.

The apprehensions surrounding the dramatisation and commercialisation of Formula One prompt questions about the validity of these concerns. Some fans posit that Liberty Media's emphasis on spectacle and entertainment is driven by a desire to attract and appease newer audiences at the cost of existing ones. Indeed, numerous studies in the field of sport fandom have highlighted that fans are motivated by diverse factors. Various typologies of fan attendance exist in academic literature, many of which rely on levels of spectatorship for classification. Terms such as "theatre-goers," "fair-weather fans," and "hardcore fans" denote different levels of attendance status and commitment to the sport or team. Typically, "theatre-goers" and "fair-weather fans" demonstrate temporal and situational involvement with their team or sport, while "hardcore fans" exhibit enduring commitment. In this situation, fans that identify themselves as "hardcore" worry that Liberty Media will prioritise "theatre-goers" and "fair-weather fans" who do not represent the same long term engagement they do<sup>294</sup>.

However, given Liberty Media's commitment to data analysis and understanding fan preferences, it is plausible to assume that they are cognisant of the desires of the majority of fans. In this scenario, the worry arises from the possibility that the majority of fans indeed

---

<sup>292</sup>Jones, C. W., Byon, K. K., & Huang, H. (2019). Service quality, perceived value, and fan engagement: Case of Shanghai Formula One racing. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 28(2), 63-76.

<sup>293</sup>Kim, S. K., Byon, K. K., Yu, J. G., Zhang, J. J., & Kim, C. (2013). Social motivations and consumption behavior of spectators attending a Formula One motor-racing event. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 41(8), 1359-1377.

<sup>294</sup>Giulianotti, R. (2002). Supporters, followers, fans, and flaneurs: A taxonomy of spectator identities in football. *Journal of sport and social issues*, 26(1), 25-46

prioritise spectacle over the essence of the sport. However, it is important to note that Liberty Media has also expressed intentions to preserve the core identity of Formula One.

As Formula One increasingly prioritises entertainment value and mainstream appeal, there is evidence that the authenticity and integrity integral to the sport's identity may be diluted. The apprehensions voiced by fans are not unfounded, as evidenced by past incidents and evolving perceptions of Formula One's commercialisation and commodification. These concerns range from perceptions of artificiality and superficiality to more substantive worries regarding safety standards. Such sentiments underscore the importance of Formula One maintaining its unique identity and ethos, rather than succumbing to becoming merely another spectacle devoid of its sporting essence<sup>295</sup>. Thus, the crux of the issue lies in whether Liberty Media can effectively balance their objectives for the sport and the objectives fans want for the sport all while maintaining the integrity and authenticity of Formula One<sup>296</sup>.

---

<sup>295</sup> Bodet G., Bernache-Assollant I. (2011). Consumer loyalty in sport spectatorship services: The relationships with consumer satisfaction and team identification. *Psychology and Marketing*, 28(8), 781–802. <https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1002/mar.20412>

<sup>296</sup> Brown, K. A., Billings, A. C., Murphy, B., & Puesan, L. (2018). Intersections of fandom in the age of interactive media: eSports fandom as a predictor of traditional sport fandom. *Communication & Sport*, 6(4), 418-435

# Chapter 3: Formula One's Changing Fanbase: Exploring the Influx of New Faces

## I. Deciphering the Formula One Fandom: Understanding its Composition

### A. Who makes up the Formula One Fanbase: Methods for Identification and Analysis

The term "fan," derived from the word "fanatic," has become a major part of today's culture. It has evolved to encompass a broad spectrum of meanings, often referring to individuals displaying excessive enthusiasm or devotion towards a particular subject or interest<sup>297</sup>. However, the term "fan" can also carry negative connotations, implying irrationality, fanaticism, or even madness. It may be associated with behaviors deemed excessive or irrational, reflecting a deep-seated obsession or preoccupation with a particular interest. Overall, the term "fan" encapsulates a complex range of meanings, reflecting both positive and negative attributes associated with enthusiastic devotion and dedication to a subject or interest<sup>298</sup>.

Nowadays, a fan is typically portrayed as an individual who is deeply passionate about a particular team, celebrity, show, brand, or similar entity. The concept of fandom is considered as a product of specific social and cultural interactions, institutions, and communities formed through the close interaction of dedicated groups of fans within a subcultural context<sup>299</sup>. Sport fandom, in particular, has been shown to have positive effects on psychological well-being and quality of life. Studies suggest that identifying with sport teams can provide individuals with a sense of belonging and social connection, potentially filling the void left by declining traditional social ties such as religion and family. Indeed, the social connections fostered through sport identification may have beneficial effects on psychological health by serving as a buffer against depression and feelings of alienation, while also boosting self-esteem<sup>300</sup>. Which explains the higher levels of loyalty and willingness to invest in their sport.

Liberty Media launched strategies to obtain a different demographic of fans. Identifying Formula One fans can be complex, but self-identification plays a crucial role in understanding fan demographics and preferences. While traditional metrics like viewership

---

<sup>297</sup>Murray, J. (2019). Fan Identification in Professional Sport. *Sport Management Undergraduate*, 1–21. [https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/sport\\_undergrad/156/](https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/sport_undergrad/156/)

<sup>298</sup>Samra, B., & Wos, A. (2014). Consumer in Sports: Fan typology analysis. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 6(4–1), 263–288. <https://doi.org/10.2478/joim-2014-0050>

<sup>299</sup>Crawford, G. (2004). *Sport fan communities*. In *Consuming Sport*. Routledge

<sup>300</sup>Duffett, M. (2013). The fan community: Online and offline. In *Understanding fandom: An introduction to the study of media fan culture*. (pp.235-355). Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

statistics provide valuable insights, they may not capture the full picture of fan engagement. For example, knowing how many televisions were tuned into a race does not reveal who specifically watched or how many individuals were involved. In light of this challenge, self-identification becomes essential. The 2021 F1 Global Fan Survey offers valuable insights into Formula One fandom. Conducted over a 30-day period from September 8th to October 7th, 2021, the survey garnered 167,302 viable responses, providing a robust dataset for analysis<sup>301</sup>. Indeed, using this survey we can analyse how successful Liberty Media was in the strategy. The survey received responses from fans in 187 countries worldwide, showcasing a broad international reach. While European fans traditionally dominated previous studies, comprising over 70% of responses, the 2021 survey marked a significant shift. European fan responses accounted for 57% of the overall sample, the lowest level ever recorded, indicating a more diverse participant pool. Notably, there was a notable increase in responses from the Asia-Pacific, Africa, and the Middle East regions, which collectively contributed 21% of the total response, doubling from the 2017 survey, indicating the success Liberty Media have had in their pursuit of global audiences. In terms of gender representation, the 2021 survey witnessed a remarkable surge in female participation, with over 30,000 female respondents, constituting 18.3% of the total sample—a substantial increase from previous studies. The Middle East and Africa regions demonstrated the highest female response rates, with one in four respondents being female. Additionally, the 2021 study attracted the youngest age profile of respondents on record, with over a third of respondents aged 16-24, compared to 26% in 2017. The average age of respondents was 32 years, with 62.9% falling within the 16-34 age range, reflecting Formula One's appeal to younger demographics.

Previous studies conducted since 2005 consistently indicated a high percentage of long-standing Formula One fans, with over 85% of the sample having followed F1 for at least six years. This trend prompted Formula One's efforts to attract a new audience. However, the 2021 Global Fan Study revealed a significant shift in this pattern, with a notable increase in the percentage of participants who had been following F1 for five years or fewer. This percentage tripled from 11.7% in 2017 to 34% in 2021, signaling a substantial influx of new fans into the Formula One community.

The 2021 Global Fan Survey provides valuable insights into the profile of Formula One fans, highlighting the success of Liberty Media's strategies in attracting a more diverse and younger audience. The survey indicates a noticeable increase in both female fans and younger viewers, suggesting Formula One's growing appeal across demographics. While it is challenging to obtain a completely accurate representation of every Formula One viewer, observations from race weekends support the survey findings, with diverse audiences attending the races, affirming the accuracy of the survey's conclusions.

---

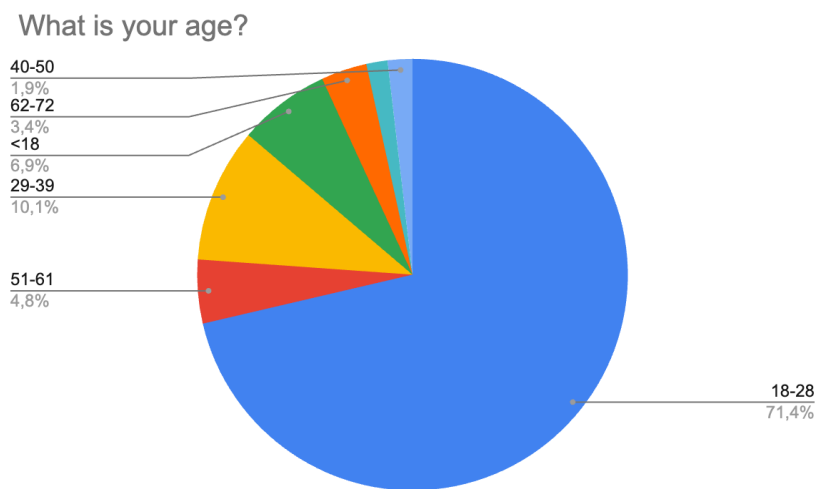
<sup>301</sup>Bradley, C. (2021). Formula 1 in 2021 Global fan insight into the world's largest annual sporting series Retrieved 7 April 2024(2005-2021) (Global Fan Survey, p. 58). Motorsport Network. <https://cdn-1.motorsport.com/survey/2021/2021-f1-global-fan-survey-motorsportnetwork.pdf>



## B. Survey Demographics vs. Fandom Reality: Assessing Representativeness and Discrepancies

In evaluating the demographic representation of Formula One fans in the survey we conducted, notable deviations from the expected distribution emerged. Particularly striking was the overrepresentation of younger individuals, constituting a significant majority of respondents. Among the 474 participants surveyed, a noteworthy 71.4% fell within the age range of 18 to 28. Furthermore, 6.9% of respondents were below the age of 18, indicating a notable presence of adolescent fans. In contrast, the distribution tapered off among older age brackets. For instance, respondents aged 29 to 39 comprised

**Figure 6:** Age distribution



the next largest segment at 10.1%. However, the survey exhibited limited outreach to older demographics, with only 1% of respondents aged 73 and above, and a marginal 1.9% falling within the 40 to 50 age bracket. Similarly, respondents aged 51 to 61 accounted for 4.8%, while those aged 62 to

72 constituted 3.4% of the sample. Collectively, these figures underscore the dominance of younger respondents, with a striking 88.4% of participants falling below the age of 39.

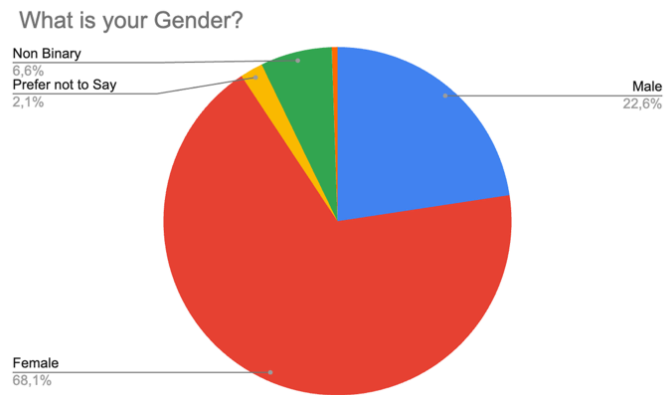
The prevalence of younger respondents in the survey can be attributed to its dissemination primarily through social media platforms. Out of the 474 respondents, a significant portion—241 individuals—identified themselves as students. Given the widespread usage of social media among younger demographics, it is understandable that the survey predominantly captured the attention of this age group. Consequently, reaching older demographics proved to be more challenging due to their comparatively lower presence on these platforms. Moreover, the survey requested participants to disclose their occupation, resulting in a diverse array of responses. To streamline the analysis, they were categorised according to definitions provided by National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE)<sup>302</sup>. Among the categorised respondents, approximately 134 individuals identified as employees, while 8 were classified as senior executives and 2 as industry and commercial

<sup>302</sup> Pcs2020-6-ouvriers / ouvrières | insee. (n.d.). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.insee.fr/fr/metadonnees/pcs2020/groupeSocioprofessionnel/6?champRecherche=true>

executives. Additionally, 58 respondents fitted into a category incorporating service personnel.

When examining the gender distribution within the survey sample, a noteworthy departure from conventional expectations emerged. Surprisingly, a significant majority of respondents identified as female, constituting 68.1% of the 474 responses. This stark contrast not only diverged from the typical demographic profile of Formula One fans but also deviated from broader global survey trends. Conversely, male respondents accounted for only 22.6% of the sample, indicating a substantial underrepresentation compared to traditional perceptions of Formula One fandom.

Figure 7: Gender distribution



Furthermore, 2.1% of participants chose not to disclose their gender, while 6.6% identified as non-binary—an aspect that likely wasn't accounted for in previous global fan surveys.

The disproportionately high representation of female respondents can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, there exists a notable presence of female fans within the younger demographic, which comprises the majority of the survey's participants. Indeed 49% of respondents were females under the age of 28 whereas only 13.3% were male in the same age group.

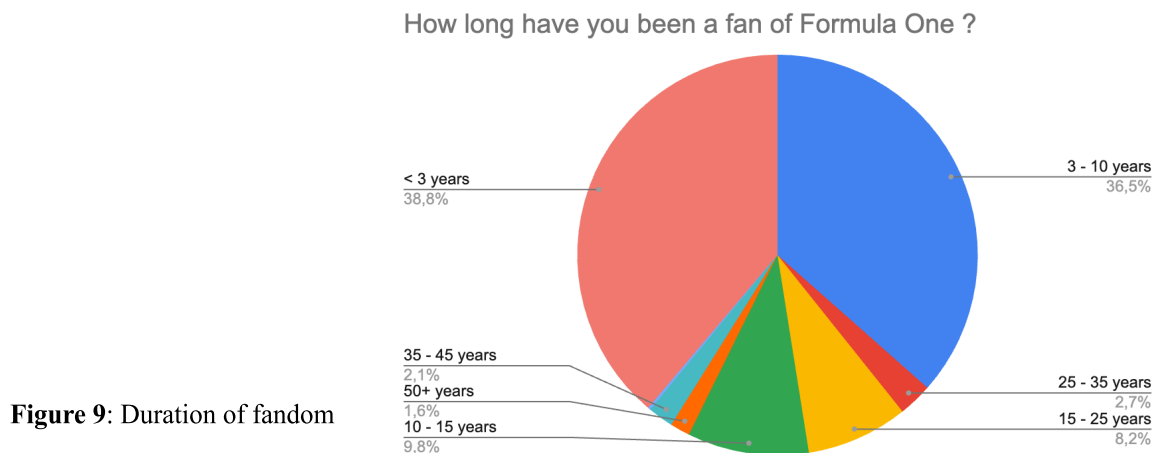
This demographic trend aligns with broader societal shifts indicating an increasing interest and engagement among young women in traditionally male-dominated sports and activities. Consequently, the strong presence of female respondents in the survey sample reflects not only the evolving demographics of Formula One fandom but also the broader cultural shifts towards gender inclusivity and diversity. Although it is important to mention that among the older age groups, gender separation is still ever so slightly present. Combining respondents over the age of 40, 4.4% were male, while 4.6% were female. This indicates that even within older generations, there was a slightly higher proportion of female respondents compared to male. What is intriguing is the influx of responses following the survey's popularity on Tumblr, a platform where one might anticipate a greater proportion of male respondents given that they constitute 58.7% of the site's traffic, while women represent only 41.3%. Surprisingly, this expectation didn't align with the actual distribution of responses received. One plausible explanation for this discrepancy lies in a sociological phenomenon whereby females exhibit a higher propensity to engage in surveys and contribute to research

efforts compared to males<sup>303</sup>. Alternatively, it is conceivable that the survey simply reached a larger female audience, prompting more women to participate. The primary dissemination channels for the survey were social media platforms and word of mouth, which likely contributed to the observed demographic variations compared to broader surveys and statistics compiled by Formula One.

**Figure 8:** Age/Gender distribution

	<18	18-28	29-39	40-50	51-61	62-72	73+	Total général
Female	19	215	35	5	10	5	2	291
Male	7	56	4	2	7	8	4	88
Non Binary	2	23	4		1			30
Other	1	3						4
Prefer not to Say	2	8						10
<b>Total général</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>423</b>

Additionally, contrasting with findings from the global fan survey, which expressed pleasant surprise at the influx of newcomers to Formula One, this survey presents a different narrative. A notable majority of respondents indicate being relatively new to the sport, with 30.8% having developed an interest in Formula One within the past three years. Following this, 36.5% have been fans for three to 10 years, while 9.8% have maintained their interest for 10 to 15 years, and 8.2% for 15 to 25 years. Notably, the percentage of respondents who have followed the sport for over 25 years is relatively low, with each subgroup accounting for less than 3% of the total. This divergence can be attributed, once again, to the predominance of younger respondents in the survey sample. With approximately 80% of participants under the age of 28, it follows that their exposure to and engagement with Formula One would correlate with a shorter time frame.



While this survey diverges significantly from the findings of the global fan survey and the demographics reported by Formula One organisations, it offers an interesting perspective. It provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of Formula One fandom. One

<sup>303</sup> Becker, R. (2022). Gender and survey participation: An event history analysis of the gender effects of survey participation in a probability-based multi-wave panel study with a sequential mixed-mode design. *Methods, data, analyses: a journal for quantitative methods and survey methodology (mda)*, 16(1), 3-32.

particularly intriguing aspect of the survey results is the substantial presence of female respondents, a demographic that is often underrepresented in traditional analyses of motorsport audiences. This abundance of female perspectives offers an enriching opportunity for nuanced analysis and a deeper understanding of the diverse range of Formula One enthusiasts. Furthermore, the strong presence of younger audiences in the survey results is noteworthy, given that they were the demographic specifically targeted by Liberty Media in the expansion strategies. Understanding their perspectives on the company's actions provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of these initiatives and the perception of fans on the future direction of Formula One. Furthermore, with fan retention strategies and the other aspects of Formula One's commercialisation it was possible to understand a perspective that these fans were prioritised. That the shift in the sport is partially to attract them. Having this demographic's opinion is thus even more interesting and enables us to verify the accuracy of these theories.

## II. A Catalyst for Change: The Impact of "Drive to Survive" on Formula One Fandom

### A. "Drive to Survive": A Phenomenon of the New Era

Having explored Liberty Media's digital media strategy, the creation of "Drive to Survive" emerges as a pivotal initiative warranting detailed examination. It is often identified as the reason for so many new fans. Launched in conjunction with Netflix in 2018, "Drive to Survive" marked a significant departure from traditional Formula One content, aiming to captivate and engage younger audiences in a fresh and innovative manner<sup>304</sup>. The objective of this 10-part documentary series was clear: to offer viewers an unprecedented, behind-the-scenes glimpse into the world of Formula One. By providing intimate insights into driver backstories, team dynamics, and the highs and lows of racing, the show promised to offer a unique perspective on the sport.

One of the key distinctions of "Drive to Survive" was its inclusive approach. Unlike previous sports documentary series that focused primarily on individual teams, this series sought to encapsulate the essence of Formula One by featuring all participating teams. While some teams initially exhibited hesitancy towards participating, notably powerhouse teams like Ferrari and Mercedes, the overwhelming success of the show prompted their eventual inclusion from the second season onwards<sup>305</sup>.

---

<sup>304</sup> Coleman, M. (2021, October22). Netflix's "Formula 1: Drive to Survive" Led to a Boom in Popularity. Retrieved 24 April 2024 Sports Illustrated.

<https://www.si.com/racing/2021/10/22/formula-one-austin-netflix-drive-to-survive-impact>

<sup>305</sup> Gilboy, J. (2019, July 25). Ferrari, mercedes hop aboard for season two of netflix's 'formula 1: Drive to survive'. Retrieved 8 April 2024 The Drive.

<https://www.thedrive.com/accelerator/29141/mercedes-ferrari-hop-aboard-for-season-two-of-netflixs-formula-1-drive-to-survive-series>

In essence, "Drive to Survive" represented an attempt to redefine Formula One storytelling for the digital age. By embracing the power of narrative-driven content and leveraging the reach of a global streaming platform like Netflix, Formula One aimed to not only attract a new generation of fans but also deepen the engagement of existing enthusiasts<sup>306</sup>. While the concept of an all-access sports documentary series was not groundbreaking when Liberty Media assumed control of Formula One, "Drive to Survive" managed to achieve a level of success that its predecessors had not. The inaugural season of the series garnered widespread acclaim from both new and existing fans, catapulting it to instant success. Such was its popularity that it swiftly earned a renewal for a second season. The timing of the second season's release, coinciding with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020, further contributed to its meteoric rise<sup>307</sup>. With live sports events severely curtailed due to pandemic-related restrictions, viewers turned to "Drive to Survive" as a compelling alternative. In essence, "Drive to Survive" not only revolutionised the genre of sports documentary series but also emerged as a cultural phenomenon in its own right. Its ability to resonate with audiences on a global scale, coupled with its impeccable timing amidst unprecedented circumstances, solidified its status as a groundbreaking and immensely impactful addition to the Formula One ecosystem<sup>308</sup>.

Indeed, what truly set "Drive to Survive" apart from other sports documentary series was its adoption of a reality TV-esque structure, interwoven with emotional plotlines that resonated deeply with viewers. The first season showcased the intimate aspects of drivers' personal lives, offering unprecedented access to the inner workings of Formula One teams. It shed light on rarely seen aspects of the sport. Some viewers even likened the show to a soap opera, emphasizing its gripping narrative and character-driven storytelling. One of the key strengths of "Drive to Survive" lay in its adept handling of narrative storytelling. Drawing upon principles of narrative theory, which posits that humans communicate through stories and that storytelling plays a vital role in cognitive development, the series effectively crafted compelling narratives that resonated with

Screenshot. (2024). *Drive to Survive* Netflix banner. Netflix.com



---

<sup>306</sup> Soble, C., & Lowes, M. (2024). Narrative Storytelling as a Fan Conversion Tool in the Netflix Docuseries Drive to Survive. *Communication & Sport*, 21674795241238158.

<sup>307</sup> Nielsen. (2022, May5). Driven to watch: How a sports docuseries drove U.S. fans to Formula 1. Retrieved 16 April 2024  
<https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2022/driven-to-watch-how-a-sports-docuseries-drove-u-s-fans-to-formula-1/>

<sup>308</sup> Ibid

audiences<sup>309</sup>. By structuring the episodes around coherent storylines and character arcs, the show fostered a deeper sense of engagement and emotional investment among viewers.<sup>310</sup>

In the realm of sports fandom, traditional theories have often focused on consumption as a byproduct of fandom among established fans<sup>311</sup>. However, "Drive to Survive" presented a unique case study, illustrating how narrative consumption can serve as a catalyst for inspiring fandom among new audiences. As viewers develop affinity towards the people portrayed in the series, opportunities for fandom emerge, creating a symbiotic relationship between community and information exchange. This interplay fosters the formation of fan communities and strengthens social identities, contributing to a deeper and more meaningful engagement with the sport. Simply put, the exchange of information serves as the lifeblood of fan communities, fueling their growth and cohesion. As fans share insights, stories, and discussions, they forge connections and deepen their engagement with the subject of their fandom. In turn, these strengthened fan communities create fertile ground for even more information exchange, perpetuating a cycle of growth and interaction<sup>312</sup>. Thus, narratives that facilitate this exchange of information play a pivotal role in nurturing and sustaining the vibrant ecosystem of fan communities. "Drive to Survive" represents a paradigm shift in sports documentary filmmaking, leveraging the power of narrative storytelling to not only entertain but also inspire and engage audiences in ways previously unseen. Through its innovative approach, the series has sparked a broader conversation about the role of narrative in shaping sports fandom and community dynamics<sup>313</sup>.

In 2020, Nielsen Sports conducted a study revealing a remarkable surge in interest in Formula One, with a staggering 73 million new fans joining the sport's ranks. While quantifying the precise impact of the docuseries on race viewership proves challenging, industry experts such as John Suchenski, Director of Programming and Acquisitions at ESPN, acknowledge its role in broadening the sport's appeal. *"having additional F1 content out there that reaches a wide and different audience helps increase awareness and interest and hopefully incentivises them to tune into the races"*<sup>314</sup>. In the United States, the impact of "Drive to Survive" on viewership is particularly striking. Prior to the series' release, ESPN typically attracted approximately 547,000 television viewers to each Formula One race.

---

<sup>309</sup> Soble, C., & Lowes, M. (2024). Narrative Storytelling as a Fan Conversion Tool in the Netflix Docuseries Drive to Survive. *Communication & Sport*, 21674795241238158.

<sup>310</sup> Image: Watch formula 1: Drive to survive | netflix official site. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.netflix.com/title/80204890>

<sup>311</sup> Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).

<sup>312</sup> Boyd R. L., Blackburn K. G., Pennebaker J. W. (2020). The narrative arc: Revealing core narrative structures through text analysis. *Science Advances*, 6(32). eaba2196, Crossref PubMed.

<sup>313</sup> Soble, C., & Lowes, M. (2024). Narrative storytelling as a fan conversion tool in the netflix docuseries drive to survive. *Communication & Sport*, 21674795241238158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21674795241238158>

<sup>314</sup> Coleman, M. (2021, October22). Netflix's "Formula 1: Drive to Survive" Led to a Boom in Popularity. Retrieved 24 April 2024 Sports Illustrated.

<https://www.si.com/racing/2021/10/22/formula-one-austin-netflix-drive-to-survive-impact>

Following the launch of the docuseries, viewership surged by 18%. By 2021, ratings nearly doubled, with an average of 934,000 viewers per race. This surge in viewership prompted ESPN to significantly increase its investment in Formula One, with a new television rights agreement signed in 2022 costing the network between USD 75 and 90 million annually—a substantial increase from the previous USD 5 million per year<sup>315</sup>.

"Drive to Survive" has not only shone a spotlight on Formula One as a whole but has also elevated the profiles of individual drivers within the sport. With their newfound visibility, Formula One drivers have become household names, recognised by fans worldwide. Their presence on social media platforms has further amplified their reach, attracting millions of followers and fostering a better engagement with fans. This surge in visibility has translated into lucrative sponsorship deals for teams. For instance, in early 2022, Red Bull Racing secured a substantial five-year title sponsorship agreement with Oracle, valued at approximately USD 500 million. Similarly, McLaren forged a partnership with Google, solidifying its status as an official multiyear sponsor<sup>316</sup>. Additionally, drivers themselves have capitalised on their growing popularity by securing personal sponsorship deals. Charles Leclerc, a prominent driver for Scuderia Ferrari, has notably served as a brand ambassador for the luxury fashion label Giorgio Armani since 2020<sup>317</sup>.

While "Drive to Survive" has undeniably contributed to the increased popularity of Formula One, it has also faced criticism for its dramatised portrayal of the sport. One common critique is the show's tendency to embellish or manipulate events to heighten the drama. For instance, there have been instances where audio clips from team radio communications unrelated to the depicted race are paired with footage to create a sense of tension or conflict<sup>318</sup>. In an interview conducted just before the start of the 2022 season, Red Bull driver Sergio Perez voiced his reservations about participating in the upcoming fifth season of "Drive to Survive." Perez expressed concerns that the show had taken its dramatisation efforts too far in the previous season, suggesting that the manufactured drama detracted from the authenticity of the sport itself. He remarked, *"they've probably gone too far in this last season. They tried to create too much drama, which the season already had"*<sup>319</sup>.

---

<sup>315</sup> Nielsen. (2022, May5). Driven to watch: How a sports docuseries drove U.S. fans to Formula 1. Retrieved 16 April 2024

<https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2022/driven-to-watch-how-a-sports-docuseries-drove-u-s-fans-to-formula-1/>

<sup>316</sup> Associated Press. (2022, February9). Red Bull name tech firm Oracle as title sponsor in \$500m deal. Retrieved 4 December 2024

[https://www.espn.com/f1/story/\\_/id/33253423/red-bull-name-tech-firm-oracle-title-sponsor-500m-deal](https://www.espn.com/f1/story/_/id/33253423/red-bull-name-tech-firm-oracle-title-sponsor-500m-deal)

<sup>317</sup> Rédac, L. (n.d.). Edgar magazine—Lifestyle, mode, art, beauté, horlogerie, automobile ... Edgar Magazine. Retrieved 9 May 2024, from <https://www.edgarmagazine.com/>

<sup>318</sup> Danne, M. (2022). "Formula 1 in a Completely Different Light": How Do Fans Perceive Authenticity in the Netflix Documentary Series 'Drive To Survive'?. Retrieved 20 April 2024

<sup>319</sup> Perez: Latest Netflix series probably went too far. (2022, March 17). Retrieved 28 April 2024 ESPN.Com.

[https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/\\_/id/33525772/sergio-perez-f1-netflix-series-probably-gone-too-far-2021-season](https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/_/id/33525772/sergio-perez-f1-netflix-series-probably-gone-too-far-2021-season)

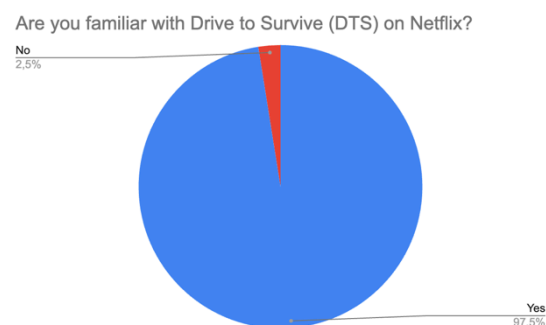
"Drive to Survive" has faced criticism not only for its dramatisation but also for its alleged role in fueling major controversies within the sport. One such instance is the contentious conclusion to the 2021 World Championship, where Max Verstappen clinched the title over Lewis Hamilton in a highly debated finish. Peter Hain, a member of the House of Lords and vice chairman of a parliamentary commission on Formula One, expressed concern over the fallout from the championship finale. Hain argued that while such dramatic conclusions may attract audiences and generate excitement, they raise serious questions about the credibility and integrity of the sport in the long term. " *That's not good for the sport. It may be exciting and it may be dramatic, it may gain the audiences that F1 craves, but you have to think of the credibility and the integrity of the sport in the longer term. As a lifelong F1 fan, I thought it was a perverted outcome. The finish was effectively rigged by the stewards in order to produce a dramatic finale for the theater*"<sup>320</sup>. Hain's remarks underscore broader concerns about the potential impact of sensationalised narratives on the sport's integrity and credibility. While "Drive to Survive" undoubtedly plays a role in amplifying the drama and spectacle of Formula One, it also prompts reflection on the delicate balance between entertainment and the sport's core values of fairness and transparency. It must navigate the fine line between captivating storytelling and accurate representation of the sport's reality. As the series continues to evolve, it will be essential for producers to heed feedback from both fans and insiders like Perez to ensure that "Drive to Survive" remains a compelling and authentic reflection of Formula One.

## B. Mixed Reviews: Assessing Fan Sentiment Towards "Drive to Survive"

The popularity of 'Drive to Survive' remains strong among respondents of our survey. An overwhelming 97.5% of participants indicated their familiarity with the series. Interestingly, the remaining 2.5% who weren't familiar with it were predominantly aged 40 and above, with a significant portion falling into the 73 plus age bracket, which potentially offers an explanation as to their lack of familiarity.

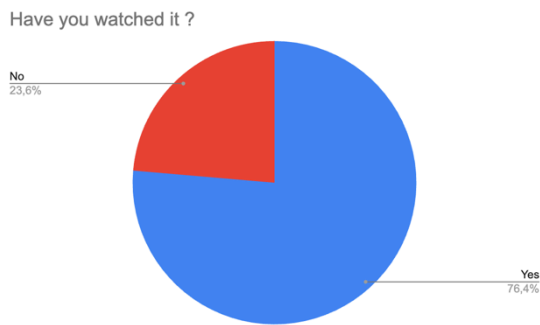
Delving deeper into the data, among those acquainted with the series, a majority of 76.4% reported having watched it entirely, highlighting its widespread viewership. Conversely, 23.6% admitted to not having viewed it at all. When probed about the impact "Drive to

**Figure 10:** Familiarity with DTS



<sup>320</sup> Rendell, S. (2022, January 7). Formula 1 season ending 'rigged by stewards' and 'left sour taste', Retrieved 24 April Labour peer claims. The Independent. <https://www.independent.co.uk/f1/fl-max-verstappen-lewis-hamilton-peter-hain-b1988592.html>





**Figure 11:** DTS viewership

Survive” had on the sport, respondents had diverse perspectives and opinions to share, reflecting its significant influence. A substantial number of participants, totaling over 314 individuals, took the time to articulate their thoughts on this particular question. These responses were very detailed, ranging from approximately 100 to 300 words each. This overwhelming response underscores the genuine desire among respondents to express their nuanced opinions on the subject matter.

Using our methodology for analysing the open ended responses, the responses were put into a Word Cloud. Upon analyzing the word cloud generated from the filtered responses, several prominent words immediately catch the eye, notably “new”, “fans” and “increased”. This observation resonates with the prevailing perspective shared by many respondents, who identified the primary effect of 'Drive to Survive' as the surge in Formula One's popularity and the influx of new enthusiasts to the sport. As one fan stated « *I think it has drawn new fans into the sport (which is good), but also doesn't give an accurate representation of what the sport is really like.* »

Broadly, this perception was met with positivity, as evidenced by the prominence of 'positive' alongside 'negative' in the word cloud. A significant number of respondents viewed the attraction of new fans as a favorable outcome, recognizing it as a testament to the show's ability to garner widespread interest. Many expressed enthusiasm for the show's role in expanding the sport's reach and fostering a broader fan base. « *As a long term fan, I was happy to see it bring a whole new audience to the sport. It has been really nice to have old friends gain an interest in F1 and have people to watch races with. However, it definitely led to some created "drama" and tension* » However, amidst the overall positivity, nuances emerged within the responses. While acknowledging the show's accessibility, some respondents tempered their enthusiasm by highlighting perceived negative aspects. Concerns were raised regarding the dramatisation, narrative focus, and potential inaccuracies depicted in the series. Criticism centered on the show's prioritisation of entertainment over the authentic portrayal of the sport, with some suggesting it caters more to a casual audience than to dedicated fans seeking a genuine representation of Formula One. « *Lots of new fans. Prioritisation of entertainment.* »



impact of 'Drive to Survive' on Formula One itself. Some respondents criticised its influence on the sport, with one remarking, *'VERY negative. DTS is at least partly responsible for F1 going to hell in a handbasket,'* while another expressed, *'Terrible. It has turned F1 into a soap opera and popularity contest.'*

Indeed, the recurring concern revolves around the perception that Formula One is increasingly prioritizing entertainment and spectacle at the expense of its core essence as a sport. Several fans articulated this sentiment with nuanced explanations such as *"It has undoubtedly promoted Formula One to the masses. Upon watching the first season, it seemed very exciting and dynamic. Putting faces to these names made it more interesting. However, in subsequent seasons, after watching races for a year, I have come to see that 'Drive to Survive' is somewhat lacking in substance. It tends to make things appear more contentious than they actually were and relies heavily on supposition. Moreover, it lacks interviews with all the major figures, which skews it towards someone's opinion. It is like candy—lots of sugar but no substance."* Other fans echoed similar sentiments, aligning with previous perceptions that they are not necessarily opposed to this new era of content and strategies. However, they emphasise the importance of Liberty Media being mindful of preserving the essence of the sport. *"I think that initially it was positive; bringing more eyes onto the sport. However, in the years since it has begun, the sport has structured itself around more commercial interests and fed into dramatisation and the American audience, which reduces the sporting aspect."*

This indicates that while Drive to Survive was a major factor in the influx of new fans, there is a consensus among most fans that the show is too dramatised. They believe that it does not do justice to the sport's essence and values. These nuanced perspectives underscore a growing apprehension among fans regarding the evolving nature of Formula One and the balance between entertainment value and sporting authenticity. As one respondent succinctly put it, *'It has turned F1 from sport to spectacle.'*

## Chapter 4: Strong Fan Perspectives on Formula One's Evolution and Current Landscape

### I. The Depth of Survey Responses: Exploring reasons for Extreme Fan Engagement

#### A. The Unexpected Popularity of the Survey: A Deep Dive into Fan Passion

The essence of this study rests upon the design of a survey instrument, crafted with precision to obtain insights and invaluable data crucial to our research goals. Initially, we harbored reservations about the response rate, uncertain whether the opinions gathered would suffice to underpin the findings. Given the survey's specificity and length, a relatively modest sample size was anticipated which, while offering intriguing perspectives, may not have guaranteed absolute accuracy. However, this survey surpassed these expectations, embarking on a trajectory of unforeseen success. This observation prompts an investigation into the factors that potentially contributed to its remarkable popularity. To begin with, it is crucial to look into the motivations driving people to participate in surveys.

Indeed, there is a critical differentiation between the theoretical understanding of why individuals participate or refrain from participating in surveys, and the practical methods employed to encourage their responses. While these two aspects may seem interchangeable, they serve distinct roles<sup>321</sup>. Theoretical frameworks provide insights into the underlying motivations and factors influencing survey participation, offering a deeper understanding of human behavior in this context. In contrast, inducement techniques are the applied strategies aimed at motivating individuals to respond, often based on insights derived from theoretical understanding. Without theoretical guidance, there is a danger of relying solely on superficial incentives or coercive methods to elicit responses<sup>322</sup>. This approach may result in respondents providing inaccurate, biased, or unreliable data, undermining the integrity and validity of the survey findings. By understanding the underlying reasons for survey participation, it is possible to tailor inducement techniques more effectively, thereby mitigating the risk of respondents providing flawed or misleading data.

There are many different frameworks to take into account when it comes to the sharing of a survey. Greenberg and Dillman's concept of using mail survey techniques as a form of social exchange offers a valuable perspective on understanding survey

---

<sup>321</sup> Keusch, F. (2015). Why do people participate in Web surveys? Applying survey participation theory to Internet survey data collection. *Management review quarterly*, 65(3), 183-216.

<sup>322</sup> Albaum, G., & Smith, S. M. (2012). Why people agree to participate in surveys. *Handbook of survey methodology for the social sciences*, 179-193.

participation<sup>323</sup>. At its core, social exchange theory posits that individuals are motivated to engage in certain behaviors, such as completing a questionnaire, based on the anticipated rewards or benefits they expect to receive from others. In the context of surveys, respondents weigh the perceived costs of participating against the expected rewards they anticipate. The perceived costs may include factors such as the time and effort required to complete the survey, concerns about privacy or confidentiality, or even the perceived intrusiveness of the questions. On the other hand, the expected rewards could encompass various factors, including the satisfaction of contributing to research, the opportunity to have a platform where it is possible to express one's opinions or experiences knowing they will be listened to and analysed. This underscores the importance of designing surveys that minimise perceived costs while maximizing perceived rewards, thereby enhancing response rates and the quality of data obtained<sup>324</sup>.

The obtained response rate becomes intriguing when considering the factors influencing individuals' decisions to participate. Indeed, the pivotal question of perceived cost plays a significant role in this determination. On the surface, a survey comprising 55 questions, including at least 13 open-ended ones, can seem daunting and potentially dissuasive. However, efforts were made to mitigate this perceived barrier to participation. At the outset, a disclaimer was provided, acknowledging the time investment required to complete the survey. Additionally, a comprehensive explanation was offered regarding the use of the gathered data, coupled with a commitment to safeguarding participants' privacy. These measures aimed to alleviate concerns about the survey's length and foster a sense of trust and confidence among potential respondents. Indeed, applying the social exchange theory we tried to reduce the perceived “cost” of the survey as much as possible.

Indeed, this theory underscores an intricate exchange dynamic inherent in survey participation. By examining the responses garnered from the survey, we can glean insights into the perceived benefits users derived from their engagement. Particularly on platforms like Tumblr, where resharing posts and appending personal thoughts through hashtags is commonplace, users engage in a dialogic process that sheds light on their motivations. Through the resharing of the survey on Tumblr, individuals expressed their perceptions and reflections, offering valuable clues about what they deemed rewarding about their participation. Upon analyzing these comments<sup>325</sup>, it became evident that respondents experienced a spectrum of reactions, ranging from the gratification of contributing to research

---

<sup>323</sup> Greenberg, P., & Dillman, D. (2023). Mail communications and survey response: A test of social exchange versus pre-suasion theory for improving response rates and data quality. *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology*, 11(1), 1-22.

<sup>324</sup> Dillman, D. A. (2020). Towards survey response rate theories that no longer pass each other like strangers in the night. *Understanding survey methodology: Sociological theory and applications*, 15-44.

<sup>325</sup> Annex 3

to a genuine appreciation for the significance of the study itself<sup>326</sup>. Moreover, respondents conveyed a sense of altruism in feeling they were aiding not only the researcher but also providing a platform for their opinions to be acknowledged, respected, and valued.<sup>327</sup> This aspect is particularly crucial, as it underscores the significance of creating spaces where individuals feel empowered to voice their perspectives. Additionally, it is essential to acknowledge the enduring influence of the sporting ethos, even in the realm of surveys. Just as competition and rivalry drive engagement in sports, a similar dynamic unfolds in survey responses, where individuals strive to make their opinions prevail. Furthermore, Sports fans usually experience deeper emotional connections to their interest, this is most likely a factor in the willingness to respond and reshare the survey. The benefit of getting to speak about their interest is not to be undervalued<sup>328</sup>. Indeed, it is possible to understand through this that the questions of Formula One's evolution under Liberty Media is a subject that resonates with fans. They have shown that they have strong opinions on the subject and they want to share them.

## B. Decoding Fan Dedication: Insights from the Survey Engagement

Spanning 55 questions, the survey delves deep into nuanced aspects of Formula One, covering a spectrum of specific topics. The meticulous preparation undertaken prior to the survey's release foresaw potential challenges related to response burden—a term commonly used to describe the effort and time required by respondents to complete a questionnaire<sup>329</sup>. Given the survey's extensive length and the intricate nature of inquiries, there was an awareness that respondents might experience fatigue or reluctance, impacting the quality and accuracy of their responses.

The primary reasons participants report taking unpaid surveys are because of interest, wanting to express their opinion and hoping to effect changes at the company<sup>330</sup>. By strategically sharing the survey on platforms like Tumblr, Reddit, and Instagram, we were able to directly reach individuals who harbor a keen interest in the subject matter or possess a general passion for Formula One. We equally relied on the theory that fans enjoy opportunities to showcase their fan capital and that a sport fandom in general is more willing to invest their time<sup>331</sup>. This targeting approach was particularly effective on Tumblr, a

---

<sup>326</sup> Dillman, D. A. (2020). Towards survey response rate theories that no longer pass each other like strangers in the night. *Understanding survey methodology: Sociological theory and applications*, 15-44.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid

<sup>328</sup> Park S.-H., Mahony D., Kim Y. K. (2011). The role of sport fan curiosity: A new conceptual approach to the understanding of sport fan behavior. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 46–56

<sup>329</sup> Rolstad, S., Adler, J., & Rydén, A. (2011). Response burden and questionnaire length: is shorter better? A review and meta-analysis. *Value in Health*, 14(8), 1101-1108.

<sup>330</sup> Rolstad, S., Adler, J., & Rydén, A. (2011). Response burden and questionnaire length: is shorter better? A review and meta-analysis. *Value in Health*, 14(8), 1101-1108.

<sup>331</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>

platform known for its fandom culture. Users on Tumblr curate their blogs around specific interests, dedicating their time to fandoms and passions<sup>332</sup>. By targeting Formula One fans on Tumblr, the survey seamlessly appeared on the dashboards of individuals who actively engage with content related to their interests, increasing the likelihood of meaningful participation.

Despite the amount and intricacy of the survey questions, respondents exhibited an extraordinary level of engagement and enthusiasm, offering responses that were both detailed and expansive. Many participants took the opportunity to provide thorough explanations and paragraphs of insight, demonstrating a remarkable commitment to sharing their thoughts and opinions. This level of over engagement with the survey was notable, as individuals systematically seized the opportunity to expand their responses, enriching the survey with additional context and detail. Their willingness to go above and beyond in providing extra details underscored their dedication to providing comprehensive feedback as well as the passion behind their opinions. This depth of engagement not only enhanced the richness of the survey data but also provided a deeper understanding of the nuanced opinions and sentiments within the fan community. Truly showcasing the depth of passion and investment in the fandom<sup>333</sup>.

Furthermore, an alternative explanation for the high level of dedication observed in respondents' responses can be found through the lens of commitment theory or involvement theory. These theories offer insights into the persuasive techniques employed, such as the foot-in-the-door method. The foot-in-the-door technique entails starting with a small initial request followed by a larger one. This approach capitalises on the principle of commitment, whereby individuals are more likely to comply with a larger request after agreeing to a smaller one<sup>334</sup>. The initial agreement fosters a sense of commitment or involvement in the individual. This phenomenon can be understood in several ways within the context of the survey. Firstly, individuals who already have a vested interest in Formula One, having clicked on the survey, may feel a sense of commitment to sharing their opinions and ensuring their voices are heard on the subject. Additionally, the strategic positioning of the initial survey questions, such as inquiries about favorite drivers or teams and reasons behind these preferences, serves to attract participants. In essence, the foot-in-the-door technique, coupled with individuals' preexisting interest in Formula One, likely contributed to the heightened level of dedication observed in respondents' responses.

---

<sup>332</sup> Tumblr statistics | updated news, trends & demographics 2023. (n.d.). Avada Commerce. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://avada.io/articles/tumblr-users/>

<sup>333</sup> Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).

<sup>334</sup> Dillman, D. A. (2020). Towards survey response rate theories that no longer pass each other like strangers in the night. *Understanding survey methodology: Sociological theory and applications*, 15-44.

Unraveling the underlying reasons behind the over-engagement observed in survey responses presents a nuanced challenge, as we lack direct insight into the thought processes of the respondents. Nonetheless, we can glean valuable insights from the comments shared through the Tumblr post promoting the survey, where certain participants expressed their opinions and provided additional context. By examining these comments<sup>335</sup>, we gain a window into the motivations and perspectives driving respondents' dedication to the survey. Indeed, a common theme emerges from the feedback received, reflecting a sense of catharsis expressed through the survey. Many participants described it as a platform for venting or "letting loose," suggesting a release of pent-up thoughts and emotions. Moreover, there was a discernible commitment among respondents, who approached the questions with a level of seriousness akin to academic inquiry. Some even went as far as to hold back or apologise for the length of their responses, indicating a genuine investment in providing thoughtful and thorough answers. This depth of engagement underscores the significance of the survey as a means for individuals to articulate their perspectives and experiences within the Formula One community.

Indeed, Sport fans hold a very specific relationship to their interests. They will invest a significant amount of themselves and their time into their support. When fans perceive that a sport has slighted them, the hurt will be felt to a deeper level than for example a fan of a TV show. This could explain the over engagement. Indeed, a majority of respondents expressed displeasure at the current state of Formula One. This survey gave them a way to express that<sup>336</sup>. An interesting observation is that women exhibited a greater tendency to complete every question on the questionnaire and provide detailed responses, whereas men tended to engage less extensively. This discrepancy in response behavior adds another layer of complexity to the survey findings and warrants further investigation into potential underlying factors influencing respondent participation and engagement<sup>337</sup>.

While definitive conclusions about respondents' motivations may remain elusive, exploring the comments provides valuable qualitative data that enriches our understanding of the multifaceted reasons behind their over-engagement. The Formula One fandom has experienced a significant surge in numbers since the implementation of digital strategies by Liberty Media. The level of dedication and passion displayed by respondents in this survey underscores the strength of engagement within the community<sup>338</sup>. Nevertheless, beyond gender, no discernible characteristic was evident that distinguished those who over-engaged

---

<sup>335</sup> Annex 3

<sup>336</sup> Sloan, L. R. (1989). The motives of sports fans. *Sports, games, and play: Social and psychological viewpoints*, 2, 175-240.

<sup>337</sup> Keusch, F. (2015). Why do people participate in Web surveys? Applying survey participation theory to Internet survey data collection. *Management review quarterly*, 65(3), 183-216.

<sup>338</sup> Park S.-H., Mahony D., Kim Y. K. (2011). The role of sport fan curiosity: A new conceptual approach to the understanding of sport fan behavior. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 46–56

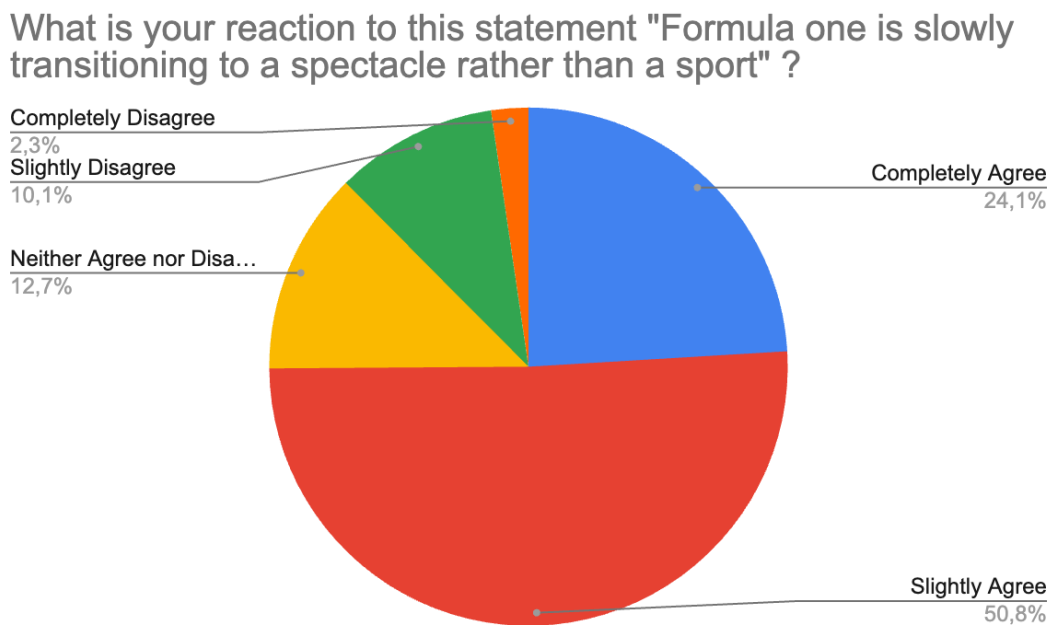


from those who did not. This suggests a widespread and inclusive enthusiasm for the sport across diverse demographics within the Formula One fanbase.

## II. Spectacle Over Sport: Fan Sentiments on Formula One's Transformation

### A. Formula One as a Spectacle: A Growing Consensus Among Fans

**Figure 13:** Opinions on transition



The data from the final question of the survey “What is your reaction to this statement “Formula One is slowly transitioning to a spectacle rather than a sport?”, provides valuable insights into the perceptions and attitudes of Formula One fans regarding the transformation of the sport. With 24.1% of respondents completely agreeing and 50.8% slightly agreeing that Formula One is slowly transitioning into more of a spectacle than a sport, it is evident that a significant portion of the fan base shares this sentiment. This indicates a widespread recognition among fans that Formula One is undergoing a shift in its identity, moving away from its traditional roots as a pure sporting competition towards a more spectacle-driven model. The high percentage of respondents who at least slightly agree with this statement suggests a prevailing concern within the fan community about the direction in which the sport is heading.

It is important to look deeper into people's responses beyond just their level of agreement with a statement. The follow-up question asking if there is anything else they'd like to add often reveals nuanced perspectives that enrich our understanding of their opinions.

For instance, while some respondents (2.3%) may have disagreed with the notion that Formula One is becoming more of a spectacle, their elaborations shed light on the complexity of their views. It becomes evident that many acknowledge the sport's transformation into a spectacle but offer nuanced perspectives on why this might not necessarily be a negative development.

Among those who expressed complete disagreement with the statement, some highlighted that Formula One has always been a spectacle, emphasizing its inherent nature as a high-profile sporting event. Others pointed out that, like any business endeavor, Formula One aims for profitability and marketability, suggesting that the changes in marketing and presentation are understandable from a commercial standpoint. One respondent aptly observed that criticisms of Formula One should be contextualised within the broader landscape of sports governance, noting that « *People who complain the most about F1 seem to not have experience with other sports and sports fandoms. I regret to inform them that the governing association of almost every sport is also pretty evil!!* » While not every respondent who selected "completely disagree" offered further elaboration, those who did provided valuable insights. Interestingly, none of these elaborations denied the notion that Formula One is evolving into more of a spectacle or that commercialisation and sensationalization aren't occurring within the sport.

When examining the responses of those who selected "slightly disagree" (10.1%), we find a similar perspective emerging. While not every respondent provided additional elaboration, those who did generally acknowledged the increasing commercialisation and sensationalization of Formula One. This suggests that while they may not outright deny the notion of Formula One becoming a spectacle, they do recognise a shift in the nature of the sport. This theory gains further credibility when considering the perspectives of those who provided additional commentary.

Indeed, when focusing on these respondents, several key arguments emerge from their elaborations. Firstly, some respondents argue that Formula One has always been a spectacle driven by commercial interests. They suggest that recent concerns over its increasing spectacle status are exaggerated. This argument is encapsulated well by the response of this individual « *Formula one has always been a commercial, capitalistic spectacle; its entire purpose is as a marketing exercise for the companies that associate themselves with teams. I think the recent concerns around the sport becoming "more" of a spectacle are overblown.* » Secondly, others contend that while the spectacle surrounding Formula One may be intensifying, the essence of the sport—the actual racing—remains unchanged. « *Everything surrounding F1 is becoming more of a spectacle. If you don't follow F1 online and only tune*

*in for the races, I don't believe there will be that much of a difference. The racing is the same.*

» Thirdly, there is a perspective that the evolving spectacle of Formula One is not unique but rather reflects broader trends in the sports industry. Some respondents see Formula One's shift as part of a larger trend towards increased commercialisation and spectacle in sports in general, likening it to developments seen in football. Overall, all but one of respondents who elaborated on their selection of "slightly disagree" fell into one of these categories, suggesting diverse perspectives on the evolving nature of Formula One. However, one respondent provided a unique viewpoint "*Just because it's becoming more mediatised doesn't mean it's becoming a spectacle, if they start including a half time show then yeah* ».

The responses from those who selected "neither disagree nor agree" (12.7%) shed light on the complexity of the issue. Many agreed with the argument that Formula One has always been characterised by spectacle. However, concerns were raised about the direction of the sport, with questions posed about the target audience, accessibility, and the balance between new fans and traditional practices. Indeed, one respondent said "*F1 as a sport is facing a hurdle. It is a rapidly growing sport with more and more media engagements for fans to interact with. But, at the same time, more races are being too expensive and inaccessible. The question becomes who is the target audience and what is Liberty Media trying to accomplish. Do you want new fans or are we pricing them out? Are you trying to match the more diverse world or trying to keep only luxury sponsors? Who is F1 for?*"

Analyzing these elaborations sheds light on a common theme among respondents who disagreed with the statement. While they acknowledged a shift in the nature of the sport, their disagreement stemmed from the timing of this transition and its implications. Therefore, it is crucial to delve into the perspectives of those who concurred with the statement and see what their opinions revealed. For these respondents, the central argument revolved around the belief that Formula One is undergoing or has already undergone a transformation into a spectacle, to the detriment of its essence as a sport. Many expressed concerns about the perceived commercialisation of the sport, suggesting that its integrity is being compromised for the sake of financial gain. "*It feels like Liberty Media is squeezing every penny out of F1 without regard for the longevity of the sport.*"

Additionally, some respondents lamented feeling disillusioned with Formula One, with a few even expressing a loss of enjoyment in following the sport. These sentiments underscore a deeper concern among fans regarding the direction in which Formula One is headed. "*It could and should be so much better than it is right now and honestly, I don't know if it is going in the right direction. I mean, obviously most sports are big business and very corrupt, that's not news, but I felt for a while it might evolve in a better direction which contributed to me starting to watch again. But recently I am not so sure. It doesn't help that most races these days are just really boring.*" These arguments resurfaced often. "*Because of*

*new tracks and new partnerships. I don't watch NASCAR because this is just too much spectacle and glitter; I'm afraid F1 is going in that direction. There's more money than ever!"* Opinions regarding Liberty Media were predominantly negative, with many perceiving the organisation as solely motivated by financial gain, disregarding the traditional values and essence of the sport. *"Again, I hate to agree but I'm beginning to question how many more years I'll watch if it carries on like this. Liberty Media is largely responsible for this and I can't begin to describe how much I loathe that organisation."*

The shared perception among those who agreed with the statement underscores a clear consensus regarding the global trends shaping Formula One. Their recurring arguments and concerns paint a vivid picture of the collective sentiment within the Formula One community. Key themes such as the perceived commercialisation of the sport, the prioritisation of financial gain over the integrity of the sport, and the impact of these changes on the fan experience emerged repeatedly among respondents. This consistency in viewpoints highlights a shared understanding of the challenges facing Formula One and a unified perspective on the direction in which the sport is heading. Furthermore, the widespread criticism directed towards Liberty Media, particularly regarding their motivations and decisions, indicates a common sentiment of dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs. *"Liberty Media is in it for the money. Therefore, they inject spectacle off track to bring in the punters and their money. I believe they care not for the traditions of the sport or what is happening to it while they generate income from it. When they have had enough they will see an enormous profit and hopefully not to another American money-making media company."* This shared perception suggests a deep-seated concern among fans about the potential consequences of prioritizing spectacle and commercial interests over the fundamental values of Formula One. Indeed, within a sports fandom, it is more likely to find consensus on opinions about the sport itself. While people may disagree on who the best athlete is, they all function within the same system; their norms and values when confronted with the sport are similar<sup>339</sup>. Where a fracture could occur is in profound changes to the fandom itself<sup>340</sup>. Indeed, we know that the Formula One fandom recently underwent a major demographic change. It would be interesting to see if that plays a role in people's opinions. However we can conclude that a large majority of individuals agree with the perception that Formula One is transitioning from a sport to more of a spectacle.

---

<sup>339</sup> Sloan, L. R. (1989). The motives of sports fans. *Sports, games, and play: Social and psychological viewpoints*, 2, 175-240.

<sup>340</sup> Osborne A. C., Coombs D. S. (2013). Performative sport fandom: An approach to retheorizing sport fans. *Sport in Society*, 16(5), 672–681.

## B. Demographic Trends in Fan Responses: What Drives Opinions?

While the survey offers a broad glimpse into the collective fan sentiment, it is imperative to conduct a deeper analysis to uncover potential trends. Surprisingly, there was little variation in opinion based on gender, age, or occupation, suggesting a consensus among most fans. However, this uniformity prompts us to explore other hypotheses, particularly regarding the duration of individuals' fandom. Indeed, Liberty Media having stated their objective of obtaining a new facet to the fandom, do these individuals agree with Liberty Media's move? By exploring how long individuals have been engaged with Formula One, we can discern whether there is a generational divide in perceptions. Do longtime fans harbor a sense of nostalgia for a bygone era of the sport, while newer fans embrace a shift?

The concept of recency bias is highly relevant to the idea that Formula One is transitioning into a spectacle. Recency bias is a cognitive bias where individuals tend to give greater weight to recent events or information compared to older ones<sup>341</sup>. In the context of Formula One, this bias can influence how fans perceive the sport's evolution. This perception of spectacularization can be amplified by the fact that recent events are more vivid and readily available in their minds due to recency bias. Conversely, fans may downplay or neglect past events or characteristics of the sport that don't align with the idea of it becoming a spectacle. This bias can impact their judgment and evaluation of Formula One's evolution, potentially leading them to overemphasise recent changes while overlooking historical aspects of the sport that may contradict the notion of it transitioning into a spectacle<sup>342</sup>.

Indeed, the impact of recency bias on fans' perceptions of Formula One's evolution into a spectacle can vary depending on their level of experience and exposure to the sport. While no one is immune to recency bias, it is reasonable to suggest that fans who have been following Formula One for a longer period may possess a broader perspective due to their exposure to a greater range of events and historical contexts. On one hand, long-time fans who have witnessed Formula One's evolution over decades may have a more comprehensive understanding of the sport's history, including its transition into a spectacle. Their extensive experience allows them to contextualise recent changes within the broader trajectory of Formula One's development. Conversely, newer fans who have only recently become interested in Formula One may approach the sport with fresh eyes and a more objective viewpoint<sup>343</sup>. Without the same level of attachment or nostalgia for past eras, they may be less influenced by recency bias and more open to critically evaluating Formula One's current state and direction.

---

<sup>341</sup> Raveendra, P. V., & Singh, P. (2018). Performance appraisal biases and behavioral biases in decision making: An empirical study. *International Journal of Mechanical Engineering and Technology*, 9(6), 312-318.

<sup>342</sup> Sukhdial, A., Aiken, D., & Kahle, L. (2002). Are You Old School?: A scale for measuring sports fans' old-school orientation. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 42(4), 71-81.

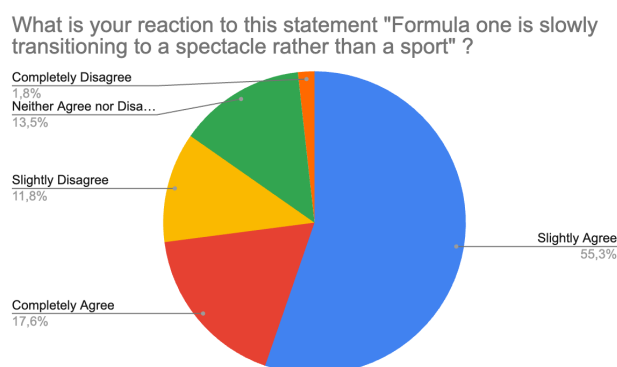
<sup>343</sup> Kim, Y. K., & Trail, G. (2010). Constraints and motivators: A new model to explain sport consumer behavior. *Journal of sport management*, 24(2), 190-210.

The breakdown of responses across different groups revealed intriguing patterns. While the 15 to 25, 25 to 35, and 50 plus year groups exhibited similar trends, with no one completely disagreeing with the statement and a majority either slightly agreeing or completely agreeing, the 35 to 45 years of fandom group stood out as the most opinionated. In this group, we observed the highest rate of “completely agree”, but a more balanced distribution of other responses. Moving on to fans with varying lengths of experience, the 10 to 15 years group emerged as particularly noteworthy. Here, a significant proportion of respondents 37.2% completely agreed with the statement, indicating a strong consensus among this cohort. Additionally, the presence of 44.2% who agreed partially underscores the

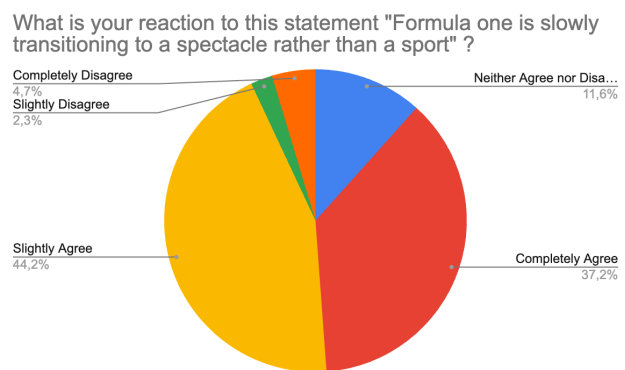
prevailing sentiment among this age group. Interestingly, as the length of fandom decreased, there was a notable decline in the proportion of respondents completely agreeing with the statement. This trend is particularly evident among those who have followed the sport for under three years, where only 17.6% expressed complete agreement. This decline could stem from a perceived lack of expertise or familiarity

with the intricacies of Formula One among newer fans. Indeed, if they perceive themselves as lacking in “fan capital” they may feel illegitimate or lacking enough knowledge to align themselves firmly in one perspective<sup>344</sup>. Or it could be representative of this fandom rupture between newer and older fans. However, the “slightly agree” rates among these

**Figure 15:** Opinions by fans of under 3 years



**Figure 14:** Opinions on transition by fans since 10-15 years



53.8% for those under three years and 53.8% for those three to 10 years suggest a general inclination towards acknowledging the spectacle nature of Formula One, albeit with varying degrees of certainty or conviction. Overall, these findings underscore the nuanced relationship between fan experience and perceptions of Formula One as a spectacle, highlighting the importance of considering individual contexts when interpreting survey responses.

<sup>344</sup> Mastromartino, B., Wang, J. J., Suggs, D. W., Hollenbeck, C. R., & Zhang, J. J. (2022). Dimensions of sense of membership in a sport fan community: Factors, outcomes, and social capital implications. *Communication & Sport*, 10(6), 1229-1256.

Exploring the hypothesis of whether individuals support a team first or a driver first offers intriguing insights into their perceptions of Formula One as a spectacle. One notable criticism directed at Liberty Media is their purported shift towards a driver-centric approach, overshadowing traditional team loyalties. This shift has prompted concerns about the commodification of drivers and the dilution of Formula One's sporting essence<sup>345</sup>. Therefore, it stands to reason that individuals who prioritise supporting drivers over teams may be more inclined to reject the notion that Formula One is transitioning into a spectacle. This rejection could stem from a desire to preserve the integrity of the sport and resist its transformation into a mere entertainment spectacle. By examining responses based on whether individuals align with a driver-first or team-first mentality, we can glean valuable insights into their attitudes towards Formula One's evolving identity.

Interestingly, the group that displayed the highest level of agreement with the statement—that Formula One is gradually becoming more of a spectacle—was those who declared supporting both equally<sup>346</sup>. They were closely followed by individuals who identified as driver-first supporters, with approximately 75% expressing some level of agreement. Surprisingly, the team-first supporters, although still showing a majority agreement with the statement at around 70%, ranked last in terms of alignment. This data challenges the hypothesis that driver-first supporters would be more inclined to disagree with the statement. Instead, it suggests a more nuanced relationship between fan allegiance and perceptions of Formula One's evolution.

Indeed, when examining the responses across different lengths of time spent in the Formula One fandom and fan preferences, we can discern notable distinctions. One prominent difference is that fans who have been engaged with the sport for a shorter duration tend to display less definiteness in their statements, often opting for responses such as slightly agree or neither agree nor disagree. Furthermore, longer term fans are more likely to agree with the statement, potentially showcasing an aspect of this supposed fandom rift. However, shorter term fans do majoritarily align with the longer term fans' views. It is important to note that we cannot conclusively determine the underlying reasons with the information available. Moreover, it is essential to recognise that there is no single overarching trend that uniformly explains why certain individuals hold specific perspectives. Instead, the diversity of opinions among Formula One fans transcends factors such as fan allegiances, sociological backgrounds, and demographic characteristics. This suggests that fan sentiment towards Formula One's transition into a spectacle is more of a collective consensus among fans, rather than being driven solely by individual affiliations or preferences. Furthermore, it is possible

---

<sup>345</sup> Soble, C., & Lowes, M. (2024). Narrative storytelling as a fan conversion tool in the netflix docuseries drive to survive. *Communication & Sport*, 21674795241238158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21674795241238158>

<sup>346</sup> See annex XX for the chart breakdown

to note that while there is talk of a “fandom fracture” in Formula One, thus far it has not been particularly evident in the expression of opinions through the survey.

### C. Fan Perception of Declining Racing Quality: Safety Concerns and Inconsistent Stewarding

Formula One, despite its prestige, has not been immune to instances of cheating and scandal throughout its history. From drivers orchestrating deliberate crashes to corporate espionage and strategic maneuvers aimed at gaining an advantage, the sport has seen its fair share of controversial incidents<sup>347</sup>. Despite assurances of clearer regulations and more vigilant stewarding with the arrival of Liberty Media in 2017, Formula One has continued to face criticisms and accusations of cheating in recent years<sup>348</sup>.

One of the most significant scandals to rock Formula One in recent years revolves around the implementation of the cost cap<sup>349</sup>. Introduced for the 2021 season, these financial regulations aimed to foster a more competitive championship by curbing excessive spending among teams. The cost cap aimed to promote the long-term financial sustainability of the sport, preventing runaway expenditure that could jeopardise its future viability. Under the cost cap system, teams are restricted in the amount of money they can spend over the course of a calendar year, with penalties imposed for any breaches. However, controversy erupted when the FIA found Red Bull guilty of an overspend during the 2021 season, coinciding with Max Verstappen's championship victory<sup>350</sup>. Despite assertions that the overspend had no impact on their performance, Red Bull faced consequences. They were handed a \$7 million fine and a 10 percent reduction in aero testing for the following season. Despite these penalties, Red Bull continued their dominance into the 2023 season, leading to criticism from rivals like Lewis Hamilton. His assertion that the previous punishment was insufficient to deter future breaches underscores the ongoing debate surrounding the efficacy of the cost cap regulations and the need for stricter enforcement to uphold fairness and integrity in Formula One<sup>351</sup>.

Indeed, criticisms about the governance and integrity of the sport have come to the forefront recently. Questions have been raised about the effectiveness of the regulatory framework and the ability of governing bodies to enforce rules fairly and transparently<sup>352</sup>.

---

<sup>347</sup> Zaksaitė, S. (2016). Manipulation of competitions in Formula-1: Where policy ends and cheating begins. *The International Sports Law Journal*.

<sup>348</sup> Zheng, A. (2023). After abu dhabi: Restoring integrity and accountability in formula 1 (SSRN Scholarly Paper 4430392). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4430392>

<sup>349</sup> *F1 cost cap explained*. (n.d.). *Global Sports Advocates, LLC*. Retrieved 3 May 2024, from <https://www.globalsportsadvocates.com/blog/understanding-the-f1-cost-cap.cfm>

<sup>350</sup> F1 cost cap: How Red Bull broke it, their punishment, and the latest news on 2023 budget. retrieved 3 May 2024 | F1 | Crash. (2023, July 24). <https://www.crash.net/f1/news/1014425/1/f1-cost-cap-how-red-bull-broke-it-their-punishment-and-2023-budget>

<sup>351</sup> Ibid

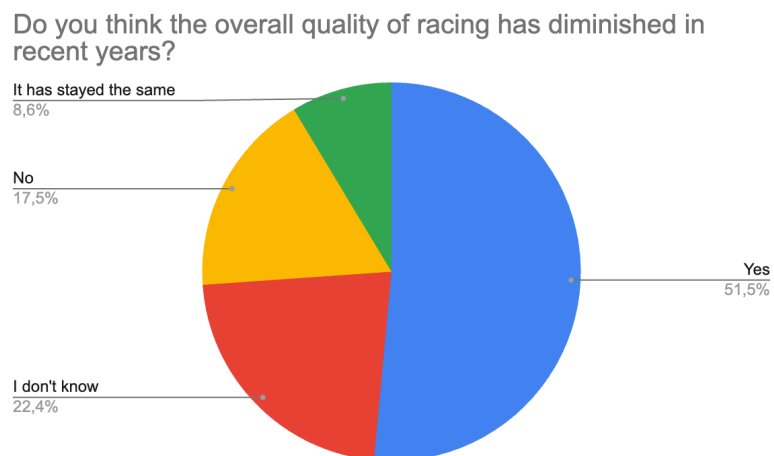
<sup>352</sup> Governance. Retrieved 25th November (2012, March 12). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/governance>



The discourse surrounding the idea of Formula One transitioning into a spectacle often revolves around its potential impacts on the quality of racing. Within the responses to the question of whether Formula One is evolving into a spectacle, this theme resurfaced. A recurring motif within these responses is the varying perspectives on the actual racing experience. Some individuals argue that despite the growing emphasis on entertainment and spectacle within the broader Formula One environment, the essence of racing remains unchanged. They maintain that the core competitive dynamics and thrill of the sport persist despite external shifts. Conversely, there are those who contend that the quality of racing has suffered as Formula One evolves into a spectacle. They express concerns that the emphasis on entertainment value has compromised the integrity of the racing, leading to diminished excitement and competitiveness on the track. These critics often cite recent developments and changes within the sport as evidence of this perceived decline in racing quality<sup>353</sup>.

Respondents were queried about their perceptions regarding the overall quality of racing in recent years. Only 8.6% of individuals felt that the quality had remained consistent, with 17.5% believing it had not diminished. In contrast, a majority 51.5% asserted that the quality of racing had indeed declined. This finding suggests that the perceived changes in Formula One extend beyond external factors and encompass the very essence of the sport, the racing itself.

**Figure 16:** Quality of racing



This question was followed up by one asking for opinions on stewarding in recent years. This inquiry was deliberately left open-ended to encourage respondents to articulate their thoughts freely, resulting in a substantial volume of detailed responses reflecting people's opinions on the current state of governance and regulation in the sport.

To visually represent these sentiments, a word cloud was created, providing a visual snapshot of prevailing sentiments. Upon coding the responses, it became abundantly clear that the overall sentiment leaned heavily negative towards the administration. Many respondents expressed discontent with the way it has been conducted, with only a minority expressing impartiality or approval. This sentiment is vividly captured in the word cloud,

<sup>353</sup> Zheng, A. (2023). After abu dhabi: Restoring integrity and accountability in formula 1 (SSRN Scholarly Paper 4430392). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4430392>



It is important to note that this perception of lesser quality doesn't just mean "the race is less fun". It can lead to serious repercussions. Indeed, when taking over, Liberty Media swore to uphold and increase driver safety. While Formula One has not experienced a fatal crash in years and various safety protocols and creations have been introduced, the sport has witnessed several incidents that serve as stark reminders of the ever-present risks faced by drivers<sup>355</sup>.

Most recently an incident at the Suzuka Grand Prix has reignited concerns about safety in Formula One, despite assurances from the FIA following past tragedies. Onboard footage captured the alarming moment during heavy rainfall when Pierre Gasly encountered a stationary tractor positioned dangerously close to the racing line while trying to navigate the aftermath of Carlos Sainz's crash<sup>356</sup>. Gasly's incredulous reaction over team radio echoed the sentiments of many within the paddock: *"What is this tractor doing on track? This is unacceptable."*<sup>357</sup> The gravity of the situation was compounded by the haunting similarity to Jules Bianchi's tragic accident at the same circuit eight years prior. Bianchi's fatal collision with a recovery vehicle underscored the

Screenshot. (2024). *The moment Gasly came across the vehicle.*  
fltv.formula1.com



imperative for strict safety protocols, yet a similar scenario was once again happening<sup>358, 359</sup>. Alex Wurz, director of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association (GPDA), made his condemnation clear: *"This must NOT happen"*<sup>360</sup>. The presence of the tractor on track, coupled with reports of drivers being unable to spot it even under safety car conditions, painted a stark picture of lapses in safety measures. The Suzuka incident serves as a sobering reminder of the inherent risks in motorsport and the paramount importance of prioritizing safety above all else. In a sport where split-second decisions can mean the difference between life and death, there can

<sup>355</sup> There have been more than 50 F1 deaths. retrieved 23 April 2024 (2024, January 10). The Manual. <https://www.themanual.com/auto/f1-drivers-safety/>

<sup>356</sup> The full FIA statement on F1 Japanese GP crane incident review, AUTOSPORT. Retrieved 26th April 2024, (Oct. 21, 2022, 12:14PM), <https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/the-full-fia-statement-on-f1-japanese-gp-review/10387595/>.

<sup>357</sup> Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://fltv.formula1.com>

<sup>358</sup> Japanese Grand Prix: Memories of Jules Bianchi death trigger anger over recovery truck on track. Retrieved 17 April 2024 (2022, October 9). BBC Sport. <https://www.bbc.com/sport/formula1/63190448>

<sup>359</sup> Image: Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://fltv.formula1.com>

<sup>360</sup> Richards, G. (2022, October 10). FIA to review use of recovery vehicles after crane incident at Japanese GP. Retrieved 22 April 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/oct/10/fia-to-review-use-of-recovery-vehicles-after-crane-incident-at-japanese-gp>

be no room for complacency when it comes to safeguarding the lives of drivers, marshalls, and all personnel involved in the spectacle of Formula One.

The perception of Formula One transitioning into a spectacle has been tolerated and even fostered in certain aspects of the sport. However, when this transition begins to encroach upon the actual racing, safety and sporting integrity of Formula One, it becomes a cause for concern. While many decisions made during races can be attributed to the complex regulations and the need for rapid decision-making, the growing number of inconsistencies and questionable rulings has raised alarms within the F1 community<sup>361</sup>. These concerns center around the possibility that such decisions could ultimately impact the quality of racing. To address these worries the governing body of Formula One has implemented various measures aimed at regulating the sport's governance. These include conducting driver meetings and introducing new protocols to ensure clearer and more consistent decision-making. Over the years, these concerns regarding the potential impact of Formula One's transition into a spectacle continued to mount. Many harbored concerns that this shift would eventually manifest during a race, leading to significant consequences.

### III. The 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix: A Turning Point Highlighting the Spectacle-Driven Transformation of Formula One

#### A. Deciphering the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix: What It Signifies for the Sport

The Abu Dhabi Grand Prix of 2021 marked a critical juncture in Formula One's trajectory, encapsulating the culmination of longstanding concerns and acting as a catalyst for the ensuing perception of the sport's integrity. This event exemplifies the central inquiry surrounding Formula One's gradual evolution into a spectacle at the expense of its sporting essence. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding and effectively analyze the implications for both the sport itself and its perception among fans, a meticulous examination of exactly what happened during the Abu Dhabi 2021 Grand Prix is imperative.

The 2021 Formula One championship season saw the emergence of a fierce battle between Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen. As the championship approached its

---

<sup>361</sup>161385360554578. (2022, November 18). F1 is 'becoming show business' and inconsistent stewarding 'feels like a strategy'. Retrieved 30 November 2023 talkSPORT. <https://talksport.com/sport/1249862/formula-1-show-business-inconsistent-fia-stewarding/>

conclusion, Hamilton faced a daunting challenge, requiring victories in the final four races to clinch the title, with no room for error. The timing of these events couldn't have been more opportune for Formula One, coinciding with a peak in viewership and engagement fueled by the success of "Drive to Survive" and the digital era. The high stakes intensified the excitement surrounding the championship battle, drawing widespread attention from fans<sup>362</sup>.

Indeed, the final races of that season could not have happened better for those seeking entertainment. Hamilton had to win, Verstappen was desperate to defend his lead, leading to an incredibly tense battle over the last few races. Many describe Hamilton's racing in those last four races as the best he has ever been. The Brazil GP, one of the pivotal races of the season and the first of four races Hamilton had to win in order to preserve his shot at the championship, epitomised the intensity of the championship fight. Hamilton's disqualification from qualifying, relegating him to the back of the grid, set the stage for a remarkable comeback as he embarked on a charge to secure victory from 20th position. Following these events, social media engagement reached a new high<sup>363 364</sup>.

However, tensions between the contenders reached a crescendo, notably highlighted by controversial moments such as the alleged brake check incident involving Verstappen during the penultimate Jeddah Grand Prix. He was accused of brake-checking Lewis Hamilton, which sparked considerable controversy and scrutiny within the Formula One community. Indeed, brake checking is one of the biggest and clearest rules in Formula One. *"At no time may a car be driven unnecessarily slowly, erratically or in a manner which could be deemed potentially dangerous to other drivers or any other person."*<sup>365</sup> Verstappen was ultimately penalised with a 10-second time penalty and two penalty points on his racing license. However, many observers perceived this penalty as relatively lenient, especially in

Formula 1. (2021). *Abu Dhabi Grand prix promotional poster*.  
formula1.com



<sup>362</sup> F1. (2022, February 17). Formula 1 announces TV, race attendance and digital audience figures for 2021. Retrieved 10th May 2024 Formula 1. [https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.formula-1-announces-tv-race-attendanceand-digital-audience-figures-for-2021.1YDpVJIOHGNuok907sWcKW.html#:~:text=The%20cumulative%20TV%20audience%20for,Sao%20Paulo%20\(82.1m\)F1.\(2021,February8\).](https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.formula-1-announces-tv-race-attendanceand-digital-audience-figures-for-2021.1YDpVJIOHGNuok907sWcKW.html#:~:text=The%20cumulative%20TV%20audience%20for,Sao%20Paulo%20(82.1m)F1.(2021,February8).)

<sup>363</sup> Harris, D. (2021, November 14). Lewis Hamilton shrugs off penalty to win F1's Brazil Grand Prix – as it happened! Retrieved 22 April 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/live/2021/nov/14/brazilian-grand-prix-f1-updates-live>

<sup>364</sup> Image: F1—The official home of formula 1® racing. (2024, February 29). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. <https://www.formula1.com/en.html>

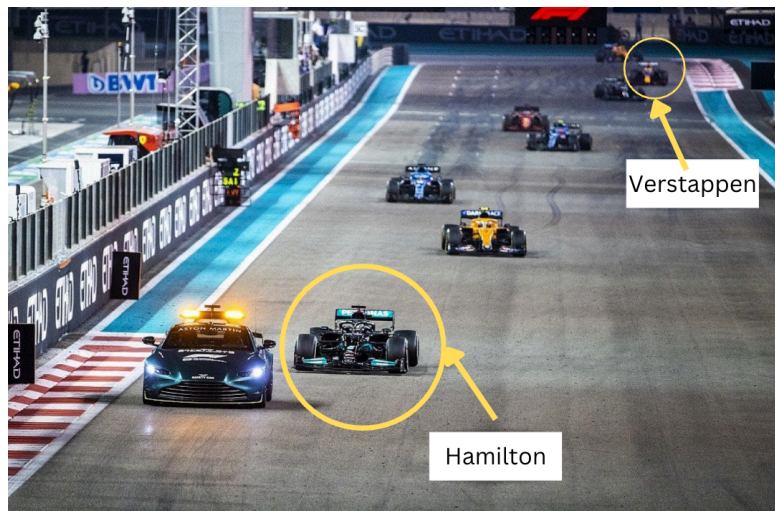
<sup>365</sup> Article 33.4 of the FIA Formula One Sporting Regulations <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>. (n.d.). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>

comparison to recent penalties issued for similar infractions<sup>366</sup>. Notably, Alonso recently received a 20-second time penalty for a similar offense, highlighting disparities in penalty severity<sup>367</sup>. The timing of the incident, occurring just before the final race of the season, added to the intrigue and speculation surrounding the championship battle. Some conjectured that the governing body may have aimed to maintain suspense and drama by ensuring both drivers entered the final race in Abu Dhabi on equal footing, thus setting the stage for a thrilling championship showdown. This showdown was highly promoted and capitalised on.

Furthermore, concerns over impartiality and conflicts of interest reached a peak with revelations about Derek Warwick, who stewarded the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. Warwick's public statement referring to Verstappen as "the great white hope" raised questions about his impartiality, particularly given his role as a steward and his ties to Honda, which supplies engines to Red Bull Racing<sup>368</sup>. As the first and only Black driver in Formula One, Hamilton has confronted adversity and racism, both on and off the track, throughout his entire career<sup>369</sup>.

During the Abu Dhabi GP, the final race of the Formula One season, Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen entered the event with an equal number of points, setting the stage for a dramatic conclusion.

Verstappen, starting from pole position, faced intense competition from Hamilton, who led for the majority of the fifty-eight-lap race. The pivotal moment occurred on lap 53 when Williams' driver Latifi crashed into the barriers with five laps remaining, necessitating the deployment of the safety car. Under safety car conditions, cars on the track are required



Screenshot. (2024). *Gap between Hamilton and Verstappen*. fltv.formula1.com

<sup>366</sup> Penalty decision for car 33. FIA Formula One Sporting Regulations. Retrieved 16th April 2024 <https://www.fia.com/sites/default/files/decision-document/2021%20Saudi%20Arabian%20Grand%20Prix%20-%20Offence%20-%20Car%2033%20-%20Causing%20a%20collision.pdf>

<sup>367</sup> Penalty decision for car 14. FIA Formula One Sporting Regulations. Retrieved 16th April 2024 <https://www.fia.com/sites/default/files/decision-document/2024%20Australian%20Grand%20Prix%20-%20Infri ngement%20-%20Car%2014%20-%20Potentially%20dangerous%20driving.pdf>

<sup>368</sup> Chequered Flag podcast from the BBC. (2016, June 9). Chequered flag formula 1 20160609 canadian grand prix preview [ canadian grand prix preview]. <http://archive.org/details/chequered-flag-formula-1-20160609-canadian-grand-prix-preview-canadian-grand-pri x-preview>

<sup>369</sup> Carrington, B. (2023). Can the Formula One Driver Speak? Lewis Hamilton, Race and the Resurrection of the Black Athlete. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 355-384). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

to reduce their speed to facilitate the safe clearing of debris by race marshals<sup>370</sup>. This resulted in cars bunching up behind the safety car in a predetermined order, irrespective of whether they had been lapped. This reduced Hamilton's 13-second lead over Verstappen but with lapped traffic between the pair (five cars), the British driver was safe from the Red Bull. The lapped cars were informed they wouldn't be allowed to overtake the Safety Car and thus gave Hamilton a crucial buffer over Verstappen<sup>371</sup>.

Indeed, Hamilton, aware of the regulations, operated under the assumption that they would either finish under the safety car, or all of the lapped cars would be let through, thus weary of losing track position, and he chose to stay out on track, while Verstappen seized the opportunity to pit for a fresh set of tires. After the pit stop, Verstappen found himself in second place with five lapped cars between him and Hamilton, along with three additional lapped cars behind him. However, with two laps remaining, Race Director Michael Masi permitted only the five cars between Verstappen and Hamilton to unlap themselves, effectively clearing the path for Verstappen to challenge Hamilton once the safety car period concluded. The race resumed with just one lap remaining, giving Verstappen enough time to make the most of his fresher tyres to take the lead and thus secure the 2021 F1 world championship<sup>372</sup>. The major point of contention centered around Masi's decision to permit only a select few of the lapped cars to overtake the safety car, contrary to the established rules that mandate all lapped cars be allowed to do so. Additionally, Masi's deviation from protocol was evident in his choice to promptly bring the safety car in, instead of adhering to the standard procedure, which would have entailed an additional lap under the safety car, effectively concluding the race under such conditions<sup>373</sup>.

Following these events, Mercedes lodged formal protests seeking an adjustment to the Race Classification to ensure compliance with regulatory stipulations. In response to the protests, stewards convened hearings and issued determinations. The stewards invoked Article 48.13 of the F1 Sporting Regulations, which empowers the Race Director to regulate safety car usage, thereby overriding Article 48.12. Moreover, stewards emphasised the desirability of races concluding under green flag conditions rather than under safety car conditions, leading to the dismissal of the complaint. Following the stewards' decisions, Mercedes retained the right to appeal in accordance with relevant provisions of the FIA International Sporting Code and Judicial and Disciplinary Rules. However, Mercedes ultimately opted to withdraw the appeal<sup>374</sup>.

---

<sup>370</sup> Image: Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://f1tv.formula1.com>

<sup>371</sup> 2021 f1 abu dhabi grand prix—Report to the world motor sport council—19 march 2022. Retrieved 27 April 2024 (2022, March 19). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/2021-f1-abu-dhabi-grand-prix-report-world-motor-sport-council-19-march-2022>

<sup>372</sup> Zheng, A. (2023). After abu dhabi: Restoring integrity and accountability in formula 1 (SSRN Scholarly Paper 4430392). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4430392>

<sup>373</sup> 2021 f1 abu dhabi grand prix—Report to the world motor sport council—19 march 2022. Retrieved 27 April 2024 (2022, March 19). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile.

<https://www.fia.com/2021-f1-abu-dhabi-grand-prix-report-world-motor-sport-council-19-march-2022>

<sup>374</sup> Ibid

Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff elucidated the rationale behind the decision, citing skepticism regarding the efficacy of the FIA's internal mechanisms for adjudicating disputes and securing justice. *“We believe we had a very strong case, and if you look at it from the legal side, if it would have been judged in a regular court you could almost guarantee that we would have won. But the problem with the ICA is the way it is structured. The FIA can't really mark their own homework. And there is a difference between being right, and obtaining justice”* Wolff underscored the need for external accountability within the FIA, highlighting concerns that reverberate with the broader implications of the events at Abu Dhabi<sup>375</sup>.

Nevertheless, the FIA initiated an inquiry into the contentious circumstances surrounding the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, culminating in the decision to dismiss Michael Masi from his role as race director ahead of the 2022 F1 season. Despite acknowledged discrepancies in Masi's adherence to safety car regulations, the outcome of the race remained unchanged. In reference to Masi's decision to allow only a certain number of cars to unlap themselves rather than all of them, the report stated: *“The process of identifying lapped cars has up until now been a manual one and human error led to the fact that not all cars were allowed to un-lap themselves.”* The rule has since been changed noting that “all” not “any” cars must be permitted to unlap themselves. They have also now stated the instructions on cars unlapping will be automated<sup>376</sup>.

The other most contentious decision, that Masi allowed the safety car to pit immediately after the lapped cars had unlapped themselves rather than staying out for an extra lap as is stated in the regulations, was acknowledged. The report stated, though, that the rules in question, Article 48.12 and Article 48.13, could be open to “different interpretation” and this contributed to the decision that was made. It raises the question of why these rules have not subsequently been changed in order to remove any confusion or interpretation in future. Since this event, all races with a late safety car have ended under a safety car, following the protocol that has been in place for years (with Abu Dhabi being the sole exception). The FIA's inquiry report characterised Masi's decisions during the race as made in "good faith," albeit acknowledging the presence of "human error" in the process. It acknowledged that they had a preference to try to avoid ending races behind the safety car and that in trying to do so in Abu Dhabi *“Masi was acting in good faith and to the best of his knowledge given the difficult circumstances”*<sup>377</sup>.

---

<sup>375</sup> Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team. Retrieved 17th April 2024 (2021, December 16). Toto's post-season f1 press conference. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyVwenXDcYw>

<sup>376</sup> 2021 f1 abu dhabi grand prix—Report to the world motor sport council—19 march 2022. Retrieved 27 April 2024 (2022, March 19). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile.

<https://www.fia.com/2021-f1-abu-dhabi-grand-prix-report-world-motor-sport-council-19-march-2022>

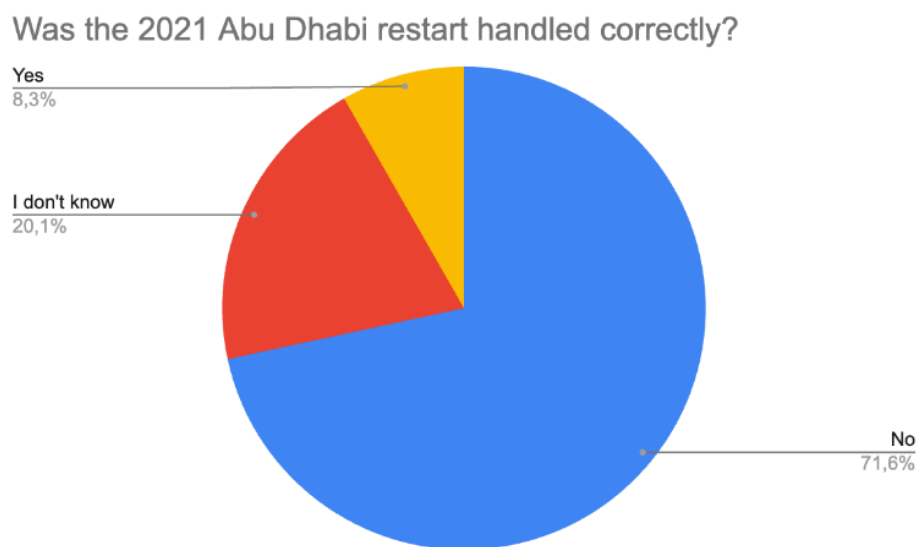
<sup>377</sup> Ibid



## B. Fan Reactions: The Impact of the Abu Dhabi Controversy

This race was very poorly received, with many people expressing their displeasure. To the question “Was the Abu Dhabi 2021 restart handled correctly?”, 71.6% of people said no, 8.3% of people said yes, and 20.1% of people said that they did not know. Now, these responses do require nuance. Indeed, the next question was: what are your opinions on the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix? Of the 8.3% of people who said they believed the restart was handled correctly, all of them decided to give further opinions. Of these opinions, not a single person expressed the opinion that the decision was correctly applied according to the regulations.

**Figure 18:** Opinions on AD Restart



Indeed, through coding the responses, it was possible to note that the responses fall into one of four categories. First, some were rooting for Verstappen and were happy with the way it played out, as exemplified by this response: *"I was supporting Verstappen more than Hamilton this time so I'm happy with this situation."* Others argued that the decision was made, and you could then not change it, such as this individual: *"Max Verstappen won, even if the decision was so-called wrong it was what happened, you can't retract that. It was the decision at the time, and you can't change that."* Some felt that Verstappen deserved to win the championship, so even though the race was incorrect, the final product is worth it, indeed, many responses aligned with this respondent's perspective: *"I think that the whole season was a bit of a mess, but ultimately I think Max deserved the championship more than Lewis, and so I liked the outcome."* Finally, a fourth group explained that they were simply making a show and made the best decision they could to ensure the entertainment: *"I believe they chose the one that can be justified the easiest: ensure the show and restart the race."*

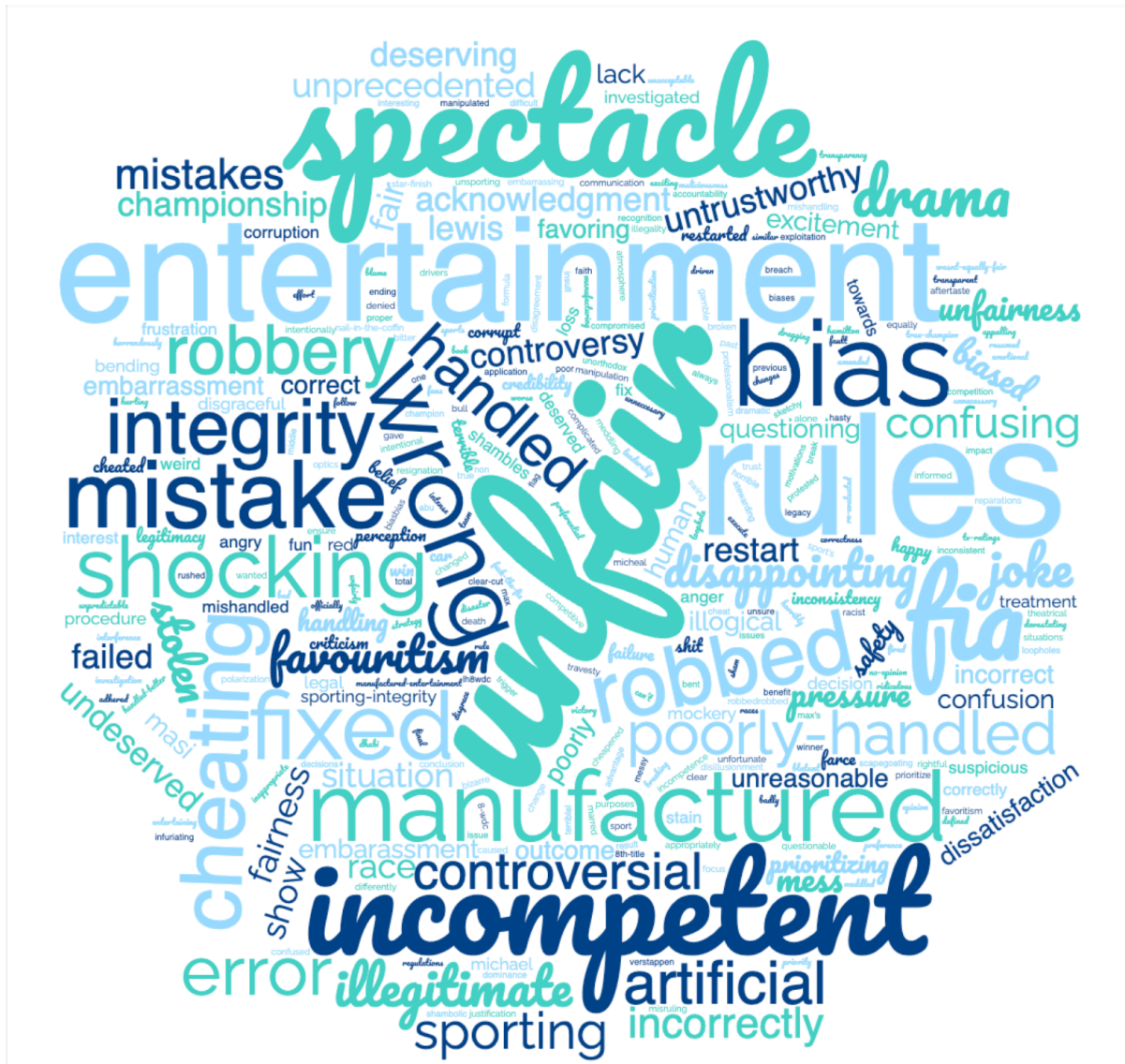
Of those who said they did not know how they felt about the restart, a majority then went on to explain that they did not feel informed enough to give their opinion. The second largest majority then stated that they found the race was handled very poorly, but the decision was made and there was no point in focusing on it: *"What is done is done, but sudden changes to the FIA rule book during the race to facilitate the change of a new WDC is not it."* Other opinions expressed were Verstappen fans explaining that while the race was controversial, they were glad that their driver won it: *"I think Max deserved the win and got it on his own merit, but I think race control trying to act in a way that made the sport 'more exciting' was unfair and should have focused on what was fairest for the drivers in the title fight."* Another strong argument that prevailed was fans who said that while it was ignoring the rules, it was an interesting and fun race to watch: *"The restart was done questionably but ignoring the rules, it was a very interesting and exciting race."* Others explained that the pressure Michael Masi was under could explain the poor decision-making at the time, and thus they understood why the decision had been made even if it was not correct: *"That was the third or so race I ever watched, so I knew basically nothing at the time. I can see now that the restart was probably meant to have gone a different way, but I can see that with the TPs having access to Masi and him perhaps feeling pressured to have such a hot championship not end under a 'boring' safety car lap, that it turned out the way that it did. Obviously this isn't really an excuse, but the shift of the sport towards spectacle really stood out here."* Once again, not a single individual expressed that the race was handled properly and correctly. Not all people who answered "I don't know" expressed their opinion, so obviously we cannot account for all of that, but of everybody who said that the restart was handled correctly and everybody who answered for the "I don't know" portion, we are able to say that not a single one of them, in fact, believes that the situation was correct.

We can discern an overarching sentiment, regardless of fan affinities, that the handling of the Abu Dhabi 2021 race was inadequate. The overwhelming majority of respondents expressed dissatisfaction, indicating a consensus that the restart was mishandled. Once again the question "What is your opinion on the Abu Dhabi 2021 situation" was mobilised, this time incorporating all responses. From this analysis, we generated a word cloud that encapsulated the collective sentiments of all who answered the question.

Immediately, several words stand out in the word cloud, notably "spectacle" and "entertainment," followed by descriptors such as "unfair," "incompetent," "rules", "mistake," "robbed," "manufactured drama," "shocking," "cheating," "fixed," and "illegitimate." Through the examination of the responses from those who initially claimed the restart was handled correctly, we know that they, too, harbored concerns about the race's conduct. Consequently, the conspicuous absence of positive words in the word cloud is

understandable. While smaller words like "fun" and "happy" are discernible, the overwhelming majority of sentiments expressed profound dissatisfaction with the race's proceedings.

Figure 19: Word Cloud of Opinions on Abu Dhabi Situation



Indeed, the acknowledgment of a preference to avoid ending races behind the safety car struck many fans as a disregard for the sport's fundamental principles. It seemed to suggest a willingness to prioritise spectacle over adherence to established rules, which fundamentally undermines Formula One's sporting integrity. Some fans questioned the essence of competition itself, wondering aloud: If winners can be arbitrarily chosen, what purpose does competition serve?

The prevailing sentiment was that the spectacle had been prioritised over the sport, disrespecting its essence and fundamental principles. This sentiment represents a culmination of growing concerns among fans regarding the balance between spectacle and tradition, as well as sporting integrity. The Abu Dhabi 2021 Grand Prix served as a glaring exemplar of these worries, embodying the fear that spectacle would overshadow the core values of Formula One.

### C. Long-term Ramifications: Trust and Integrity in Formula One

The aftermath of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix saw a chorus of criticism from drivers and analysts alike, directed towards Race Director Michael Masi for his handling of the race's conclusion. Several drivers publicly condemned Masi's decision, viewing it as a departure from standard safety car procedures<sup>378</sup>. Lewis Hamilton, in a radio message to his race engineer Peter Bonnington during the last lap, expressed his belief that the race result had been "manipulated," a sentiment not aired on the television broadcast<sup>379</sup>. George Russell labeled Masi's decision as "unacceptable," echoing the sentiments of many drivers on the grid. Lando Norris, positioned at the head of the group of cars permitted to unlap, asserted that the decision to resume racing on the final lap was orchestrated "for TV" rather than for the integrity of the competition. Commentator David Croft asserted that adherence to the rules as written would have secured Hamilton's victory in both the race and the championship<sup>380</sup>.

Hamilton's conspicuous silence following the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix left many speculating about his future in the sport, with some even questioning whether he might consider retirement<sup>381</sup>. This uncertainty was particularly concerning given Hamilton's immense influence and popularity within Formula One. With a social media following surpassing that of the sport itself, Hamilton is not only a record-breaking driver but also a powerful figure in attracting sponsors and engaging fans. The prospect of Hamilton's departure from Formula One raised significant concerns about the potential repercussions for the sport<sup>382</sup>. Hamilton's influence extends beyond the racetrack, shaping the sport's narrative and public perception to a considerable extent. However, he did return, affirming his

---

<sup>378</sup> <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>. (n.d.). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. Retrieved 13 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>

<sup>379</sup> Abu Dhabi GP: Lewis Hamilton claimed F1 title-deciding race was 'manipulated' in radio message. (n.d.). Retrieved 19 April 2024 Sky Sports. Retrieved 13 May 2024, from <https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12433/12494989/abu-dhabi-gp-lewis-hamilton-claimed-f1-title-deciding-race-was-manipulated-in-radio-message>

<sup>380</sup> Sky Sports F1. (2022, February 9). Michael masi-red bull audio at abu dhabi grand prix 'really uncomfortable' says martin brundle. Retrieved 12 April 2024 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79VL3Zd-O0s>

<sup>381</sup> Lewis hamilton's weird social media silence enters 7th week. Retrieved 5 May 2024 (2022, January 24). Autoweek. <https://www.autoweek.com/racing/formula-1/a38870936/lewis-hamilton-weird-social-media-silence/>

<sup>382</sup> Carrington, B. (2023). Can the Formula One Driver Speak? Lewis Hamilton, Race and the Resurrection of the Black Athlete. In *The History and Politics of Motor Racing: Lives in the Fast Lane* (pp. 355-384). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

commitment to obtaining the record-breaking championship. Addressing the events that transpired, Hamilton recently offered a succinct yet poignant reflection on the contentious race, stating, "*Was I robbed? Obviously. I mean, you know the story.*" In these few words, Hamilton encapsulated the sentiment shared by many fans and observers who viewed the events of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix as a deviation from sporting integrity<sup>383</sup>.

Sports fans are drawn to the thrill of the game for myriad reasons, one of which is the role of stressors it provides. Indeed, various theories posit that sports offer a platform for experiencing eustress, or pleasant stress. The essence lies in the notion that modern society often lacks the exhilarating variability found in sports, allowing individuals to confront challenges and explore new avenues. Crucially, this engagement hinges on a sense of control—the familiarity with rules, potential outcomes, and informed decision-making. Herein lies the crux: it is not merely about the end result but rather the exhilarating process of risk-taking that brings satisfaction. However, when the familiar constructs of this environment are disrupted, the resulting sense of betrayal, hurt, and disillusionment becomes all the more profound—a disruption akin to having one's comfort stripped away<sup>384</sup>. This illuminates the visceral reactions witnessed in response to events like the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Indeed, it is not the outcome that caused the major upset, but the disregard for a system that has worked one way for years. It is not about the results but rather the seismic shift in familiarity. That is not to say the result doesn't play a role. But if fans have operated within a certain framework for a substantial amount of time, and that sense of familiarity is abruptly altered, the ensuing reactions are unsurprising. Indeed, even as fans may persist in watching, the residue of distrust lingers. The bond between fans and a sport can be likened to that of a relationship: once trust is fractured, substantial effort is required to rebuild it<sup>385</sup>. In the aftermath of events such as those witnessed in Formula One, fans may find themselves needing to "relearn" the sport before they can emotionally invest in the same manner as before. This process entails a recalibration of expectations, a reevaluation of the sport's integrity, and a gradual restoration of confidence in the governing bodies and the sport itself. Indeed, it creates a recalibration of the sport's fandom and its operations. Thus, while the allure of the sport may endure, the scars of disillusionment remain, shaping the future dynamics of fan engagement and the sport's broader narrative. This underscores the intricate

---

<sup>383</sup> Addy, D. R., Campbell. (2024, April 1). Lewis Hamilton is changing lanes. *British GQ*. Retrieved 2 April 2024 <https://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/lewis-hamilton-interview-2024>

<sup>384</sup> Sloan, L. R. (1989). The motives of sports fans. *Sports, games, and play: Social and psychological viewpoints*, 2, 175-240.

<sup>385</sup> Cheska, A. T. (1981). SPORTS EVENTS IN CULTURAL PERCEPTION OF "THE GOOD LIFE". In *The Quality of Life: Systems Approaches* (pp. 448-455). Pergamon.

relationship between sports fandom, familiarity, and the profound impact of disruptions on fan psychology and emotional investment in the sport<sup>386</sup>.

In the aftermath of Abu Dhabi, a shift occurred. Every year, Liberty Media has typically released a press statement at the onset of the Formula One season, highlighting the previous year's TV figures. Surprisingly, for the year 2022, no such announcement was made. Instead, a statement was issued, emphasizing various other metrics such as race attendance and social media followers, all of which purportedly showed an upward trend. However, conspicuously absent was a clear indication of the cumulative TV viewership figure for the global audience. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that this metric has experienced a slight decline<sup>387</sup>. This revelation carries significant weight, particularly in light of Formula One's upward trajectory since navigating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, even a marginal dip in viewing figures prompts questions about the underlying factors influencing this trend. Moreover, the 2023 season has followed a similar trajectory, with viewing figures showing a slight decline<sup>388</sup>.

Indeed, the aftermath of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix seemed to mark a turning point for many fans, prompting a reevaluation of their relationship with Formula One. While some attributed the decline in viewership to a vocal subset of fans who declared their intention to stop watching after the controversial end to the 2021 season, others pointed to the influence of "Drive to Survive." This documentary series has undeniably played a significant role in popularizing Formula One, presenting it as a thrilling and dramatic spectacle. However, the landscape has shifted with the implementation of new regulations that Red Bull have mastered, resulting in their dominance in subsequent seasons<sup>389</sup>. Coupled with the fallout from the cost cap scandal and the bitter taste left by Abu Dhabi, this has led to disillusionment among certain fans. While Formula One remains a highly popular sport with substantial social media engagement and viewership, the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix served as a catalyst for fans to view the sport through a different lens. Many now perceive it more as a spectacle than a true sport, questioning its legitimacy and authenticity. This shift in perception underscores the need for the sport's governing bodies to address concerns and regain the trust of disillusioned fans.

---

<sup>386</sup> Sloan, L. R. (1989). The motives of sports fans. *Sports, games, and play: Social and psychological viewpoints*, 2, 175-240.

<sup>387</sup> Liberty media corporation reports fourth quarter and year end 2022 financial results. Retrieved April 25th 2024 (2023, March 1). Liberty Media Corporation. <https://www.libertymedia.com/investors/news-events/press-releases/detail/485/liberty-media-corporation-reports-fourth-quarter-and-year>

<sup>388</sup> Liberty media corporation reports fourth quarter and year end 2023 financial results. Retrieved April 25th 2024 (2024, February 28). Liberty Media Corporation. <https://www.libertymedia.com/news/detail/525/liberty-media-corporation-reports-fourth-quarter-and-year>

<sup>389</sup> Garcia-del-Barrio, P., & Reade, J. J. (2021). Does certainty on the winner diminish the interest in sport competitions? The case of formula one. *Empirical Economics*, 1-21.

## Conclusion

This thesis began with the question “In what manner has Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One altered its essence from a sport to a spectacle, and to what extent does the fan perception of this transition diverge from objective reality?” To effectively address this inquiry, our research unfolded through the exploration of four key hypotheses.

First of all, the hypothesis that was developed, stated that: Formula One was primarily a sport in its earlier iterations and that Liberty Media planned to change that. Our research demonstrated that Formula One indeed began as a purely sporting endeavour, with minimal media presence. Under Ecclestone's leadership, it evolved into a media event, with the race remaining the central focus albeit glamorised for media consumption. Having established Formula One's essence, we observed how Liberty Media's acquisition positioned them to wield significant influence, poised for a paradigm shift in Formula One's trajectory. The company set out plans to transform the world of Formula One through global expansion and commercialisation, while emphasising the importance of preserving its sporting integrity. This confirmed Formula One's origins as a sport. However, while we validated the fact that Liberty Media's acquisition signalled a pivotal moment for change and unveiled plans to revolutionise aspects of Formula One, they also expressed a commitment to upholding its core sporting essence. Thus, this hypothesis is only partially validated.

Moving on to the second hypothesis: The strategic decisions made by Liberty Media, whether originating internally or influenced by external factors, played an important role in this evolution of sport to spectacle, reshaping Formula One's landscape.

Indeed, the objective of US expansion was clearly stated by Liberty Media, demonstrating their commitment to this endeavor. The sport successfully adapted facets of American culture to attract American audiences, a significant step towards catering to a new demographic. Following this expansion, Formula One embraced a 'Super Bowlification' by adding two new US Grand Prix events, embodying the mega-event formula. This marked a significant factor in the shift towards spectacle, with these races serving as prime examples of the evolving nature of Formula One. Furthermore, an analysis of Liberty Media's commercial strategy illuminated their success in gaining popularity, particularly through digital expansion. Launching into social media and releasing apps such as F1 TV enabled Formula One to attract a younger demographic of viewers and achieve high rates of fan engagement across platforms. While digitalisation was generally well-received, concerns arose regarding access issues for apps like F1 TV and the need for content authenticity. Another contributing factor to the shift was the role of brands and sponsorships. Liberty Media created an attractive market for sponsors, garnering significant interest. However, the influx of sponsorships and their influence, including changes to team names, raised concerns about the

commercialisation compromising historical aspects of the sport. Additionally, the influence of host countries of Formula One races was examined. It became apparent how the sport could be utilised for 'sportswashing' purposes. Furthermore, instances of impositions on the drivers to maintain a certain image became apparent. Concerns regarding safety and the influence of host countries on race scheduling further underscored the complexities of Formula One's global presence. Lastly, the role of fans in this shift was highlighted. While Liberty Media aimed to acquire a younger demographic, considerations of fan retention and pleasing the broader fan base were crucial. It was possible to note concerns about Liberty Media's focus solely on younger and American audiences.

Overall, it is possible to prove that these factors did reshape the sports landscape and significantly contributed to the shift in Formula One. While some initiatives were well-received, others were not, highlighting the delicate balance Liberty Media must maintain to uphold their objectives.

Next, the assertion that the influx of new fans, largely driven by the popularity of "Drive to Survive," has significantly altered the demographic makeup of Formula One enthusiasts. However, there is a general consensus among these fans that the show has had largely negative effects on the sport. Utilising data from the 2021 global F1 fan survey, we confirmed a notable shift in the makeup of Formula One fans, characterised by a substantial increase in female and younger demographics. This trend was further corroborated by the findings of our own research survey, which was predominantly populated by younger individuals and female respondents. Moreover, the significant impact of "Drive to Survive" in attracting new fans to the sport was confirmed. However, amidst its success, there emerged a consensus among fans and stakeholders within Formula One regarding the show's excessive dramatisation and misrepresentation of the sport's essence. Ultimately, this research validated the assertion of an influx of new fans, largely attributed to "Drive to Survive." Additionally, both new and existing fans expressed concerns about the show's potential to compromise the authenticity of Formula One.

The final hypothesis centred on the assertion that: a majority of fans strongly believe that Formula One has transformed into a spectacle. This, at the cost of sporting integrity, resulting in a compromise to the quality of racing.

Firstly, an analysis of survey responses as well as insights into fans commentary on the survey highlighted the significance of the word "strongly" in the hypothesis, indicating a deeply resonant topic among fans, as evidenced by the substantial number of responses received and the passionate and detailed nature of these responses. Subsequently, the assertion that Formula One has transitioned into a spectacle found widespread agreement among fans, with the majority expressing alignment with this viewpoint. While a few dissented, citing either the sport's existing spectacle status or broader industry trends, it still



demonstrates the prominence of spectacle in Formula One. Furthermore, it was evident that this sentiment represented a general consensus among fans. Indeed, apart from newer fans leaning more towards “slightly” than “completely”, no trends were detectable when looking into characteristics of those who responded. Fans predominantly align with the notion of Formula One as a spectacle. Additionally, a majority of fans perceived this shift as adversely impacting the quality of racing. It was possible to demonstrate instances of safety lapses and inconsistent stewarding illustrating this belief. Finally, an examination of the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix served as a case study, revealing a disregard for rules in favor of creating a dramatic finale, a move that was vehemently criticised by fans and stakeholders alike. This incident eroded trust in the sport's governance and created a sentiment of betrayal and disillusionment among fans. In conclusion, the evidence supports the hypothesis that a majority of fans strongly believe Formula One has transformed into a spectacle, leading to compromises in racing quality and sporting integrity.

Having addressed these smaller hypotheses, it is possible to use them to bring answers to the overarching hypothesis that stated: Formula One has transitioned from a pure sporting event to a spectacle, a notion that is widely agreed upon by fans.

Indeed, Formula One has undergone a significant transformation, altering its essence from what it once was. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that, thus far, the race itself has largely remained unchanged. There is a clear accumulation of factors indicating a prioritisation of the spectacle aspect within Formula One. While some changes have positively impacted the race experience, the prominence of spectacle within the sport is undeniable. It is essential to emphasise that this hypothesis concerns the transition from a pure sporting event to a spectacle, and in that regard, Formula One has indeed evolved. It is no longer purely a sporting event. However, it has not yet reached a state of complete spectacle. Rather, it's part of an ongoing transition, reflecting a dynamic shift in the sport's identity. For the fans, there's a prevailing consensus aligning with this notion, acknowledging a discernible shift in Formula One's identity from its traditional roots. This sentiment is shared across the fan base, indicating a widespread recognition that the event has evolved significantly from its previous state. Contrary to the assumption that newer fans, drawn in by the spectacle, might perceive things differently, the evidence suggests otherwise. The majority of fans, regardless of their entry point into the sport, agree with this observation.

Indeed, this hypothesis when taking all of the nuances into account is proven accurate. As for the overarching question of this thesis “In what manner has Liberty Media's acquisition of Formula One altered its essence from a sport to a spectacle, and to what extent does the fan perception of this transition diverge from objective reality?”

We have thoroughly examined the factors contributing to this shift, shedding light on both the evolution degradation and preservation of Formula One's essence. It is possible to

confirm a shift from pure sporting event to spectacle, however the question of if this is at the cost of its essence as sport remains to be seen. Indeed, while surrounding elements to the sport have undergone significant transformation, notably emphasising spectacle, the core essence of the sport, represented by the race itself, has largely remained intact. However, it is crucial to acknowledge instances where Formula One's sporting integrity has been compromised in favour of spectacle. The Abu Dhabi Grand Prix serves as a poignant example, illustrating Formula One's willingness to prioritise spectacle over sporting competition. Indeed they chose the spectacular finale over sporting integrity. Moreover, growing inconsistencies in stewarding and safety lapses have further called into question the preservation of Formula One's sporting essence.

While Formula One's transition towards spectacle is evident, its essence as a sport has not been entirely altered. Nevertheless, continued instances of compromising sporting integrity for spectacle risk eroding this essence entirely, potentially transforming Formula One into a mere spectacle devoid of its sporting roots. The assessment of how far the fan perception of Formula One's transition diverges from objective reality reveals a striking alignment between perception and reality. Contrary to expectations of potential underestimation or overestimation, fans have demonstrated a keen awareness of the ongoing transition towards spectacle and the associated challenges to the quality of racing. Indeed, a majority have identified the ongoing transition as well as the factors that contribute to it. Fans have also acknowledged the positive impacts of Liberty Media's initiatives while remaining vigilant about potential risks to the sport. This nuanced understanding reflects an accurate perception of the objective reality of Formula One's transformation.

To answer the question, Formula One has radically transformed from its original identity as a purely sporting event. Indeed, it is now an international industry boasting gaming, television, events and merchandise, as well as the race itself. The events surrounding the Formula One race have become a spectacle. Its sporting essence however remains mostly intact. This transition is still ongoing, and Formula One must be aware of recent discrepancies that have called into question their sporting integrity and ensure that it does not continue down that route.

It is important to mention the limitations of this research. The main drawback of this study is the limited representation of older demographics in the survey. While some representation of older demographics was achieved, almost three-quarters of respondents were under the age of 28. Despite efforts to mitigate sample bias, the surveys' dissemination through social media inherently skewed towards younger respondents. Considering the significant aspect of fan rupture, it would have been beneficial to have an equal proportion of older fans to thoroughly explore their perspectives. However, the insights obtained from the older respondents who did participate were invaluable to our analysis. Furthermore, Formula

One's transition into a spectacle represents a profound shift, and it is likely that certain contributing factors were not fully explored in this research. While the most crucial aspects were addressed, some elements may warrant deeper investigation. Additionally, this research was conducted within a specific timeframe, limiting the ability to capture evolving fan perceptions or long-term trends. Future research endeavours could benefit from extended data collection periods to track changes over time.

Moreover, it would be beneficial in subsequent studies to inquire about respondents' nationalities or countries of residence. Given Formula One's European origins and its expansion into new markets like the US, understanding any regional or cultural influences on fan perceptions would be insightful. Although this survey examined trends in age, gender, occupation, and other fan characteristics, the inclusion of nationality-related questions was overlooked. This omission stemmed from the initial assumption that the survey would primarily target the UK audience, failing to anticipate its broader reach on platforms like Tumblr. Thus, this aspect was not considered during the survey's design phase.

In future research endeavours, it would be interesting to delve deeper into the landscape of fan opinions by incorporating a broader array of sociological questions. By exploring topics related to social identity, community dynamics, and cultural influences, It could offer a richer understanding of how Formula One fandom intersects with itself and broader societal trends. Moreover, dedicating ample time to analyse all the questions from the survey in its original form would provide invaluable insights into the intricacies of fan perceptions. Indeed, a complete analysis of all 55 questions would most likely illuminate subtle nuances and also offer a more comprehensive view of how the evolving spectacle of Formula One resonates with fans.

Furthermore, expanding the research scope to include the perspectives of teams, drivers, and other key stakeholders holds promise. By engaging with those deeply entrenched in the Formula One ecosystem, it would give an opportunity to obtain firsthand insights into the inner workings of the sport and its evolving dynamics. Understanding how participants perceive the sports transformation into a spectacle, and contrasting these perspectives with those of fans, would yield fascinating insights into the viewpoints within the Formula One community. It would enable us to unravel the complexities of Formula One's transition and its impact on various stakeholders. It would offer a holistic perspective that transcends mere fan opinions, shedding light on the broader implications of Formula One's evolution into a spectacle. Furthermore, using Formula One as a case study, it would be interesting to expand and include other sports with the objective of determining if this is indeed a trend across the sports world.

# Bibliography:

## Sociology of Sport, Sport fandom and Fan Behaviour :

### Academic Sources:

- Armstrong, K. L. (2007). Self, Situations, and Sport Consumption: An Exploratory Study of Symbolic Interactionism. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 30(2).
- Allison, R., & Knoester, C. (2021). Gender, sexual, and sports fan identities. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 38(3), 310-321. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2020-0036>
- Attali, M., & Saint-Martin, J. (2010). Dictionnaire culturel du sport. Dans *Armand Colin eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.3917/arco.attal.2010.01>
- Baillet, D. (2002). Les grands thèmes de la sociologie du sport. *Les grands thèmes de la sociologie du sport*, 1-256
- Basson, J.C et Nuytens, W (2001), « Modes d'encadrement et de contrôle des supporters de football, entre modèle officiel et alternative autonome : le cas du Racing Club de Lens », *Revue européenne de management du sport*, n° 5, p. 1-29.
- Berteau, F. (2013), *Le Dictionnaire des supporters. Côté tribunes*, Stock, Paris.
- Bodet G., Bernache-Assollant I. (2011). Consumer loyalty in sport spectatorship services: The relationships with consumer satisfaction and team identification. *Psychology and Marketing*, 28(8), 781–802. <https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1002/mar.20412>
- Bodin, D ; Robene, L et Heas, S. (2005), « L'hooliganisme entre genèse et modernité », *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, n° 85, p. 61-83.
- Boli, C. (2005), « Convertir les supporters en fidèles consommateurs : une politique commerciale à Manchester United », *Communication et Organisation*, n° 27, p. 70-82 <https://doi-org.ressources-electroniques.univlille.fr/10.4000/communicationorganisation.3241>
- Bourdieu, P. (1988). Program for a sociology of sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.5.2.153>
- Braumüller, B. (2020). Young adults' perceptions of the relevance of interaction on social online networks for sports activities. *European Journal For Sport And Society*, 17(3), 231-249. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16138171.2020.1792072>
- Brohm, J. M. (1992). Political Sociology of Sport. *Sociologie politique du sport*.
- Calbo, S. (1999). La réception comme activité collective. *Raisons pratiques (Paris)*, (10), 199-223.
- Brown, K. A., Billings, A. C., Murphy, B., & Puesan, L. (2018). Intersections of fandom in the age of interactive media: eSports fandom as a predictor of traditional sport fandom. *Communication & Sport*, 6(4), 418-435.
- Chovaux, O. (2003). L'émergence du 'spectacle sportif au nord de la France : vitalité du football-association et origines du supportérisme dans les années vingt. *Éthique et spectacle sportif, Arras, Artois Presses Université*, 39-64
- Crawford, G. (2004). Sport fan communities. In *Consuming Sport*. Routledge
- Détrez, C. (2020). Chapitre 6. La sociologie de la réception ? *Sociologie de la culture* (pp. 137-160). Paris : Armand Colin.
- De Kosnik, A. (2012). Fandom as free labor. In *Digital labor* (pp. 98-111). Routledge.
- Duffett, M. (2013). The fan community: Online and offline. In *Understanding fandom: An introduction to the study of media fan culture*.(pp.235-355). Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Duret, P. (2019). *Sociologie du sport*. Que sais-je.
- Ehrenberg, A. (1991). Le culte de la performance, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, coll.
- Evens, T., Iosifidis, P., & Smith, P. (2013). *The political economy of television sports rights*. Springer.
- Ginhoux, B., & Dubief, J. (2020). Openers, witnesses, followers, and 'good guys'. A sociological study of the different roles of female and male ultra fans in confrontational situations. In *The Ultras* (pp. 9-21). Routledge.
- Giulianotti, R. (2002). Supporters, followers, fans, and flaneurs: A taxonomy of spectator identities in football. *Journal of sport and social issues*, 26(1), 25-46.
- Gray, G. T., & Wert-Gray, S. (2012). Customer retention in sports organisation marketing: examining the impact of team identification and satisfaction with team performance. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 36(3), 275-281.
- Harwood, J., & Roy, A. (2005). Social identity theory and mass communication research. In J. Harwood & H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup communication* (pp. 189–211). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

- Hedlund, D. P. (2017). Creating value through membership and participation in sport fan consumption communities. In *Value co-creation in sport management* (pp. 60-81). Routledge.
- Hirshon, N. (2020). Social identity theory in sports fandom research. In *Multidisciplinary perspectives on media fandom* (pp. 172-191). IGI Global.
- Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2009). From broadcast scarcity to digital plenitude: The changing dynamics of the media sport content economy. *Television & New Media*, 10(4), 354-370.
- Jenkins, H., & Ito, M. (2015). *Participatory culture in a networked era: A conversation on youth, learning, commerce, and politics*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Johnson, L. M., Chou, W. H. W., Mastromartino, B., & Zhang, J. J. (2020). Sport fan consumption: Contemporary research and emerging trends. *Handbook of Research on the Impact of Fandom in Society and Consumerism*, 149-170.
- Kim, Y. K., & Trail, G. (2010). Constraints and motivators: A new model to explain sport consumer behavior. *Journal of sport management*, 24(2), 190-210.
- Kolbe, R. H., & James, J. D. (2000). An identification and examination of influences that shape the creation of a professional team fan. *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, 2(1), 23-38.
- Krijnen, T. (2017). Feminist Theory and the Media. *The International Encyclopedia of Media Effects*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118783764.wbieme0096>
- Lestrelin, L. (2022). *Sociologie des supporters*. La Découverte.
- Loy, J. W., & Booth, D. (2000). Functionalism, sport and society. *Handbook of sports studies*, 8-27.
- Mastromartino, B., Wang, J. J., Suggs, D. W., Hollenbeck, C. R., & Zhang, J. J. (2022). Dimensions of sense of membership in a sport fan community: Factors, outcomes, and social capital implications. *Communication & Sport*, 10(6), 1229-1256.
- Michener, J. A. (2014). Children and Sports. In *Sports in America* (pp. 104-135). Dial Press.
- Michener, J. A. (2014). Sports and Upward Escalation. In *Sports in America* (pp. 162-195). Dial Press.
- Miller, T., Lawrence, G., McKay, J., & Rowe, D. (2001). *Globalisation and sport: Playing the world*. Sage.
- Milne, G.R., McDonald, M.A., Sutton, W.A., & Kashyap, R. (1996). A niche-based evaluation of sport participation patterns. *Journal of Sport Management*, 10, 417-434.
- Newland, B., & Hayduk, T. (2020). Female sport fandom: Insights from the growing female market. *NYU School of Professional Studies*. [https://www.sps.nyu.edu/content/dam/sps/academics/departments/tisch-instituteforglobal-sport/pdfs/Female\\_Sport\\_Fandom\\_White\\_Paper.pdf](https://www.sps.nyu.edu/content/dam/sps/academics/departments/tisch-instituteforglobal-sport/pdfs/Female_Sport_Fandom_White_Paper.pdf)
- Osborne A. C., Coombs D. S. (2013). Performative sport fandom: An approach to retheorizing sport fans. *Sport in Society*, 16(5), 672-681.
- Oswald, D., Poli, R., Busset, T., Besson, R., & Jaccoud, C. (Eds.). (2014). *L'autre visage du supportérisme : autorégulations, mobilisations collectives et mouvements sociaux*. PIE-Peter Lang SA, Éditions Scientifiques Internationales
- Park S.-H., Mahony D., Kim Y. K. (2011). The role of sport fan curiosity: A new conceptual approach to the understanding of sport fan behavior. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(1), 46-56.
- Pegoraro, A. (2013). Sport fandom in the digital world. In *Routledge handbook of sport communication* (pp. 248-258). Routledge.
- Pope, S. (2019). Continuity and change in the Lives of female Sports Fans. *The Feminisation of Sports Fandom: A Sociological Study* 105-150. Routledge.
- Plaza, M., Boiché, J., Brunel, L., & Ruchaud, F. (2017). Sport= male... But not all sports: Investigating the gender stereotypes of sport activities at the explicit and implicit levels. *Sex roles*, 76, 202-217.
- Picone, I., Kleut, J., Pavlíčková, T., Romic, B., Møller Hartley, J., & De Ridder, S. (2019). Small acts of engagement: Reconnecting productive audience practices with everyday agency. *new media & society*, 21(9), 2010-2028. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819837569>
- Samra, B., & Wos, A. (2014). Consumer in Sports: Fan typology analysis. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 6(4-1), 263-288. <https://doi.org/10.2478/joim-2014-0050>
- Scraton, S., & Flintoff, A. (2013). Chapter 5. *Gender, Feminist Theory, and Sport*, 96-111. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118325261.ch5>
- Sloan, L. R. (1989). The motives of sports fans. *Sports, games, and play: Social and psychological viewpoints*, 2, 175-240.
- Smolianov, P., Zakus, D. H., & Gallo, J. (2014). Ideal-type model for an integrated elite and mass sport system. In *Sport Development in the United States*. Routledge
- Stevens, C. S. (2010). You are what you buy: Postmodern consumption and fandom of Japanese popular culture. *Japanese Studies*, 30(2), 199-214.

- Sturm, D., & McKinney, A. (2013). Affective hyper-consumption and immaterial labors of love: Theorizing sport fandom in the age of new media. *Participations*, 10(1).
- Sukhdial, A., Aiken, D., & Kahle, L. (2002). Are You Old School?: A scale for measuring sports fans' old-school orientation. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 42(4), 71-81.
- Sveinson, K., & Hoeber, L. (2015). Overlooking the obvious: An exploration of what it means to be a sport fan from a female perspective. *Leisure Studies*, 34(4), 405-419.
- Toffoletti, K. (2017). Consumption. *Women sport fans : Identification, participation, representation*. 55-79 Taylor & Francis.
- Trail, G. T., & James, J. D. (2001). The motivation scale for sport consumption: Assessment of the scale's psychometric properties. *Journal of sport behavior*, 24(1).
- Vaugrand, H. (2001). Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Marie Brohm: their schemes of intelligibility and issues towards a theory of knowledge in the sociology of sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 36(2), 183-201.
- Ville, S. (2022). *Le théâtre de la boxe : Naissance d'un spectacle sportif (ParisLondres, 1880-1930)*. Presses universitaires de Rennes.
- Wann, D. L., Melnick, M. J., Russell, G. W., & Pease, D. G. (2001). *Sport fans: The psychology and social impact of spectators*. Routledge.
- Wann, D. L. (2012). Chapter 20-The Causes and Consequences of Sport Team Identification: Chapter taken from *Handbook of Sports and Media* ISBN: 978-0-203-87367-0. Routledge Online Studies on the Olympic and Paralympic Games, 1(46), 358-382.
- Watkins, B. A. (2014). Social Identification and social media in Sports: Implications for sport brands. In *Routledge handbook of sport and new media* (pp. 200-210). Routledge.
- Whannel, G. (1993). Sport and popular culture: The temporary triumph of process over product. *Innovation: the European journal of social science research*, 6(3), 341-349.
- Witkemper, C., Lim, C. H., & Waldburger, A. (2012). Social media and sports marketing: Examining the motivations and constraints of Twitter users. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 21(3).

## The Sport/Media relationship, globalisation and digital age:

### Academic Sources:

- Acar, O., & Puntoni, S. (2016). Customer empowerment in the digital age. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 56, 4–8. doi:10.2501/JAR-2016-007
- Andrews, D. L. (2004). Speaking the 'universal language of entertainment': News Corporation, culture, and the global sport media economy. *Critical readings: Sport, culture, and the media*, 99-128.
- Andrews, D. L., Batts, C., & Silk, M. (2014). Sport, glocalisation and the new Indian middle class. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 17(3), 259-276.
- Andrews, D., & Ritzer, G. (2007). The Grobal in the Sporting Glocal. In R. Giulianotti & R. Robertson (Eds.), *Globalisation and Sport* (pp. 28–45). Blackwell.
- Beedie, P., & Craig, P. (2010). Chapter 10 Sport and the media Sport sociology. *Learning Matters*.
- Boyd R. L., Blackburn K. G., Pennebaker J. W. (2020). The narrative arc: Revealing core narrative structures through text analysis. *Science Advances*, 6(32). eaba2196, Crossref PubMed.
- Chadwick, S., Widdop, P., & Burton, N. (2022). Soft power sports sponsorship—A social network analysis of a new sponsorship form. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 21(2), 196-217.
- Cheska, A. T. (1981). SPORTS EVENTS IN CULTURAL PERCEPTION OF "THE GOOD LIFE". In *The Quality of Life: Systems Approaches* (pp. 448-455). Pergamon.
- Donnelly, P. (1996). The local and the global: Globalisation in the sociology of sport. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 20(3), 239-257.
- Dyreson, M. (2018). The super bowl as a television spectacle: Global designs, glocal niches, and parochial patterns. In *A Half Century of Super Bowls*. Routledge.
- Evens, T., Iosifidis, P., Smith, P., Evens, T., Iosifidis, P., & Smith, P. (2013). The Sports-Media-Business Complex. *The Political Economy of Television Sports Rights*, 13-30.
- Filo, K., Lock, D., & Karg, A. (2015). Sport and social media research: A review. *Sport management review*, 18(2), 166-181.
- Frandsen, K. (2014). Mediatisation of Sports. In K. Lundby (Ed.), *Mediatisation of Communication* (pp. 525–543). Mouton de Gruyter.
- Glebova, E., Zare, F., Desbordes, M., & Geczi, G. (2023). 'If there is no football, then we have nothing to discuss': a phenomenological study on football fandom and COVID19 pandemic. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 23(5), 373390.

- Gobble, M. M. (2018). Digitalisation, digitisation, and innovation. *Research-Technology Management*, 61(4), 56–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.2018.1471280>
- Gorse, S., & Chadwick, S. (2010). Conceptualising corruption in sport: Implications for sponsorship programmes. *The European Business Review*, 4, 40-45.
- Gaboriau, P. (2003). The tour de France and cycling's Belle Epoque. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 20(2), 57-78.
- Gantz, W., & Lewis, N. (2014). Sports on traditional and newer digital media: Is there really a fight for fans?. *Television & New Media*, 15(8), 760-768.
- Hoehn, T., & Lancefield, D. (2003). Broadcasting and Sport. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 19(4), 552–568.
- Hoehn, T., & Kastrinaki, Z. (2012). Broadcasting and sport: value drivers of TV right deals in european football. URL: [http://www.city.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/120130/Hoehn\\_Kastrinaki\\_Sports\\_Rights\\_Feb\\_2012.pdf](http://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/120130/Hoehn_Kastrinaki_Sports_Rights_Feb_2012.pdf).
- Horne, J. (2022). Sport, Spectacle, and Mega-Events. *The Oxford Handbook of Sport and Society*, 194.
- Hopsicker, P. M. (2017). ‘Superbowling’: Using the super bowl’s yearly commentary to explore the evolution of a sporting spectacle in the american consciousness. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 34(1–2), 23–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2017.1334644>
- Houlihan, B. (2008). Sport and globalisation. *Sport and society: A student introduction*, 553-537.
- Hull, K. (2014). A hole in one (hundred forty characters): A case study examining PGA Tour golfers’ Twitter use during the Masters. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 7(2), 245-260.
- Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2009). From broadcast scarcity to digital plenitude: The changing dynamics of the media sport content economy. *Television & New Media*, 10(4), 354-370.
- Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2012). *Sport beyond television: The internet, digital media and the rise of networked media sport*. Routledge.
- Hutchins, B., Li, B., & Rowe, D. (2019). Over-the-top sport: live streaming services, changing coverage rights markets and the growth of media sport portals. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(7), 975-994.
- Huang, Y., & Hsu, J. (2017). The applications of social media in sports marketing. *Physical Education Journal*, 50, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.3966/10247297201712500S001>
- Hussain, G., Naz, T., Shahzad, N., & Bajwa, M. J. (2021). Social Media Marketing in Sports and using social media platforms for sports fan engagement. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government Vol*, 27(06).
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Kariyawasam, K., & Tsai, M. (2017). Copyright and live streaming of sports broadcasting. *International Review of Law, Computers & Technology*, 31(3), 265-288.
- Kretchmer, S. B. “Advertainment: The Evolution of Product Placement as a Mass Media Marketing Strategy.” *Journal of Promotion Management*, 2004, 10, 37–54.
- Kunz, R. E., Elsässer, F., & Santomier, J. (2016). Sport-related branded entertainment: the Red Bull phenomenon. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 6(5), 520-541.
- Lefever, K., & Lefever, K. (2012). Sports/media complex in the new media landscape. *New Media and Sport: International Legal Aspects*, 7-30.
- Madrigal, R. “The Influence of Social Alliances with Sports Teams on Intentions to Purchase Corporate Sponsors’ Product.” *Journal of Advertising*, 2000, 29(4), 455–469.
- Maennig, W. (2005). Corruption in international sports and sport management: Forms, tendencies, extent, and countermeasures. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 5(2), 187-225.
- Maguire, J. A. (2011). The global media sports complex: Key issues and concerns. *Sport in Society*, 14(7-8), 965-977.
- Marriott, S. (1996). Time and time again:live television commentary and the construction of replay talk. *Media, Culture & Society*, 18(1), 69-86.
- Martin, C. R., & Reeves, J. L. (2001). The whole world isn't watching (but we thought they were): The Super Bowl and United States solipsism. *Sport in Society*, 4(2), 213-236.
- Mohammadkazemi, R. (2015). Sports marketing and social media. In *Handbook of research on integrating social media into strategic marketing* (pp. 340-358). IGI Global. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287406899\\_Sports\\_Marketing\\_social\\_Media](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287406899_Sports_Marketing_social_Media)
- Murray, J. (2019). Fan Identification in Professional Sport. *Sport Management Undergraduate*, 1–21. [https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/sport\\_undergrad/156/](https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/sport_undergrad/156/)
- Parganas, P., Anagnostopoulos, C., & Chadwick, S. (2017). Effects of social media interactions on brand associations: A comparative study of soccer fan clubs. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 18(2), 149-165.

- Pedersen, P. M., Laucella, P., Geurin, A., & Kian, E. (2020). Sociological Aspects of Sport communication. *Strategic sport communication*.337-377 Human Kinetics Publishers.
- Raveendra, P. V., & Singh, P. (2018). Performance appraisal biases and behavioral biases in decision making: An empirical study. *International Journal of Mechanical Engineering and Technology*, 9(6), 312-318.
- Raney, A. A., & Bryant, J. (Eds.). (2009). Why We Watch and Enjoy Mediated Sports. In *Handbook of Sports and Media. Handbook of sports and media*.339-357. Routledge.
- Roudometof, V. (2016). Theorizing glocalisation: Three interpretations I. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 19(3), 391-408.
- Şahin, E., Demirsel, M. T., & Adam, A. A. (2020). The effect of social media on sports marketing: Konyaspor Football Club case. *İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 12(1), 79-94.
- Sorignet, P. E. (2006). Danser au-delà de la douleur. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 163(3), 46-61.
- Shin, N., & Peachey, J. W. (2021). Understanding the global–local nexus in the context of the Olympic Games: Implications for managing community development through sport megaevents. *Journal of Sport Management*, 36(1), 82-95.
- Tainsky, S. (2010). Television broadcast demand for National Football League contests. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 11(6), 629–640.
- Tribou, G., Dermit, N., & Wojak, C. (2018). *Management du sport-5e éd. : Marketing et gestion des clubs sportifs* (Vol. 1). Dunod.
- Trula, E. M. (2020, août 12). *La audiencia de los grandes deportes estaba en declive. el parón del coronavirus ha acentuado el proceso.* Xataka. <https://www.xataka.com/magnet/audiencia-grandes-deportes-estaba-declive-paroncoronavirus-ha-acent-uado-proceso>
- Warren, G. S. (2020). Mega Sports Events Have Mega Environmental and Social Consequences. *Missouri Law Review*, 85(2), 496–524.
- Weatherill, S. (2000). Resisting the pressures of Americanisation: the influence of European Community law on the European sport model. *Willamette J. Int'l L. & Dis. Res.*, 8, 37-73
- Wenner, L. A., & Billings, A. C. (Eds.). (2017). Sport, media and mega-events. London: Routledge.
- Whannel, G. (1986) An unholy alliance: notes on television and the remaking of British sport 1965–86. *Leisure Studies* 5/2, pp.129–145.
- Witkemper, C., Blaszk, M., & Chung, J. (2016). Establishing a Typology of Social Media Uses in the Sport Industry: A Multidimensional Scaling Study. *Communication & Sport*, 4(2), 166-186.

#### Press Articles:

- Brown, M. (2016, 6 décembre). The problem with digital streaming live mega sporting events. Retrieved 3 December 2023 *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/maurybrown/2016/12/06/the-problem-with-digital-streaming-live-mega-sporting-events/>
- Connolly, E. (2018, 23 janvier). *WHISTLE Sports: How young audiences are leading their own sports viewing revolution.* Retrieved 20 April 2024 *SportsPro*. <https://www.sportspromedia.com/insights/interviews/whistle-sports-how-youngaudiences-are-leading-t-heir-own-sports-viewing-rev/>
- Molnar, P. (2021, 8 octobre). Can professional sport leagues reverse the trend of declining younger viewership? Retrieved 26 April 2024 - The San Diego Union-Tribune. *San Diego UnionTribune*. <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/business/story/2021-10-08/canprofessional-sport-leagues-reverse-the-trend-of-declining-younger-viewership>
- Saint-Germain, Q. S. I. and A. P. agree landmark strategic partnership and investment deal in P. (n.d.). Qatar sports investments and arctos partners agree landmark psg deal. beIN SPORTS. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.beinsports.com/en-mena/football/ligue-1/articles/qatar-sports-investments-and-arctos-partners-agree-landmark-psg-deal-psg-2023-12-07>
- Shoalts, D. (2015, août 15). Viewing sports on television in decline among younger fans, study finds. Retrieved 1 May 2024 *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/sports/moresports/viewing-sports-on-television-in-decline-among-younger-fans-studyfinds/article25977318/>
- Thompson, D. (2013, août 27). Sports could save the TV business; or destroy it. Retrieved 23 April 2024 *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/07/sports-could-save-thetv-business-or-destroy-it/277808/>



## Formula One:

### Books:

- Jenkins, M., Pasternak, K., West, R., & Lauda, N. (2016). *Performance at the Limit: Business Lessons from Formula 1® Motor Racing* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781316477144
- Noble, J., & Hughes, M. (2004). *Formula One racing for dummies*. Wiley Pub.
- Sturm, D; Wagg, S; Andrews, D (2023). *The History and Politics of Motor Racing*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-22825-4>
- Tremayne, D., & Hughes, M. (1998). *The concise encyclopedia of formula one*. Dempsey Parr.
- Hamilton M, Brawn R, (2020) *Formula 1 Official History*. Welbeck Publishing Group

### Academic Sources:

- Chadwick, S. (2023). Formula 1 in the Gulf Region: The Fast and the Furious. In *The Future of Motorsports* (pp. 13-23). Routledge.
- Ciolfi Ms, J. L., & Stuart Dr, S. (2013). Organisational succession in F1: An analysis of Bernie Ecclestone's roles as CEO of Formula One management. *International Journal of Motorsport Management*, 2(1), 1.
- Dolles, H., & Raghunathan, K. (2024). Entrepreneurs and commercial ownership of sport events—the business development of Formula One 1. In *Research Handbook on Major Sporting Events* (pp. 179-194). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Garcia-del-Barrio, P., & Reade, J. J. (2021). Does certainty on the winner diminish the interest in sport competitions? The case of formula one. *Empirical Economics*, 1-21.
- Gallego, P., & Maestro, L. (2014). Las audiencias en la Fórmula 1: ¿deporte o deportista?, VI Congreso Internacional Latina de Comunicación Social, <https://docplayer.es/14621287-Las-audiencias-en-la-formula-1-deporteodeportista.html>
- Gross, C. V. and D. (n.d.). NBA Commissioner Adam Silver has a game plan. *Strategy+business.*, from <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/NBA-Commissioner-Adam-Silver-Has-a-Game-Plan>
- Harrington, M., Cuskelly, G., & Auld, C. (2000). Career volunteering in commodity intensive serious leisure: Motorsport events and their dependence on volunteers/amateurs. *Society and Leisure*, 23(2), 421-452.
- Haynes, R., & Robeers, T. (2020). The Need for Speed? A Historical Analysis of the BBC's Post-war Broadcasting of Motorsport. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 40(2), 407–423.
- Howell, M., & Miller, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Motorsports and American Culture: From Demolition Derbies to NASCAR*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Jenkins, M. (2010). Technological discontinuities and competitive advantage: A historical perspective on Formula 1 motor racing 1950–2006. *Journal of Management Studies*, 47(5), 884-910.
- Jensen, J.A., & Cobbs, J. Analyzing return-on-investment in sponsorship: Modeling brand exposure, price and ROI in Formula One racing. *Journal of Advertising Research*, (2014). . Available at: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2322589>
- Jenkins, M., & Floyd, S. (2001). Trajectories in the evolution of technology: A multilevel study of competition in Formula 1 racing. *Organisation studies*, 22(6), 945-969.
- Jensen, J. A., Cobbs, J., & Groza, M. D. (2014). The niche portfolio strategy to global expansion: The influence of market resources on demand for Formula One racing. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 27(4), 247-261.
- Jensen, J. A., Cobbs, J. B., Albano, B., & Tyler, B. D. (2021). Analyzing price premiums in international sponsorship exchange: What drives marketing costs in formula one racing?. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 61(1), 44-57.
- Jones, C. W., Byon, K. K., & Huang, H. (2019). Service quality, perceived value, and fan engagement: Case of Shanghai Formula One racing. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 28(2), 63-76.
- Judde, C., Booth, R., & Brooks, R. (2013). Second place is first of the losers: An analysis of competitive balance in Formula One. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 14(4), 411-439.
- Kim, S. K., Byon, K. K., Yu, J. G., Zhang, J. J., & Kim, C. (2013). Social motivations and consumption behavior of spectators attending a Formula One motor-racing event. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 41(8), 1359-1377.
- Llamas Mayora, A. (2022). Female Fans in Formula 1: A Qualitative Study of Spanish Female Fans' Behaviours, Attitudes, and Motivations towards F1 and its Consumption through Twitter.

- Li, B., Gao, T., Ma, S., Zhang, Y., Acarman, T., Cao, K., ... & Wang, F. Y. (2023). From Formula One to Autonomous One: History, Achievements, and Future Perspectives. *IEEE Transactions on Intelligent Vehicles*.
- Mastromarco, C., & Runkel, M. (2009). Rule changes and competitive balance in Formula One motor racing. *Applied Economics*, 41(23), 3003-3014.
- Mourão, P. (2017). The political economy of formula one. In P. Mourão (Ed.), *The Economics of Motorsports: The Case of Formula One* (pp. 239–269). Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-60249-7\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-60249-7_7)
- Palermo, A., & Delaine, G. (2023). Formula One on social networks: a successful strategy. *ZER: Revista de Estudios de Comunicación= Komunikazio Ikasketen Aldizkaria*, 28(54), 13-29.
- Schreyer, D., & Torgler, B. (2018). On the role of race outcome uncertainty in the TV demand for Formula 1 Grands Prix. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 19(2), 211-229.
- Soble, C., & Lowes, M. (2024). Narrative Storytelling as a Fan Conversion Tool in the Netflix Docuseries Drive to Survive. *Communication & Sport*, 21674795241238158.
- Storm, R. K., Jakobsen, T. G., & Nielsen, C. G. (2020). The impact of Formula 1 on regional economies in Europe. *Regional studies*, 54(6), 827-837.
- Stuart, S. A. (2018). Bernie Ecclestone: Formula One's Entrepreneurial Ringmaster. In E. Bayle & P. Clastres (Eds.), *Global Sport Leaders: A Biographical Analysis of International Sport Management* (pp. 363–394). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sturm, D. (2023). Processes of Greenwashing, Sportwashing and Virtue Signalling in Contemporary Formula One: Formula Façade? In H. Naess & S. Chadwick (Eds.), *The Future of Motorsports: Business, Politics and Society* (pp. 167–182). Routledge.
- Rojas-Torrijos, J. L. (2021). *Análisis del auge en el seguimiento de la Fórmula 1 en España a través del éxito de la figura de Fernando Alonso*. idUS - Depósito de Investigación Universidad de Sevilla. <https://idus.us.es/handle/11441/127324>
- Rosell Montagud, S. (2016). Análisis de las transmisiones deportivas en TV en España. El caso de la Formula 1 (Movistar F1, Antena 3 y TV3).
- Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2023). A formula for success: How Formula One racing embraced digital and social media to engage fans. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 11(1), 43-59.
- Zaksaitė, S., & Raduševičius, K. (2017). Manipulation of competitions in Formula-1: where policy ends, and cheating begins. *The International Sports Law Journal*, 16, 240246.
- Zheng, A. (2023). After Abu Dhabi: Restoring Integrity and Accountability in Formula 1. *Columbia Journal of Law & the Arts*.

#### Press Articles:

- 161385360554578. (2022, November 18). F1 is 'becoming show business' and inconsistent stewarding 'feels like a strategy'. Retrieved 30 November 2023 talkSPORT. <https://talksport.com/sport/1249862/formula-1-show-business-inconsistent-fia-stewarding/>
- Abu Dhabi GP: Lewis Hamilton claimed F1 title-deciding race was 'manipulated' in radio message. (n.d.). Retrieved 19 April 2024 Sky Sports. Retrieved 13 May 2024, from <https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12433/12494989/abu-dhabi-gp-lewis-hamilton-claimed-f1-title-deciding-race-was-manipulated-in-radio-message>
- Addy, D. R., Campbell. (2024, April 1). Lewis hamilton is changing lanes. *British GQ*. Retrieved 2 April 2024 <https://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/lewis-hamilton-interview-2024>
- Anderson, G. (2022, February 1). Gary Anderson: How the cost cap will really hit teams and F1 retrieved 13 April 2024. *The Race*. <https://the-race.com/formula-1/gary-anderson-how-the-cost-cap-will-really-hit-teams-and-f1/>
- Asher, R. (2023, 28 février). Formula 1 cost cap: What is it and how does it work? Retrieved 20 February 2024 *autosport.com*. <https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/formula-1-cost-cap-what-is-itand-how-does-it-work/10379447/>
- Associated Press. (2022, February9). Red Bull name tech firm Oracle as title sponsor in \$500m deal. Retrieved 4 December 2024 [https://www.espn.com/f1/story/\\_/id/33253423/red-bull-name-tech-firm-oracle-title-sponsor-500m-deal](https://www.espn.com/f1/story/_/id/33253423/red-bull-name-tech-firm-oracle-title-sponsor-500m-deal)
- Benson, A (2022). F1 'spygate': Fifteen years on the sporting scandal that had everything, *BBC Sport*, Retrieved 5 December 2023 <https://www.bbc.com/sport/formula1/63575321>.
- Chase Carey on how F1 can crack U.S. market. Retrieved 27 November 2023(2017, October 18). *ESPN.Com*. [https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/\\_/id/21060354/formula-one-ceo-chase-carey-how-f1-crack-us-market-facebook-youtube-second-grand-prix](https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/_/id/21060354/formula-one-ceo-chase-carey-how-f1-crack-us-market-facebook-youtube-second-grand-prix)

- Carey warns against F1 history being “straightjacket”; for change. Retrieved 7 May 2024 (2020, October 14). <https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/carey-warns-against-f1-history-being-straightjacket-for-change-4978190/4978190/>
- Coleman, M. (2021, October22). Netflix’s “Formula 1: Drive to Survive” Led to a Boom in Popularity. Retrieved 24 April 2024 Sports Illustrated. <https://www.si.com/racing/2021/10/22/formula-one-austin-netflix-drive-to-survive-impact>
- Cooper, J. (2021). How liberty media and content creators transformed f1 for the masses. Drive Tribe. <https://drivetribe.com/p/how-liberty-media-and-content-creatorsGFu1JtZLSAairpx8DxzQZg?iid=X3yB M5slQ5OOhAtD8xs0J6g>
- Cooper, A (2022) F1 clarifies safety car rules after Abu Dhabi controversies, Retrieved 19 April 2024 AUTOSPORT <https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/f1-clarifies-safety-car-rules-afterabu-dhabi-controversies-/9025019>
- Cooper, A (2021) Why Mercedes chose not to pursue its Abu Dhabi F1 appeal, MOTORSPORT.COM, <https://us.motorsport.com/f1/news/why-mercedes-chose-notto-pursue-its-abu-dhabi-f1-appeal/689280>
- Cohen, J. (2023) Chasing the Bag: Breaking Down F1 Constructors Payout, Retrieved 24 November 2023 <https://www.one37pm.com/sports/f1-constructors-payout>.
- Danne, M. (2022). “Formula 1 in a Completely Different Light”: How Do Fans Perceive Authenticity in the Netflix Documentary Series ‘Drive To Survive’?. Retrieved 20 April 2024
- EClifford@dolphins.com. (2024, March 26). Hard rock announces star-studded performances featuring ed sheeran & john summit for hard rock beach club at 2024 formula 1 crypto. Retrieved 9 May 2024 Formula 1 Crypto.Com Miami Grand Prix. <https://f1miamigp.com/news/press-release/hard-rock-beach-club-performances/>
- Essere Ferrari: Why does the Scuderia inspire passion in racing fans like no other team? | Formula 1®. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/essere-ferrari-why-does-the-scuderia-inspire-passion-in-racing-fans-like-no.47Kr88abvjZ5EiitqSdHIY>
- F1 cost cap explained. (n.d.). Global Sports Advocates, LLC. Retrieved 3 May 2024, from <https://www.globalsportsadvocates.com/blog/understanding-the-f1-cost-cap.cfm>
- F1 cost cap: How Red Bull broke it, their punishment, and the latest news on 2023 budget. retrieved 3 May 2024 | F1 | Crash. (2023, July 24). <https://www.crash.net/f1/news/1014425/1/f1-cost-cap-how-red-bull-broke-it-their-punishment-and-2023-budget>
- *FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem opens the way for a new step forward in Formula 1 refereeing.* Retrieved 29 April 2024 (2022, 17 février). Federation Internationale de l’Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/news/fia-president-mohammed-ben-sulayem-opens-way-newstep-forward-formula-1-refereeing>
- Gilboy, J. (2019, July 25). Ferrari, mercedes hop aboard for season two of netflix’s ‘formula 1: Drive to survive’. Retrieved 8 April 2024 The Drive. <https://www.thedrive.com/accelerator/29141/mercedes-ferrari-hop-aboard-for-season-two-of-netflixs-formula-1-drive-to-survive-series>
- Haring, B. (2023, November 18). Embattled f1 las vegas grand prix is fighting bad press and manhole problems. Retrieved 6 May 2024 Deadline. <https://deadline.com/2023/11/embattled-f1-las-vegas-grand-prix-fighting-bad-press-manhole-problems-1235618027/>
- Harris, D. (2021, November 14). Lewis Hamilton shrugs off penalty to win F1’s Brazil Grand Prix – as it happened! Retrieved 22 April 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/live/2021/nov/14/brazilian-grand-prix-f1-updates-live>
- Gross, C. V. and D. (n.d.). NBA Commissioner Adam Silver has a game plan. Strategy+business. Retrieved 8 May 2024, from <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/NBA-Commissioner-Adam-Silver-Has-a-Gam>
- Interview: How F1 sponsorship reflects the changing face of the audience. Retrieved 4 May 2024 (2023, December 15). <https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/interview-how-f1-sponsorship-reflects-the-changing-face-of-the-audience/10558025/>
- Japanese Grand Prix: Memories of Jules Bianchi death trigger anger over recovery truck on track. Retrieved 17 April 2024 (2022, October 9). BBC Sport. <https://www.bbc.com/sport/formula1/63190448>
- Kharitonova, A. (2021, 13 février). *F1 Social Media Trends of 2020.* Retrieved 27 November 2023 Paddock Magazine. <https://www.thepaddockmagazine.com/f1-social-media-trends-2020/>

- Llorba, L., & Redbull. (2023, 22 février). *El origen del mayor campeonato de la historia*. Retrieved 2 december 2023 Red Bull. <https://www.redbull.com/cl-es/historia-origen-formula-unocampeonato-mundial>
- Lewis hamilton's weird social media silence enters 7th week. Retrieved 5 May 2024 (2022, January 24). Autoweek. <https://www.autoweek.com/racing/formula-1/a38870936/lewis-hamilton-weird-social-media-silence/>
- Lights out: How formula one enables human rights violations in the middle east. Retrieved 15 April 2024 (2022, November 17). Towson University Journal of International Affairs. <https://wp.towson.edu/iajournal/2022/11/16/lights-out-how-formula-one-enables-human-rights-violations-in-the-middle-east/>
- Misra A. (2021, July 19). Marketing strategy that revived the fate of Formula one. Retrieved 30 November 2024 The Strategy Story. <https://thestrategystory.com/2021/07/19/formula-one-marketing-strategy/>
- Mee, L. (2023, April 14). Sebastian vettel warned of miami floods ahead of first race as circuit sits underwater. Retrieved 10 April 2024 F1 Briefings: Formula 1 News, Rumors, Standings and More. <https://www.si.com/fannation/racing/f1briefings/news/sebastian-vettel-warned-of-miami-floods-ahead-of-first-race-as-circuit-sits-underwater-lm22>
- Mercedes and Kingspan agree to end F1 deal with immediate effect. (2021, December 8) Retrieved 14 May 2024. <https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/mercedes-kingspan-terminate-f1-sponsorship-deal/6863376/>
- Nielsen. (2022, May5). Driven to watch: How a sports docuseries drove U.S. fans to Formula 1. Retrieved 1§ A <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2022/driven-to-watch-how-a-sports-docuseries-drove-u-s-fans-to-formula-1/>
- Næss, H. E. (2020). *A History of Organisational Change: The case of Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA)*, Retrieved 16 December 2024. 1946–2020. Springer Nature
- Nichol, J. (2022, 26 mars). What is the GPDA in Formula 1 & # 8211; and which drivers are members? Retrieved 8 december 2024HITC. <https://www.hitc.com/en-gb/2022/03/26/what-is-the-gpda-f1/>
- Noble, J. (2021, May 19). The pay TV vs free-to-air conflict at the heart of modern F1. Retrieved April 30 2024 Motorsport.com. <https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/the-pay-tv-vs-free-to-air-conflict-at-the-heart-of-modern-f1/6510753/>
- Perez: Latest Netflix series probably went too far. (2022, March 17). Retrieved 28 April 2024 ESPN.Com. [https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/\\_/id/33525772/sergio-perez-f1-netflix-series-probably-gone-too-far-2021-season](https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/_/id/33525772/sergio-perez-f1-netflix-series-probably-gone-too-far-2021-season)
- Rédac, L. (n.d.). *Edgar magazine—Lifestyle, mode, art, beauté, horlogerie, automobile ...* Edgar Magazine. Retrieved 9 May 2024, from <https://www.edgarmagazine.com/>
- Rendell, S. (2022, January 7). Formula 1 season ending 'rigged by stewards' and 'left sour taste', Retrieved 24 April Labour peer claims. The Independent. <https://www.independent.co.uk/f1/f1-max-verstappen-lewis-hamilton-peter-hain-b1988592.html>
- Richards, G. (2022, March 26). Saudi Arabian Grand Prix to go ahead as planned despite Houthi missile attack. Retrieved 19 April 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/mar/25/saudi-arabian-grand-prix-at-risk-of-cancellation-after-houthi-missile-attack>
- Richards, G. (2022, October 10). FIA to review use of recovery vehicles after crane incident at Japanese GP. Retrieved 22 April 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/oct/10/fia-to-review-use-of-recovery-vehicles-after-crane-incident-at-japanese-gp>
- Richards, G. (2023, November 14). F1 apologises to Las Vegas for disruption caused by new night race. Retrieved 6 May 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/nov/14/f1-apology-las-vegas-greg-maffei-disruption-night-race-complaints>
- Richards, G. (2023, November 17). Las Vegas GP practice descends into farce after drain covers damage cars. Retrieved 6 May 2024 The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/nov/17/las-vegas-gp-opening-practice-cancelled-after-cars-damaged-by-drain-covers>
- Stuart, G. "1950 vs 2020: Cars, drivers, safety and pit stops – how F1 has changed in 70 years," Formula 1, 2020.Retrieved 9 May 2024 <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.1950-vs2020-cars-drivers-safety-and-pit-stops-how-f1-has-changed-in-70years.62ITx6LIY3qgzTctXgzlj.html>

- Saudi Arabian Grand Prix will go ahead after missile attack. Retrieved 19 April 2024 (2022, March 25). BBC Sport. <https://www.bbc.com/sport/formula1/60880598>
- Saudi Arabian GP: F1 drivers back event to continue despite concerns after attack at Jeddah oil depot. (n.d.). Sky Sports. Retrieved 19 April 2024, from <https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12433/12575340/saudi-arabian-gp-f1-drivers-back-event-to-continue-despite-concerns-after-attack-at-jeddah-oil-depot>
- Staff, T. (2023) ‘Inside the world of formula 1: the impact of “drive to survive”’, Retrieved 3 December 2023 Loud and Clear Reviews, 5 July. Available at: <https://loudandclearreviews.com/inside-the-world-of-formula-1-the-impact-of-drive-to-survive/>.
- Takle, A (2021, 12 décembre). Timeline of season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. Retrieved 17 February 2024 Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-motor-f1-abudhabi-timeline/idUKKBN2IR0BU/>
- Timeline: How the fia cost cap story unfolded as red bull and aston martin enter agreements over breaches | formula 1®. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 13 December 2023, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/timeline-how-the-fia-cost-cap-story-unfolded.6yAhD5hKoRuUTqhU1wYuGY>
- There have been more than 50 F1 deaths. retrieved 23 April 2024 (2024, January 10). The Manual. <https://www.themanual.com/auto/fi-drivers-safety/>
- Williamson, M. (2017) “A timeline of formula one,” Retrieved 26 November 2023 ESPN. <http://en.espn.co.uk/f1/motorsport/story/3836.html>

#### Podcasts:

- Clarkson, T. (Host). (2020, October). Chase Carey on his role in shaping F1’s future and guiding the sport through a global pandemic [Audio podcast, Episode 107]. In F1-Beyond the Grid.
- Chequered Flag podcast from the BBC. (2016, June 9). Chequered flag formula 1 20160609 canadian grand prix preview [canadian grand prix preview]. <http://archive.org/details/chequered-flag-formula-1-20160609-canadian-grand-prix-preview-canadian-grand-prix-preview>

#### Data:

- 2021 f1 abu dhabi grand prix—Report to the world motor sport council—19 march 2022. Retrieved 27 April 2024 (2022, March 19). Federation Internationale de l’Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/2021-f1-abu-dhabi-grand-prix-report-world-motor-sport-council-19-march-2022>
- 2021 Formula One Sporting Regulations, FIA, at art. 6.1, Retrieved 27 April 2024 [https://www.fia.com/sites/default/files/2021\\_formula\\_1\\_sporting\\_regulations\\_iss\\_13\\_-\\_2021-12-08.pdf](https://www.fia.com/sites/default/files/2021_formula_1_sporting_regulations_iss_13_-_2021-12-08.pdf) (Dec. 8, 2021).
- All GP contracts | This is how long GP’s will stay in F1. Retrieved 4 May 2024 (2024, May 11). RacingNews365. <https://racingnews365.com/f1-gp-contracts>
- Appendix 17.1 . Driver declarations and Undertakings. Federation Internationale de l’Automobile. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/site-search>
- Appendix J . Specific regulations for series production Cars. Federation Internationale de l’Automobile. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/site-search>
- Article 33.4 of the FIA Formula One Sporting Regulations <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>. (n.d.). Federation Internationale de l’Automobile. Retrieved 2 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>
- Bradley, C. (2021). Formula 1 in 2021 Global fan insight into the world’s largest annual sporting series Retrieved 7 April 2024(2005-2021) (Global Fan Survey, p. 58). Motorsport Network. <https://cdn-1.motorsport.com/survey/2021/2021-f1-global-fan-survey-motorsportnetwork.pdf>
- Decision of the Contract Recognition Board 02/09/2022, FIA, <https://www.fia.com/news/decision-contractrecognition-board-02092022>.
- Fia thursday press conference—2023 saudi arabia grand prix | formula 1®. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 19 April 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/fia-thursday-press-conference-saudi-arabia.idgA3rohAKN8G6Hyd1Lh>
- Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://f1tv.formula1.com>
- F1—2022 miami grand prix—Post-race press conference transcript. (2022, May 9). Federation Internationale de l’Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/news/f1-2022-miami-grand-prix-post-race-press-conference-transcript>

- F1. (2022, February 17). Formula 1 announces TV, race attendance and digital audience figures for 2021. Retrieved 10th May 2024 Formula 1. [https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.formula-1-announces-tv-race-attendance-and-digital-audience-figures-for-2021.1YDpVJIOHGNo907sWcKW.html#:~:text=The%20cumulative%20TV%20audience%20for,Sao%20Paulo%20\(82.1m\)F1.\(2021,February8\).](https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.formula-1-announces-tv-race-attendance-and-digital-audience-figures-for-2021.1YDpVJIOHGNo907sWcKW.html#:~:text=The%20cumulative%20TV%20audience%20for,Sao%20Paulo%20(82.1m)F1.(2021,February8).)
- F1—2023 las vegas grand prix—Post-race press conference transcript. Retrieved 23rd April 2024 (2023, November 19). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/news/f1-2023-las-vegas-grand-prix-post-race-press-conference-transcript>
- F1—2023 saudi arabian grand prix—Thursday press conference transcript. Retrieved 19th April 2024 (2023, March 16). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/news/f1-2023-saudi-arabian-grand-prix-thursday-press-conference-transcript>
- F1TV Knowledgebase 2023. (n.d.). Retrieved 13 May 2024, from [https://support.formula1.com/s/article/2023-What-is-F1-TV?language=en\\_US](https://support.formula1.com/s/article/2023-What-is-F1-TV?language=en_US)
- F1 formula 1 logo review critique. (n.d.). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://thefutur.com/content/f1-formula-1-logo-review-critique>
- Formula 1: Rebrand | wieden+kennedy. (n.d.). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.wk.com/work/formula-1-rebrand/>
- Formula 1 announces TV and Digital audience figures for 2020. Retrieved 5th May 2024 Formula 1. 2022, <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.formula-1-announces-tv-and-digital-audience-figures-for-2020.3sbRmZm4u5Jf8pagvPoPUQ.html>
- Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://f1tv.formula1.com>
- F1—The official home of formula 1® racing. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en.html>
- Governance. Retrieved 25th November (2012, March 12). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. <https://www.fia.com/governance>
- Hall, A. (2022, 29 novembre). *Formula 1 season smashes U.S. television viewership records*. Retrieved 3rd May 2024 ESPN Press Room U.S. <https://espnpressroom.com/us/pressreleases/2022/11/formula-1-season-smashes-u-s-television-viewership-records/>
- <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>. (n.d.). Federation Internationale de l'Automobile. Retrieved 13 May 2024, from <https://www.fia.com/regulation/category/110>
- Liberty Media Corporation. Retrieved 25th November 2023. (2017, January 23). Liberty media corporation completes acquisition of Formula 1. Liberty Media Corporation. <https://www.libertymedia.com/news/detail/305/liberty-media-corporation-completes-acquisition-of-formula-1>
- Liberty Mutual video | re:Invent 2021 | AWS. (n.d.). Amazon Web Services, Inc. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://aws.amazon.com/solutions/case-studies/liberty-mutual-2021-reinvent-video/>
- Liberty media corporation reports fourth quarter and year end 2022 financial results. Retrieved April 25th 2024 (2023, March 1). Liberty Media Corporation. <https://www.libertymedia.com/investors/news-events/press-releases/detail/485/liberty-media-corporation-reports-fourth-quarter-and-year>
- Liberty media corporation reports fourth quarter and year end 2023 financial results. Retrieved April 25th 2024 (2024, February 28). Liberty Media Corporation. <https://www.libertymedia.com/news/detail/525/liberty-media-corporation-reports-fourth-quarter-and-year>
- Miami GP attracts largest live audience in US TV history. (n.d.). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/miami-grand-prix-attracts-f1s-largest-live-audience-in-united-states.1TZioGIUvFHEEsQ7qz304>
- Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team. Retrieved 17th April 2024 (2021, December 16). Toto's post-season f1 press conference. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyVwenXDcYw>
- Pcs2020-6-ouvriers / ouvrières | insee. (n.d.). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.insee.fr/fr/metadonnees/pcs2020/groupeSocioprofessionnel/6?champRecherche=true>
- Penalty decision for car 33. FIA Formula One Sporting Regulations. Retrieved 16th April 2024 <https://www.fia.com/sites/default/files/decision-document/2021%20Saudi%20Arabian%20Grand%20Prix%20-%20Offence%20-%20Car%2033%20-%20Causing%20a%20collision.pdf>
- Penalty decision for car 14. FIA Formula One Sporting Regulations. Retrieved 16th April 2024 <https://www.fia.com/sites/default/files/decision-document/2024%20Australian%20Grand%20Prix%20-%20Infringement%20-%20Car%2014%20-%20Potentially%20dangerous%20driving.pdf>

- Register—Login. (n.d.). Tumblr. Retrieved 13 May 2024, from [https://www.tumblr.com/login?redirect\\_to=%2Fblog%2Fannies0102%2Fblaze%2Fcampaigns](https://www.tumblr.com/login?redirect_to=%2Fblog%2Fannies0102%2Fblaze%2Fcampaigns)
- Sauber won't use Stake name at every F1 race. Retrieved 7th May 2024 (2024, February 6). <https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/sauber-wont-use-stake-name-every-f1-race/10572928/>
- Sky Sports F1. (2022, February 9). Michael masi-red bull audio at abu dhabi grand prix 'really uncomfortable' says martin brundle. Retrieved 12 April 2024 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79VL3Zd-O0s>
- Tumblr statistics | updated news, trends & demographics 2023. (n.d.). Avada Commerce. Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://avada.io/articles/tumblr-users/>
- The full FIA statement on F1 Japanese GP crane incident review, AUTOSPORT. Retrieved 26th April 2024, (Oct. 21, 2022, 12:14PM), <https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/the-full-fia-statement-on-f1-japanese-gp-review/10387595/>.

## Methodology:

### Books:

- De Leeuw, E. D., Hox, J., & Dillman, D. (2012). *International handbook of survey methodology*. Routledge.

### Academic sources:

- Albaum, G., & Smith, S. M. (2012). Why people agree to participate in surveys. *Handbook of survey methodology for the social sciences*, 179-193.
- Asenahabi, B. M. (2019). Basics of research design: A guide to selecting appropriate research design. *International Journal of Contemporary Applied Researches*, 6(5), 76-89.
- Becker, R. (2022). Gender and survey participation: An event history analysis of the gender effects of survey participation in a probability-based multi-wave panel study with a sequential mixed-mode design. *Methods, data, analyses: a journal for quantitative methods and survey methodology (mda)*, 16(1), 3-32.
- Dillman, D. A. (2020). Towards survey response rate theories that no longer pass each other like strangers in the night. *Understanding survey methodology: Sociological theory and applications*, 15-44.
- Farooq, R. (2018). How to design and frame a questionnaire. In *Innovations in measuring and evaluating scientific information* (pp. 50-60). IGI Global.
- Greenberg, P., & Dillman, D. (2023). Mail communications and survey response: A test of social exchange versus pre-suasion theory for improving response rates and data quality. *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology*, 11(1), 1-22.
- Herzog, A. R., & Bachman, J. G. (1981). Effects of questionnaire length on response quality. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 45(4), 549. <https://doi.org/10.1086/268687>
- Keusch, F. (2015). Why do people participate in Web surveys? Applying survey participation theory to Internet survey data collection. *Management review quarterly*, 65(3), 183-216.
- Lee, C. J. G. (2012). Reconsidering constructivism in qualitative research. *Educational Philosophy and theory*, 44(4), 403-412.
- Lynn, P. (2017, April). From standardised to targeted survey procedures for tackling non-response and attrition. In *Survey Research Methods* (Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 93-103).
- Park, Y. S., Konge, L., & Artino Jr, A. R. (2020). The positivism paradigm of research. *Academic medicine*, 95(5), 690-694.
- Rolstad, S., Adler, J., & Rydén, A. (2011). Response burden and questionnaire length: is shorter better? A review and meta-analysis. *Value in Health*, 14(8), 1101-1108.
- Opoku, A., Ahmed, V., & Akotia, J. (2016). Choosing an appropriate research methodology and method. In *Research methodology in the built environment* (pp. 32-49). Routledge.

## Images:

- F1—The official home of formula 1® racing. (2024, February 29). Formula 1® - The Official F1® Website. <https://www.formula1.com/en.html>
- Formula 1. (n.d.). F1 TV. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://f1tv.formula1.com>
- Images. (n.d.). Motorsportimages.Com. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from [https://www.motorsportimages.com/photos/?race\\_type\\_id=&search=jeddah+2023](https://www.motorsportimages.com/photos/?race_type_id=&search=jeddah+2023)
- Instagram. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from [https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fandrej%2F&is\\_from\\_rle](https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fandrej%2F&is_from_rle)

- Instagram. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from [https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fstakeflighteam%2F&is\\_from\\_rle](https://www.instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fstakeflighteam%2F&is_from_rle)
- Kym illman—Youtuber | fl photographer. (n.d.). Kym Illman. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.kymillman.com/>
- Log in or sign up to view. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.facebook.com/login/>
- McLaren formula 1 team. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.mclaren.com/racing/formula-1/>
- Nemenov, Alexander | fl photographer (n.d.). Retrieved 12 May 2024, from <https://www.gettyimages.fr/search/2/image-film?page=5&phrase=alexander%20nefedov&sort=mostpopular>
- Saudi Arabian Grand Prix to continue as planned after attack at oil depot near Jeddah circuit. (n.d.). Sky Sports. Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12040/12574973/saudi-arabia-grand-prix-fire-breaks-out-at-jeddah-oil-depot-ahead-of-f1-race-weekend>
- Visa cash app rb formula one team. (2024, January 18). <https://www.visacashapprb.com/en/>
- Watch formula 1: Drive to survive | netflix official site. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 May 2024, from <https://www.netflix.com/title/80204890>



## Annex:

**Annex 1:** List of articles referencing Abu Dhabi

**Annex 2:** List of survey questions

**Annex 3:** List of tumblr comments

**Annex 4:** List of responses to Abu Dhabi question + adjectives

**Annex 5:** List of responses to Stewarding question + adjectives

**Annex 6:** List of responses to DTS perception + adjectives

**Annex 7:** List of responses to Spectacle precisions + adjectives

**Annex 8:** Occupations breakdown

**Annex 9:** 46 other responses to if other type of content should be pursued

## Annex 1: List of articles referencing Abu Dhabi

GPfans.com. (2023, April 2). Sport or spectacle? Mayhem in Melbourne and F1's biggest struggle. GPfans.

<https://www.gpfans.com/en/f1-news/104844/f1-sport-or-spectacle-australian-grand-prix-2023-analysis-finish-mayhem/>

Article about how since abu Dhabi consistency is up in the air

Formula one is no longer a sport. (2021, December 13). Jalopnik.

<https://jalopnik.com/formula-one-is-no-longer-a-sport-1848205192>

Victoire de Verstappen en F1: La FIA voulait du spectacle à tout prix. (2021, December 13). Europe 1.

<https://www.europe1.fr/sport/victoire-de-verstappen-en-f1-la-fia-voulait-du-spectacle-a-tout-prix-4082276>

Sport, M. (2022, January 6). 'I want to love F1 again but the Abu Dhabi debacle is still too raw'. Motor Sport Magazine.

<https://www.motorsportmagazine.com/articles/single-seaters/f1/i-want-to-love-f1-again-but-t-he-abu-dhabi-debacle-is-still-too-raw/>

F1's brilliant and tarnished 2021 is a lesson in perspective. (2021, December 31). The Race.

<https://www.the-race.com/formula-1/f1s-brilliant-and-tarnished-2021>

Harrington, A. (2023, April 20). Haas f1 chief on 2021 abu dhabi gp: 'what the hell is happening here'. F1 Briefings: Formula 1 News, Rumors, Standings and More.

<https://www.si.com/fannation/racing/f1briefings/news/haas-f1-chief-on-21-abu-dhabi-gp-what-the-hell-is-happening-here>

## Annex 2: List of questions

### 1/ How long have you been a fan of Formula One ?

- < 3 years
- 3 - 10 years
- 10 - 15 years
- 15 - 25 years
- 25 - 35 years
- 35 - 45 years
- 50+ years

2/ Do you consider yourself a fan of a specific Team?

3/ If yes, which team ?

4/ Do you consider yourself a fan of a specific driver?

5/ If yes, which driver?

### 6/ In general, would you say you support a team over a driver ?

- Yes I support the team more than the driver
- No I am a fan of a driver first
- Prefer not to say
- I don't know

7/ Please feel free to elaborate why here

8/ Are there any teams you root against ?

9/ If yes, which team?

10/ In a few words, why do you root against them ?

11/ Have you perceived a change in Formula One since 2017?

12/ If yes, do you consider it positive or negative?

13/ Please feel free to elaborate on your perception

14/ Do you know who Liberty Media are?

15/ Do you know who Stefano Domenicali is?

16/ Do you know who Mohammed Ben Sulayem is?

17/ Are you satisfied with the way Mohammed Ben Sulayem has carried out his duties within his role?

18/ Are you satisfied with the way Stefano Domenicali has carried out his duties within his role?

19/ Are you aware of the recent controversies surrounding these figures?

20/ If yes, what is your perception on them?

21/ Should these figures be allowed to show support to specific teams (such as attending launches, publically rooting for a team etc) ? "

22/ Do you agree with Zak Brown's (CEO of McLaren) criticisms concerning "sister teams" ["This A/B team and co-ownership, which is a whole other level of A/B team, is of big concern to us and the health of the sport and the fairness of the sport" ]?

23/ What issues may this present?

24/ Visa Cash App RB's former title sponsor Alpha Tauri recently announced a partnership with the FIA, should partnerships between team sponsors and regulatory bodies be allowed

25/ Are you familiar with the controversy surrounding the Abu Dhabi GP of 2021?

### 26/ Was the 2021 Abu Dhabi restart handled correctly?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

### 27/ What is your opinion on the 2021 Abu Dhabi situation?

#### Open ended question

28/ If you could change the outcome of Abu Dhabi 2021, which of the following options would you choose?

29/ If you would like to elaborate more on Abu Dhabi 2021, please do so here

### 30/ What are your opinions on the Las Vegas Grand Prix?

- It's just another race
- It's more of a spectacle than a race

- It's a spectacle and a sporting event
- I don't know

**31/ Do you think the overall quality of racing has diminished in recent years?**

- Yes
- No
- It has stayed the same
- I don't know
- No opinion

**32/ What is your opinion of the stewarding in the turbo-hybrid era?**

Open ended question

33/ Please feel free to elaborate more here

34/ Do you believe there has been a lack of transparency in Formula One?

35/ Do you trust the regulatory bodies to evaluate a race legitimately and impartially?

36/ If you would like to elaborate please do so here

37/ What is your opinion on the current length of the race calendar ?

38/ Do you watch every race you are able to?

**39/ Are you familiar with F1 TV?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**40/ Are you/would you be a subscriber?**

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- I don't know

41/ If you have F1 TV, do you use the other functions? (archives, documentaries, shows)

**42/ Are you familiar with Drive to Survive (DTS) on Netflix?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**43/ Have you watched it ?**

- Yes
- No
- I've watched some of it

**44/ What kind of impact do you think it has had on the sport?**

Open ended

**45/ Do you think investments into this type of content should be pursued (DTS, F1 TV content) ?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- No opinion

46/ With DTS we have seen more people talking about a distinction between "DTS fans" and "Traditional fans", how would you categorise yourself?

47/ In your opinion, is there a distinction being made between "DTS fans" and "Traditional fans" ?

48/ Would you like to elaborate on your experience as a fan on the distinction debate?

49/ Formula One has been characterised by certain media outlets as a "rich old white man's sport", what is your opinion concerning this statement?

50/ Would you like to elaborate on your opinions concerning this characterisation?

**51/ What is your reaction to this statement "Formula one is slowly transitioning to a spectacle rather than a sport" ?**

- Completely Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Slightly Disagree
- Completely Disagree

**52/ Is there anything else you would like to add or develop on?**  
**Open ended question**

**53/ What is your age?**

- <18
- 18-28
- 29-39
- 40-50
- 51-61
- 62-72
- 73+

**54/ What is your Gender?**

- Female
- Male
- Non Binary
- Prefer not to Say
- Other

**55/ What is your occupation?**

Short answer form

## Annex 3: List of tumblr comments

#signal boost

#f1

#f1

#really interesting survey#but oof this brought up a lot of reasons why i stopped watching#f1

#this was pretty fun everyone should fill it in the more responses the better#plus helps with someones thesis 😊

#go and fill out annie's f1 survey!#she's doing extremely important research on the lore#f1

#oh this was good i got to rant#f1

#f1#formula 1

#tw: AD '21

#im so jealous of you op#I went to one of my modules assigning us coursework only to find out last year's theme was f1 related#we do not have this option this year...#anyway rb to do this later

Very good survey with some really great questions regarding the current state of F1. Good luck with your thesis Annabelle!

#formula 1#f1#formula one#motorsports#survey#drive to survive#racing

#boosting!#sorry for the charles bias you might now get

#boost'

#boost!#also hi op I already filled in when you send it to a certain university's f1 society hiiiiii

#boosting

#reblogging to reach my f1 oomfs!!#f1

#quite interesting actually#f1

#!#very good survey#fun to fill out

#formula 1

#bro i cant tell you how good that felt#i havent ranted about f1 in a while and that felt like a big relief 🙌

#f1#formula 1#formula one#survey

#the way i had to stop myself from going on full on rant mode about ad21 lol#but go fill it out

#super interesting survey !!#f1#signal boost

#super interesting form !!#f1

#formula 1#formula one#f1#motorsports#survey#drive to survive#racing

#f1

#signal boost#this was really interesting! good questions#go fill this out it's a lot of fun#and it's no surprise that I had A Lot Of Feelings And Opinions about the topics (sorry op)#formula 1#f1 survey

#go go go provide more data!#sorry op i let a bit loose in the opinion options 😊

#this was fun to fill out!#dug up some long hidden feelings

#done and done#very nicely formatted

#signal boost

#f1#formula 1

#this was SO long but u should do it!#lots of questions about abu dhabi 21

#go fill this out!!#props to op I wouldn't be able to handle reading every opinion and having to treat them all as equally valid lmao#but I feel much lighter after getting to complain for a few minutes 😊 #f1

#hey you 🙌 go answer this questionnaire#I know the pain of making dissertation questionnaires lmao#good luck op!

#the questions were great!#honestly this is so cool#and i hope it works out and a lot of people answer this#when i wrote my bachelors thesis i thought about doing a questionnaire on here as well#anyway#good luck with it!!!

#signal boost#f1#formula one

## Annex 4: List of responses to Abu Dhabi question + adjectives

27/ What is your opinion on the 2021 Abu Dhabi situation?

- It's an embarrassment to the sport, a stain on its legacy. They prioritized a "star finish" over sporting integrity.
- Manufactured entertainment over sporting integrity.
- "They should have red-flagged as that is what the rules stated or should have finished under safety car as letting lapped cars through between Ham and Ver is unfair." Although it was unprecedented, it lined up with the rule book and also corrected the error of not bringing the lap cars to overtake before.
- It should have been handled better, and it shows how the FIA always show preference towards Red Bull.
- FUCK THE FIA HAMILTON 8 TIME WORLD CHAMPION.
- 8th Title for Lewis.
- Max deserved to win the Grand Prix. However, this race was the final nail in the coffin for the polarization of the community.
- You can't change rules like that mid-season; it should have been brought in after the season has ended.
- It's controversial and understandable why people think it's wrong. But looking at it unbiasedly, no FIA/F1 rules were officially broken, even if the decision was never seen before.
- Terrible; the true champion was robbed, for the sake of TV ratings.
- It wasn't equally fair to all drivers.
- As shown in the next seasons, the race finished under an SC which shows that there was an altercation with the race.
- I'm not sure about what happened.
- It was handled very poorly.
- That's crazy, bro.
- I think it wasn't handled correctly in the heat of the moment but it's not the driver's fault at all but the FIA's.
- I'm mixed on it. I think the restart itself was fair, a rolling restart that is; however, how long it took for this to be completed and how long it took for them to decide is where I have the issue and also how they let the lapped cars pass the front-runners. It just seemed unnecessary to me. I think it was fair that Verstappen passed Hamilton because honestly that would've happened anyway if lapped cars didn't pass and they had more laps to race.
- While Max Verstappen deserved a title for his season, he shouldn't have won the way that he did. Lewis led the majority of the race and had managed to put a great distance between him and Verstappen, and if there hadn't been the restart, he would have easily won. The fact that it's the first time something like that had ever happened (allowing cars to unlap themselves) stands without reason. There was no cause for it, and it has never been done before as there's not a reason. Personally, I feel the move was done to give Max an unfair advantage, and I believe someone higher up in the FIA found a way to benefit from it as there is no other reason they would make that choice logically.
- Completely unfair; seemed like they were just trying to up the drama and satisfy the fans who wanted an end to Hamilton's era of domination.
- Too many interests at play for Red Bull. This team had to win the title! Cheating.
- It was a joke. It felt like there was a preference for Verstappen to win; seems like a stolen and undeserved championship.
- It wasn't handled correctly in the moment, but the aftermath was professionally handled (upholding the result, replacing the race director with 2 people, which should've been carried forward beyond 2022).
- I don't think M. Verstappen should be deprived of his title because the mistake is not on him. He also had a good call in making a pit stop for soft tires. The FIA made a title-deciding mistake in not making ALL cars pass the leaders in time, so either the decision of leaving all cars pass the leaders should have been called before, or the race should have ended behind the safety car. L. Hamilton would have won in this case, but things happened as we know today.
- So incorrectly handled. Lewis should have won that race. The conspiracy theories are crazy.
- Stewards' decisions should be final, no argument.
- Even if the race would have finished under a safety car and the championship would have been decided in a rather boring way, it was in no way right to decide to change how a safety car restart should be handled. It isn't ever right but definitely not in a race with such importance.
- It was terrible. That's all I'm going to say since it still angers me to this day.
- I think it was manufactured.
- I don't have one.
- I think it's hard to judge that situation, but what I do know is that the last-minute change in decision from Masi about the lapped cars being allowed to unlap themselves was a bit of a stretch. It doesn't give the impression that it was done on purpose, haha.



- It was unfair and shouldn't have happened the way it has, just for the sake of the spectacle. F1 is a SPORT and it should be handled in that way. However, it's not Max's fault, and what is done is done. Everybody should move on and focus on not letting that happen again.
- The rules should've been followed as they were written out, as they have been followed in every previous race.
- The very fact that Michael Masi stepped down speaks volumes. Had the situation been handled correctly, then either the race finished under safety car or ALL lapped cars would have been let go not just the ones in between Max and Lewis. The main point to take away is that the entire situation was handled with putting on "a show" being prioritized over following the proper rules.
- Should've let lapped cars go through at least a lap earlier (which they could have done), then everything would have been fine, and Verstappen (most likely) would have fairly won the race and championship. Because they didn't do this, the race should have finished behind the safety car.
- It wasn't handled in the best way, but they needed to act; people overreacted because they were rooting for a driver.
- It was a PR disaster!
- It was unfair; the race should have been Lewis' win, the restart on the last lap disallowed this to happen.
- This is another situation that enrages me. I will say to start that I am fully aware that Max is a very skilled driver; there is no denying that. And the same goes for Lewis. But I truly believe that the Abu Dhabi 2021 race was handled very poorly.
- They did it to create drama and to make someone other than Lewis win.
- As a Max Verstappen fan, I'm quite happy, but at the same time, I never really understood why they decided to do this restart like this. Probably to feed the animosity between Max and Lewis (that I think is stupid).
- An absolute farce; it was shocking and had such a disappointing outcome. It was unfair.
- Not well-handled at all and showed favoritism.
- I feel it was a clear bending of the rules to allow for a dramatic end to the season - drama was put first over sporting rules, and it was completely unfair.
- It was fixed so as to help Verstappen win and Hamilton lose.
- While Michael Masi was not biased to any team, he showed himself to be incompetent frequently throughout the season. Abu Dhabi 2021 was wrong because the unlapped cars had not all been allowed to overtake, preventing cars outside the top 2 from fighting for position on the final lap.
- The regulations were not respected in this situation. For me, Hamilton has been stolen and lost his title because of that.
- Unfair victory.
- There were plenty of mistakes in favor of other drivers throughout the season.
- Even though I was rooting for Max, I think Hamilton should have won. Only because it is the last race doesn't mean the race rule set should be handled differently. We've had races being won behind the safety car before. And if you don't want that to be the case. Red flag it and have a full restart.
- Extremely unfortunate for a result like that to be decided by human error. Disappointing end for the best season in years. However, I don't think the result could've been changed as these types of things happen in sports.
- A lot of things happened, but I think all was done correctly. We wanted a show; they gave us a show without marring any illegality.
- I believe that no matter the fact that Max Verstappen won, Michael Masi should have been investigated further in his involvement as he failed to follow the sports regulations. While I am unaware of his intentions in why he did so, as the Race Director, he should have ensured that the race was fair between Hamilton and Verstappen.
- It was rushed.
- It was started too early, but the cars were, of course, allowed to unlap themselves - I don't know why this was not done properly before.
- Max deserved the win.
- The lapped cars should've been let through sooner because it was safe, and then Max would've still won, and he definitely deserved to win the championship.
- Total farce.
- It added excitement and spectacle.
- Manufactured artificial entertainment over sporting integrity.
- There was no reason for the FIA to deviate from the established rules. Max's first World title is illegitimate as a result, and there is less trust in the FIA; fans and drivers cannot be confident that the FIA will follow their own rules.
- The FIA should have let the restart go as it had for any other race previously. The decision seemed more based on the amount of drama it could produce than the rules of F1 itself.
- It was unfair and can be seen as bias.

- Teams voted to finish under the green flag, rules gave Masi a way to make it happen, and so it did. Teams got what they agreed to.
- Hamilton was robbed. I'm still pissed.
- Very badly handled.
- They tried to make Verstappen win. Hamilton should have won. Priority was the entertainment, not following the rules of an F1 race.
- I think this is a misleading question. My 'opinion' doesn't really differ from the factual events. Masi explicitly neglected the safety car restart procedure. Only once the unlapped cars have caught back up to the field may the Safety Car be brought in. If this procedure was followed, as it should have been, the race would have concluded under the safety car.
- I think this is a misleading question. My 'opinion' doesn't really differ from the factual events. Masi explicitly neglected the safety car restart procedure. Only once the unlapped cars have caught back up to the field may the Safety Car be brought in. If this procedure was followed, as it should have been, the race would have concluded under the safety car.
- "I honestly don't know what should have been done but no matter the decision, the championship would have been decided by race direction. At least letting all lapped cars to unlap themselves or not allowing lapped cars to unlap would have lessened the controversy in my opinion." It was not handled correctly, but the result cannot be changed now.
- People are judging Max's first Championship on one race, forgetting the whole season before. Apparently, during the drivers' meeting before the race, the teams and the race director agreed to not finish on a yellow flag no matter what. Now that this event is passed, there is no point in saying Max or Lewis should have won. FIA just needs to learn about this and find a solution. One that would come to mind would be to add a green and white flag as in NASCAR to avoid finishing on a yellow (after the SC goes in, there is one race lap before finishing).
- It was intentional misuse of power. Hamilton was robbed of the title; they shouldn't have allowed the five cars in front to pass; either all cars to pass or none at all.
- It was handled appropriately.
- People blame Max, but he just took the opportunities he had. But all cars should have been released in a way faster manner. Move on.
- I don't have enough time to elaborate on this, but I wish I could. But I'm still fuming. Like most people. What a disgrace this was. The fact Masi was sacked shows it was handled incorrectly, and Hamilton was cheated.
- Absolute joke. I have stopped following F1 since then. Rules were not followed. It was the worst decision I've ever seen in sport.
- "From what I have read, the literal rules were followed by the race leaders. I think in this case, no decision would have been without criticism, and they have tried to manage it to the best of their ability, even if it was controversial. Potentially biased because I like Max Verstappen."
- It was wrong because a rule was not followed correctly, but I understand that it was done for the significance of the race and also done for the drama.
- Before the race start, it was agreed upon that all efforts were done to finish the race under green flags. This led to some seemingly wrong moves during the race.
- No clue; stopped watching Formula One after Michael Schumacher retired!
- Ordered amended for entertainment purposes.
- I think they're both amazing drivers, and at any other time, it wouldn't have mattered, but I think it skewed the results. Lewis is the rightful world champion that year.
- I believe that Masi didn't deal with it correctly and was very biased towards RB, but I think Max deserved it.
- They made the Abu Dhabi race so big beforehand so they could get as many views as possible (they are right to do that), but when Latifi crashes, it should have been red-flagged and race restart after. But the FIA wanted to give a show to the now massive audience they got; they had to say bring the safety car out, let all the lapped cars between Lewis and Max go, and then go back to racing for one lap. If that scenario happened in Monaco or Spa or anywhere else during the year, it would have finished with everyone behind the safety car, and Lewis would have won. I won't say anymore because I could write a book about how stupid that race was.
- I can't remember the ins and outs of it, but it was definitely suspicious. Would have been more entertaining to see Hamilton and Verstappen face off under fair circumstances. Don't know enough about the rules to have an opinion on why it was wrong and how to fix it.
- Since I started only recently to watch and learn about F1 (around May of last year), I don't feel qualified enough to make a statement about it. But from what I read, it does seem a bit like a shit show. Bad for the sport, felt fixed. Hamilton should have won. The decision was made to provoke the confrontation in the last lap between Max and Lewis; I was not supporting one or another, but it felt like it was made up for drama. They chose the winner of this race.

- Disgraceful, clear FIA gerrymandering. Michael Masi was just the instrument of the clear bias. It was clear that the FIA did everything that year to stop another Mercedes win and an 8th title for the only black driver in the field. It is clear Michael Masi bent the rules to set up a final lap that would be great for TV. I think it is unfortunate he had the power to do this and I think it brings up valid questions on the validity of the sport (if it is real or not). I have heard talk that people think F1 is rigged and it's things like this that fuel those suspicions.
- I was supporting Verstappen more than Hamilton this time, so I'm happy with this situation. I think it was fair. Hamilton was stolen.
- Lewis got robbed because they didn't want a black man to break Schumacher's record. I think it was mishandled, but that isn't the fault of the driver nor the team.
- Completely ridiculous. There is no way it should've been allowed to happen. Absolute sham. Mixing and matching of the rules to give the outcome they wanted all in the name of "the show."
- Verstappen should've gotten a penalty. The authorities should have handled the situation better because one team had more advantage from the other which is fair, but it didn't give the other team a chance to fight.
- Horrible. Yes, Max Verstappen had worked enough through the whole season to be able to get the title, but in the end, Max Verstappen was handed the WDC by Michael Masi when Lewis Hamilton had done so much that race and the whole season to be in front.
- Horribly handled all around. Unfair to Max, much as I'm not a fan of his - he deserved a win if he got one, that wasn't in question. Unfair to Lewis because he was disadvantaged by an unorthodox application of the rules. And unfair to fans, who were cheated of the thrill and entertainment of a 'true' finish, and instead watched one stage directed for them (whether or not it was done with the intent to 'give' Max/RBR a title or not).
- Max Verstappen won, even if the decision was so-called wrong it was what happened you can't retract that. It was the decision at the time, and you can't change that.
- I did not like the contact with the race director from either side; team principals and sporting directors should not be pleading their case during a race, and the race director should only be communicating decisions. It leads to distractions and the potential for undue influence. From what I've seen, many other motorsports would have called a red flag and waited for the track to be clear, and if they didn't want to do that, the race should have finished behind the safety car as there wasn't time to fully unlap the drivers and complete the extra lap afterward. As it stands, proper protocol was not followed, and Abu Dhabi 2021 will remain a stain on Formula One for decades yet.
- The race was handled differently for the sake of entertainment rather than racing.
- Once it was done, it was done, honestly, and there was nothing they could have done that wouldn't have left the "rightful" winner in doubt. But the race restart should have followed standard procedure. Unfairly handled in Red Bull's favor. It was handled poorly, but I've moved on; complaining will not undo it.
- FIA wanted to make F1 fun again by getting a new champion; this is the only reason they handled it the way they did. If that was a normal non-deciding race, they would have handled that differently. It was incorrectly handled by the FIA, as it gave a clear advantage to Verstappen by breaking its own policies on unlapping lapped cars. The restart was handled wrong, and Lewis could have won another title fairly.
- It was an absolute disgrace and ever since, I think F1 became worse. It was a complete mess, driven by the perceived need for spectacle at all costs, and resulted in Lewis Hamilton being denied a championship that he and Mercedes had earned by a strategic gamble that there would be a safety car. Such gambles are an accepted part of F1 strategies and should not be derailed by a completely unpredictable failure to adhere to the rules of the sport.
- It showcased F1 in a bad light, but this isn't the first controversy and won't be the last one.
- They flagrantly ignored the rules to make Max world champion. I have nothing against Max for that; it's not his fault that the governing body did that, but I can't believe the results were upheld despite Masi being fired for the way he handled it. It shows blatant meddling in the results for "entertainment".
- Based on previous races' understanding of lapped cars and unlapping during restarts, it was not handled as usual and thus gave Verstappen an advantage.
- They screwed up bad, and they know it, but they won't fix it. It was clearly stated as a human error; however, they do happen, and the championship was earned by the right person in the end. I do think that too many emotions were involved in the end, and it wasn't really handled properly by many parties involved.
- They completely disregarded the rules and seemingly made no effort to address or correct the issue. Disgraceful. Failed to execute the rules correctly, which led to the decider of the WDC, and I am not happy with the way it was handled during the race. After, it only led to more hate in the whole community and it makes the whole, exciting season of 2021 look horrible, leaving a bitter aftertaste.
- It was a bad call, but what's done is done, we can't know what could have happened. Max won the championship, under the circumstances.
- I'm a Max fan; I'm biased. The most credible thing the FIA could've done was annul the whole race; Max would still have won the championship, but it would've shown that the race wasn't really handled well. That would open a whole pit of other questions about other races and decisions, though.

- The stewards made their decision, and they will have to stand by it.
- Lewis Hamilton should have won. It is unfair to bend the rules to make the race more interesting. All cars should have been unlapped before the race was restarted even if this led to the race ending under the safety car.
- I thought the handling of the situation was shambolic, and I'm a Hamilton fan so of course it frustrated me. Absolutely ridiculous how the championship was decided by "human error" and broken rules, and they just expected everyone to accept it and move on? Even after admitting that they broke their own rules? Honestly insane. Felt hugely unfair to Mercedes - felt like the sanctity of the competition and the championship were ruined. Lost much of my interest in Formula One, especially as a Lewis fan.
- I do think it was handled incorrectly, but I don't think that it should be considered some huge scandal or whatever. Mistakes were made, but at the end of the day, that's just how shit works sometimes. There's not much point in debating things like that when you know that retrospectively nothing's going to change. It's not even entirely down to Lewis losing out, unlapping the cars between Max and Lewis and not the rest wasn't fair to Carlos behind Max who could've also had a chance at gaining positions but it was purely down to not wanting to finish such a season under a safety car, but how it was handled was not good.
- The situation was badly handled and confused, but ultimately Max Verstappen was a deserving WDC. As a Max fan, I don't mind it because I got the outcome I wanted. I am not too concerned with the whole thing. But I do wish it had been less controversial. Clear that Max was worthy of being the champion, but the way the situation was handled not only was incredibly unfair to Lewis and Mercedes, it created doubt and controversy around Max's title. Honestly, it was well before I discovered F1. I believe the past is the past, and it is the situations like the Abu Dhabi 2021 that make F1 so interesting. For more context, I appreciate both Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton and am impartial to either result. I appreciate the significance of the event on the history of F1 and its influence on the current affairs in the sport.
- It cheapened the overall championship just for the sake of ratings and proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that driver's merit doesn't matter in the face of a governing body which will simply overrule a season for the sake of narrative. It lays bare how loopholes can be exploited in the sport to favor teams and drivers, which can allow holes in the legitimacy of the sport.
- It didn't follow rules and regulations. Straight up just freestyled to give people a show (and Max the championship). It prioritized entertainment over the race. Technically legal as far as I know, but badly handled.
- "It was purely the fault of inconsistent stewarding. They should have let none or all of the backmarkers through, it's unfair that they didn't. I don't think the race was rigged, but I suspect they were under pressure to make it entertaining (+ high stress and time pressure) and that's why they didn't follow their rules properly. If not for that, I do believe Hamilton would have won - either the backmarkers don't go and max has to get through traffic, or they do go and they would still be under SC when they finished."
- I don't think rules should be situational. If it was any other race in any other circumstance, this would not have happened, and therefore it shouldn't have happened here either.
- Complicated.
- Lewis was robbed of his 8th title.
- I think it is shameful and deeply unfair. Every wave of dominance in F1 gets artificially ruined by the FIA, and even though dominance is boring, I think letting teams come to their natural end is better.
- This is where my negative opinion of Sulayem began. I believe he rejected the rules and standard practice for the sake of providing an exciting end to the 2021 season. I don't necessarily think he cared whether or not Max won—he just wanted it to be controversial so people talked about it.
- "F1 is a sport, of course, but the F1 is also a spectacle. Which you can tell by watching several tracks, Vegas, Miami etc. Saudi Arabia is one of these, which is why it is the closing race for so long. This drama, which they amplified with things like DTS and even using drivers like Hamilton as celebrities in their own right, brings in a lot of support and money for a very expensive sport. Whether the restart was within the rules or not, it would not have been satisfactory to decide the championship behind a safety car, so they made the best decision for the sport and the viewers who want entertainment."
- In hindsight it could have been handled better, such as calling a safety car earlier. But you can't base who wins an entire championship on one poor call. Track limits issues handled differently in Bahrain at the start of that year could have put Max ahead of Lewis to the point where Abu Dhabi didn't matter as much, so it isn't as compelling to me as it is to others.
- I thought it was a deliberate disregard of the rules. They should have immediately acknowledged and corrected the outcome. I lost faith after this one.
- Terrible handling of not only the situation but also the penalization of the races before. Verstappen clearly running Hamilton off the track in Brazil 2021 or the (as far as I remember proven) brake check the race after come to mind. Also, the way Spa was handled in 2021 was disgraceful.
- Made a mockery of the sport and showed the lengths the governing body would go to, to stop Lewis breaking a record he holds with Michael Schumacher. (Bernie Ecclestone went on British TV saying that Lewis losing was

a good thing as Michael now kept his record for the most WDC). They further proved they messed up that night after firing Michael Masi and making him sign an NDA, which proves that they knew it was incorrect, which they admitted after calling that champions a 'Human Error'.

- There clearly needs to be better communication, but there have been similar situations in the past, like the 2008 title, and I don't think there'll ever be resolutions to situations like these that please everyone.

- I'm in favor of it.

- Max won.

- It was handled completely wrong -- it doesn't matter if it's an uninteresting ending because they don't finish with racing laps, the safety car has to do a lap after the yellow flag ends and the race restarts after this lap ends not before. It messed up the other drivers' races as some of them said they were not all unlapped by the time the race restarted (which is the rules as far as I am aware) and I think they were neglected, to focus on Lewis Vs Max. I am not a fan of Verstappen at all but if he had been in Lewis' position I would say the same thing, and whilst both he and Lewis would have been deserving winners, the race should have ended under the safety car outlap and Lewis should have won.

- Corrupt but Toto was weak for not pursuing justice.

- I am a fan of Max, and I'm glad he won, but I also think that the safety car procedure probably wasn't too fair.

- I think it's fair Max Verstappen won, but mostly it has been 3 years and they should stop dragging it out every few months.

- The whole race was handled as a theatrical spectacle rather than a sporting event. In sports sometimes things just have an anti-climactic ending, and people who regularly watch sports are aware of that. The decisions made around the last lap were purely for the entertainment value for non-F1 fans who tuned in because of all the "historic race" advertisements. The outcome was no fault of either of the drivers, but 100% the fault of the FIA.

- For me, it's really hard to not feel racist motivations in this situation. A clear advantage was given to Max because the FIA decided to ignore its own rules and correct a mistake. And I doubt this would have happened to another competitor.

- Everything that has been said already, a driver was favored so he could win the championship.

- Again, entertainment over rules. But let me point out this has already started the race before, Saudi Arabia 21, with Max's ridiculous non-penalty.

- The rules were broken on purpose to keep a black man from winning and equal a white man's record. I wrote my bachelor thesis about it.

- I understand that everybody wanted a spectacle and excitement, the idea that the entire championship came down to the last lap of the race was just that, but the entire grid should have been unlapped, and had they done that it would have most likely ended the race under the safety car. That sort of ending wasn't going to make lots of news and generate profit for the sport, so choices were clearly made.

- It was handled terribly all around, and no reparations were made.

- Although I believe Max deserved to win the championship overall, Lewis deserved that race win.

- Lewis was robbed, but it's done now.

- There are a variety of issues surrounding this, including but not limited to racism involving Lewis Hamilton, and the fact of the matter is, it was unfair in general and should not stand.

- It was a complete travesty and Lewis was robbed, they used a loophole to let Max win for the optics, they openly admitted the result of the race was 'human error', bending the rules allowed Max to win. Under very similar circumstances back in 2012 they ran the safety car to the end despite the title fight, it was what was safe and what was legally required but Masi decided he knew better, even if you argue it was technically legal it was no the spirit of the rules. If he was so desperate for those last few laps, it should have been red-flagged and restarted so they could all have new tires, they didn't even let the lapped runners through properly, all around shambles.

- I think Max deserved the win and got it on his own merit, but I think race control trying to act in a way that made the sport "more exciting" was unfair and should have focused on what was fairest for the drivers in the title fight.

- There should be clear-cut rules for these situations, and those rules should be followed to ensure no driver has an unnecessary advantage and no driver has an asterisk beside their championship.

- It sounds bad! But I didn't follow it closely at the time, and I can't say for sure things were mishandled. I'm sure if I'd been a fan at the time, I'd have been angrier on Hamilton's behalf.

- I believe Max is the rightful winner.

- It made a mockery of the entire sport and robbed Lewis Hamilton of the title. It was an insult to the intelligence of everyone watching that they really thought they could get away with it, and we'd all just accept that Verstappen was the legitimate champion.

- They pushed for a spectacle finish rather than a correct or safe one. The result is not my concern but maintaining consistency and regularity is.

- Could've been handled better. It's wrong that TPs could put pressure on a race director like that. Race director didn't make a mistake by letting the race end with a green flag, the mistake was not making that decision earlier/in the first place. Mercedes team gambled with a strategy and it didn't end up working for them that time. The entire mess could've been avoided if the rules were fully applied the first time (when it was only announced some cars can overtake) as it would've allowed fully clean racing for all positions.
- The restart was done questionably but ignoring the rules, it was a very interesting and exciting race.
- I started watching F1 in 2022, so I did not watch it live. I think it's hard to say what the right choice would have been. My instinct is to say let all cars unlap? Let no cars unlap?
- It was handled improperly for the sake of entertainment, to maximize the "spectacle" and "sale potential."
- I'm of the opinion it's happened, they've had the investigations they fired Massi, nothing changed, and the investigation was over.
- Very happy with the final result having been supporting Verstappen throughout the season and overall felt like he performed better over the season; however, Hamilton should have won the race.
- My opinion isn't very strong, but I do feel like it probably should have ended under the safety car. The decisions made feel like they were less about fairness and more about entertainment, and on balance, I think ending under the safety car seems like it would have been the right thing to do. I wouldn't change the outcome in hindsight, however. It is what it is.
- Michael Masi was pressured by Red Bull to break the rules of F1 governing the Safety Car to ensure Max Verstappen would win the race and become world champion. The FIA admitted that the rules were not followed, and it's quite obvious considering Masi was then relieved from his position.
- It's the reason I've heavily considered to stop watching. And the reason why I've stopped paying for Sky/other streaming services to watch F1.
- It's embarrassing for F1 and the FIA.
- "I've marked no, but I'm somewhere in the middle. I do wonder if it had have been framed as 'nobody wants the title fight to end like this' rather than some nefarious attack, how different it would be. Like yes, of course, it's for entertainment, but is that a bad thing? You're telling me that the rules (which are highly changeable and interpretable) are suddenly so sacrosanct? Also, just because of how I got into it; I listened to 6 years of racing commentary in a very condensed period of time. I listened to Martin Brundle without fail, whinge about letting lapped cars through every time it happened, and reiterate that they 'normally do, but they don't /have/ to, strictly speaking by the rules'."
- In my opinion, a red flag should have been thrown, and then the race be restarted with the cars in the right order.
- The FIA have admitted to their mistake and should have finished the race.
- It's complicated, but I do not feel like at the end of the race that the result was fair.
- It happened in an incorrect way, but Max still won the championship in the end as that's just the way it happened. Had it been done correctly, maybe Lewis would have won, but he didn't and that is the end of it.
- They should have called a red flag after Latifi crashed, but if not, they should've continued the safety car till the end or made all cars unlap.
- From what I've seen recently come out from Michael, it appears to be a misunderstanding of the rules. However, Max was always going to win a WDC, and when you take into account the number of decisions that went against him earlier in the season, it almost evened the scales. But it was still wrong.
- It was an absolute joke; the race directors prioritized the final race of the season not finishing under a safety car over following the rules, and I don't think entertainment value should be prioritized over the sport being kept fair.
- Max should never have been allowed to continue from his position.
- Lewis deserved to win the race, Max deserved to win the championship.
- The race/race restart procedure was not carried out in accordance with the regulations, and the individuals responsible should be held accountable, as well as not entrusted with such responsibilities in the future. However, since the procedure that was carried out did not directly 'target' any one specific team/driver/position/group, but instead affected the race as a whole, there is no need to null and void or alter its result, only to make sure it does not happen again.
- It should have ended behind the safety car.
- I think it proves that the FIA prefer a spectacle above the sport.
- I wasn't there to watch, but I have seen it now and know what happened. I think the situation wasn't handled properly, and the stewards made mistakes, but it wasn't Max or Red Bull's fault... At the end of the day, I think any team would have also accepted the result as long as it was them that won in the end.
- It was weird when you look at the decisions. If they wanted a one-lap race, they should've ended the safety car earlier, track was clear, and let all the cars unlap themselves.

- I think it was not handled correctly, but at the end of the day, it was a human error. Giving the win to Lewis afterward would've been unfair because Max didn't do anything wrong, but Max winning that way didn't feel right either.
- I feel like the situation could have been handled better, but I don't know what would have been the best response. Now, Max has three championships and Lewis has seven. My opinion has changed since the race. Then, I was sure Lewis should have eight championships; now, since so much time has passed, I don't care as much, if only because it can no longer be changed.
- A decision was made that prioritized show over fairness or precedent. That decision very clearly favored one driver over the other (although I don't necessarily believe that it was intentionally rigged. Don't have enough of the facts to draw that conclusion).
- It broke two rules (can't name them off the top of my head, sorry), but after a safety car, drivers are required to stay in order for another lap for safety reasons. This could have potentially killed the safety car drivers and harmed drivers on the grid and was simply down to the need to create drama for Drive To Survive and most likely racism and a dislike of the politics of LH, who had promoted Pride and BLM alongside other issues during that season for which he was criticized by the ruling bodies.
- If that had happened earlier in the season, that is one thing, but for a championship deciding race there was too much at stake. Spa should not have happened, so subtracting the 12.5 points Max was awarded, and the 7.5 to Lewis, they would not have started Abu Dhabi tied. If all lapped cars had been let through, not just the ones between Max and Lewis, Lewis would have won the race and the championship.
- "Michael no, it's not fair you can't do this" - Toto Wolfe
- Handled wrong, but like most races that year were.
- It should've been a red flag then a restart.
- Rules were not followed in order to present a particular narrative of the sport.
- I think, this particular decision was not according to the exact wording of the rules but similarly, other incidents during the season have not been dealt with completely accurately. Therefore, going equal on points in the last race is already tainted by other incidents during the season.
- Shambles.
- I liked that it ended with a race, but I think either they should have done a red flag and restarted or adhere to the rules of a start behind a safety car and not letting some drivers pass and not the others to get the last lap race in.
- It was against the rules and completely unnecessary.
- It was a mess, but hey, Mercedes could've pitted Hamilton for new tyres as well.
- I don't think it was handled well, but I don't agree that makes Max to blame. It's human error and it happens.
- I think the restart was handled incorrectly, and Lewis Hamilton should've won the race, but overall Max Verstappen should've won the title.
- I think that brake checking from Verstappen should have been handled more professionally from a higher up level. It should have been investigated from an outside perspective that wouldn't have a bias towards a certain team based on funding and/or points.
- While I agree it was a close call, Red Bull has been seen to have an undue level of swing with the FIA and their rulings in a way that Mercedes and Ferrari never really have in the last 5 years.
- It was the death of the sport for me, in a way. Of course, I'm still watching, but it's just not the same anymore. To see that incredible fuckup live, knowing that they were making a mistake deliberately, hearing what was said in team-director radios... it was terrible. Even if I wasn't a supporter of Lewis Hamilton, I would have the same opinion, and I was actually sorry for Verstappen too, I mean, it's his first title and he can't even enjoy it fully because everyone says it was gifted to him (and it was. My opinion still stands).
- From the rulebook's perspective: no. From a sporting perspective: yes(ish). Maybe everyone should just move on.
- I think the situation was not elegant, but I do think it was legal. It was definitely not the most controversial decision of the season.
- Hamilton was robbed.
- I wasn't able to watch the 2021 season, so I'm not sure.
- Was not handled correctly, regulation was ignored. Felt incorrect.
- Max overtook, simples.
- It should've been Lewis's title.
- The rules were applied in such a specific way that had never been seen before, made worse by the fact that the rules are used inconsistently and change from race to race just cause. Michael Masi had also expressed bias towards Max Verstappen in the past.
- The decisions might have been fucked, but the decisions were made anyways, and the drivers drove their best under the circumstances.
- Things should have not be handled the way they were handled.

- A whole mess, to be honest. Hamilton deserved the win, and FIA's later decisions confirmed their mistakes in handling the situation.
- A trigger to FIA shitshow.
- The wrong decision was made in the moment, but there's nothing they could've done after the fact to fix it that would've been fair.
- In a situation so dependent on strategy, there should not be a delay in human choice. I don't think the rules were broken; I think they were wrong. Teams should be able to play off a definitive rule book, and allowing decisions on whether cars should be unlapped is not something that should change based on circumstances.
- I don't really give one, to be honest.
- Very sketchy and weird.
- I'm not informed enough about this to provide an answer.
- I do think Max deserved to win; however, I don't think the restart after the safety car was fair.
- It was clear, in my opinion, that letting what happened happen would lead to Hamilton losing 1st place and hence the WDC due to his tyre situation. I think this was unfair.
- Completely unacceptable and incorrect to misapply the rules so badly at such a critical junction.
- I've made peace with it over the last few years, but I think it was appalling how entertainment and race spectacle were prioritized over fairness.
- Was not handled in the correct way and was done in a way that made good TV viewing rather than fair racing despite the possibility for a new record to be made.
- That the restart was not handled effectively, but I also believe that some of the frustration came from TP radios earlier in the race.
- The race should never have been resumed with one lap to go. Lewis should have won.
- I supported Max in 2021; however, that was Lewis' win, and the situation was rushed to be back in racing conditions for the 'excitement'.
- I think it was incorrectly handled. Having only the 5 cars between Verstappen and Hamilton unlap themselves, and with the change of the procedure of the safety car, there were clear biases towards one driver over the other (Verstappen). I think what is more painful is the championship was down to this final race and lap that was handled completely incorrectly on multiple counts. Seems like a failure of the clear regulations set by the FIA just to be ignored because one driver was preferred over the other.
- Frankly, it made good TV, and that was the goal of the race direction. At its core, F1 is entertainment. It would have been better if it had been done properly, but all this did was lift the veil, not change the status quo.
- The rules were violated without an extra lap of SC. Rules are rules; you wrote them, you must obey them. No show and the title fight doesn't cost it.
- The entire race was a mess from Lap 1.
- Lewis Hamilton was robbed of a fighting chance in the last phase of a race he would've otherwise won. It was an absolute disgrace.
- The situation was handled badly.
- It is what it is. I don't think it was the wrong decision to make.
- It was insulting simply because it was done to make good TV and not following the rules. I don't need F1 to baby me to keep me entertained mess up other drivers, including Lewis.
- It broke the rules. The hasty post-season rule changes don't fix the issue. No person who believes what happened at AD2021 was right or even just a mistake has given an adequate logical justification for the gagging of Michael Masi via NDA on the last race.
- It should not have been restarted. In other occasions, the races have finished under yellow flag conditions.
- It is known that Masi was fired because of the decisions that he made in Abu Dhabi, and I agree that the SC restart was handled incorrectly, but at the same time I do not fault Max for winning the title. I think Verstappen deserved the WDC but Hamilton should have had Abu Dhabi.
- I genuinely think the FIA chose a winner for the championship and they did what they had to do in order for the chosen one to be able to win.
- It is what it is, and continually holding on to it years later is hurting the sport – the decision was investigated and remains, and therefore, at least to an extent that does not make it against the rules or regulations.
- I'm kind of unsure of what exactly happened. Additionally, I think the most popular understanding of the situation is that the race was turned in Red Bull's favor due to their tie-ups with the FIA.
- They should've followed their own rules but didn't.
- 1. Lewis should have won. 2. Max was not at fault. 3. It was just wrong. It ruined the legitimacy of the sport. It's hard to watch F1 nowadays. I grew up watching every race live on Sundays with my family, and now I stick to checking on Twitter for updates and watching highlights on YouTube.
- It was unfair.
- I think it is important to accept the outcome of the race; Max Verstappen ultimately won the race and thus the championship. However, the race restart was not handled correctly. The rules clearly state that either all lapped



cars should be let through or none should at all. Masi's decision to not let any through at first and then shortly changing his mind to only let the cars between Max and Lewis through in order to fabricate a last lap sprint race for the championship was a farce, unfair on Lewis and Mercedes, and broke the FIA's own rules governing the sport.

- I personally thought the restart was handled very shoddily... but it did make for an amazing finish.
- I haven't seen what actually happened.
- It was Michael's error + should have been dealt with in a transparent, visible + more thorough manner.
- I think that maybe the final decision was unfair, but at the same time, it is over. Also, it is motorsports, and they do race. Max saw an opportunity and he took it. I think if you are upset with the final decision, the blame lies with the FIA, not Max.
- I believe the whole race was a mess. A lot of people bring it down to the last lap but ignore other moments like Lewis going off track and gaining an advantage that he never gave back, and Max being a menace whenever he got the chance.
- All lapped cars should have been allowed to unlap because otherwise, the only beneficiary was Max. Ultimately, my opinion is that the FIA favored Max in the situation because they wanted a better battle for the sake of entertainment and didn't consider what was truly fair.
- The race should have ended under a safety car as would be the correct procedure to follow according to the rules of the sport. The fact that they ended the safety car a lap early, and had only the five cars between Hamilton and Verstappen unlap themselves to save time after having the Red Bull team whining in Masi's ears about it so clearly shows no regard for the rules were given and "ensure Max wins at any cost" was the focus. The result absolutely should not have stood, and similar to the end of F2 in Monza in 2019, they should have rolled back to before Masi's interference in the result.
- I still think it was a misruling, and Hamilton should've been WDC.
- "I'll be controversial and say that I think it was handled to get the best possible solution. It was clear that a restart with lapped cars between the leaders could be potentially dangerous, so they needed to be out of the way. However, ending the season with a title-deciding race under safety car would have kinda ruined the end and been a shitty end to the season. By only having the dangerously placed cars unlap themselves, would could have a race to the end. Maybe calling an early red flag and neutralizing the race would have been the most ideal solution."
- It's tough for me to say as I became a fan just after that.
- All cars should have been allowed to unlap themselves (only 5 between HAM and VER causes bias issues as the title was at stake), and the restart should have occurred either earlier (as the procedure was for the restart to be at the end of the lap when the track was deemed safe) or not at all, allowing current positions to be kept as done on other occasions.
- It was a poor decision, made not to benefit Red Bull and Max Verstappen, but to avoid ending the race under safety car conditions. However, this decision was incorrect and did unfairly benefit Red Bull and Max Verstappen.
- Lewis was robbed first of all. Second, it was truly just a bizarre thing to do that left no fair outcome for anyone really.
- Listen, it's a race at the end of the day. People go to the F1 to see a race, and that's what they got. I can't say I particularly care for sticking to the inherent rules if it makes for a good, competitive race. But I'm probably biased as a fan of Verstappen...
- As a Max and Lewis fan, it's a complicated situation. But it should have been Lewis' 8th. It was mishandled, and the start of clear bias in the sport, in my opinion.
- It should have ended under the Safety Car.
- Honestly, it shouldn't have happened like that, and I'm not even a huge Lewis supporter because I like others more than him (just preference), but I think it was just an unfair call.
- It shows how F1 is less of a sport and more an entertainment franchise. Rules are bent and broken for drama and politics.
- Handled completely wrong.
- Hamilton was robbed.
- What is done is done, but sudden changes to the FIA rulebook during the race to facilitate the change of a new WDC is not it.
- I think the restart after the red flag was handled horrendously, and whether intentional or not, it benefited the victory of Verstappen. This isn't to say he didn't deserve to win or that he cheated, but that whoever was in charge of managing the race probably made the conscious choice to create a situation that wouldn't benefit Hamilton.
- An absolute fix. That was handled specifically so that Max won. Lewis would have had it in the bag if not for the restart. They've never done a restart like that before or since.

- There should be a cutoff at the very end of a race where if a red flag is called, the race just ends or additional laps are added so a restart allows drivers to race for a representative period of time rather than favoring viewers' adrenaline rushes.

- I don't have one. I'm not dwelling on it and decided to move on, not think about it.

- The ending felt manufactured, like ending under safety car would have been too anticlimactic, so the race directors created an interesting ending.

- The rules were broken, and Hamilton was robbed of the title. Nothing more to add, really.

- The race restart was handled wrong and resulted in all Hamilton's hard work during the race going to waste.

- It was a clear breach of established precedents in terms of how restarts have been handled in the past.

- Should have red-flagged then 2-lap sprint for the win both on fresh tires.

- Bernie Ecclestone said Lewis should retire to preserve a white man's shared record. Derek Warwick called Verstappen the next great white hope. Michael Masi got heavily demoted and the FIA admitted they messed up. The FIA's predatory practice of discouraging teams from going to outside courts to seek justice by way of having the right to suspend the team from all FIA-governed series, depriving thousands of everyday people of their salaries, is disgusting. Lewis Hamilton is F1's only 8-time world champion.

- I had only started watching F1 a few months before that, so I'm not sure I understood at the time what went on. In hindsight, it seemed like a mess in not unlapping all the cars and then forcing a racing lap where (I think) the race was probably supposed to finish (boringly but correctly) under the safety car. Made it exciting and, at the time, having Verstappen win was exciting. I live in the UK under the specter of Lewis Hamilton being talked about non-stop and hearing for years that he was always winning races so a challenge was exciting at the time.

- I definitely think it could've gone way better than it was handled.

- That was the third or so race I ever watched, so I knew basically nothing at the time. I can see now that the restart was probably meant to have gone a different way, but I can see that with the TPs having access to Massi and him perhaps feeling pressured to have such a hot championship not end under a 'boring' safety car lap, that it turned out the way that it did. Obviously this isn't really an excuse, but the shift of the sport towards spectacle really stood out here.

- MAX MAX MAX SUPER MAX.

- I think that both teams Mercedes and Red Bull meddled too much in the decision-making. HOWEVER, Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton did go into that race head to head so I do not care that Max won the race. It was not the blatant steal from Lewis that people act like it is.

- I understand the reasoning behind the decision to generate excitement for a championship-deciding race; however, I don't think the rules for the restart should have been compromised for that. I also think this is only controversial because it did not work in Mercedes' favor; had the team decided to pit Hamilton so both him and Verstappen were on fresh tires, I think more people would have considered Masi's decision to be fair.

- Another example of applying rules when they suit the FIA. They should have let all cars unlap themselves, as was the rule.

- It should be re-evaluated.

- The rules shouldn't be changed for one race, for any reason. There are guidelines and rules for a reason, and people in positions of power should not be able to make decisions on changing these during a race without consultation from others, regardless of how high up they are in the sport.

- It was a difficult situation given its impact on the championship outcome, and a decision had to be made quickly. I think greater use of the red flag in situations like this will ensure good racing and reduce controversy.

- Lewis was set to win the race. The person who made the decision about the restart was fired. I think that says a lot.

- They could not handle Lewis, a black driver, breaking the most significant record of the sport, held by a white man. It was manipulated. Since then, they have proved they do have the ability to handle restarts correctly, which further shows just how corrupt it was. It showed how Lewis is truly alone in the sport. Mercedes dropped their complaint because the Constructors' Championship mattered more than their star driver being robbed. None of the drivers protested it; they admitted it was strange but did not stand their ground or stick with Lewis.

- While I agree that Max should have won the championship based on overall performance throughout the season, I don't think that race was handled particularly well. I was at the race, and the atmosphere for Max's first championship was marred dramatically.

- They shouldn't have restarted the race being that close to the checkered flag. However, if they did restart the race, all lapped cars should have been allowed to unlap themselves.

- Whilst a fan of Max Verstappen and pleased he won the championship, I don't agree that the principles laid out in the rules of F1 at the time were adhered to.

- Not too sure.

- Since we've seen a couple of times after Abu Dhabi, the race is allowed to finish under the safety car when there aren't enough laps left for the cars to unlap themselves. This has been the rule, but for "the spectacle" and

the title fight, it was changed only in that race. It doesn't matter why this was done or if RB was involved in it, but it matters that the heads of the sport wanted to create a show rather than to keep the integrity of a 70-year-old sport.

- I think that the way it played out was extremely unfair. Lewis should have gotten that eighth championship; it's clear that they were favoring Max.

- I don't think it was fair to only allow the cars between the top two to unlap. All cars should have been able to unlap or none; the decision did not make sense to me.

- I don't have much of an opinion as I wasn't watching at this point, and I've only seen clips of people explaining it.

- Cheated win by Max Verstappen. If the rules were rewritten after that race, then clearly it was an unfair win and won via a loophole that should have never been allowed.

- The most devastating sporting moment of my life. Definitely a case of "manufacturing a final showdown" rather than following the rules as they're written. If you don't like the rules, F1/FIA can change them, but do it properly between races or even seasons, not on the fly. No drivers are to blame; it's fully on race control. Also, setting up that final shootout when Hamilton didn't have fresh tires was pointless because Verstappen was always going to pass. In terms of show, letting Verstappen try to pass the back markers and catch Hamilton in the time remaining would have been even better to watch, regardless of the outcome. And if Verstappen had won it that way, there'd be no asterisk in people's minds about his first championship.

- It's a joke; it shouldn't have happened and was absolutely a fix.

- That the whole part at the end was handled incorrectly, but I believe that the right person won the championship in the end.

- If cars were going to unlade themselves, all cars should have, if not, then none; it's that simple.

- To me, it seems that race procedures weren't followed properly. It just seemed like a very, very strange decision and obviously caused huge issues in terms of who 'should've' won the race. I do feel that the situation was handled poorly/unfairly, and normal procedures should have been stuck to.

- I think that the whole season was a bit of a mess, but ultimately, I think Max deserved the championship more than Lewis, and so I liked the outcome.

- Shambolic. Lewis Hamilton was robbed of a title.

- Lewis should have won.

- It happened; the results can't be changed, but the FIA should own up to their mistakes and be more honest.

- To start off, I may be completely biased here as a Lewis Fan, but I don't blame Max or Red Bull for this matter. I blame the leadership. Over the years, rules and protocols have been made, and with a single safety car, somebody simply threw away those rules and protocols. It is not fair to Lewis, Max, and the fans.

- I know something about the controversy, but I don't think I'm informed enough about the situation to form an opinion as I didn't follow the 2021 season.

- I don't have one; I wasn't a fan of F1 back then, so I don't really care.

- The rules were broken in order to increase the entertainment value of the end of the race. This not only violated the reason for having those rules in the first place but was also a safety issue due to the confusion it caused drivers (specifically regarding who was allowed to unlade themselves) and the subsequent blue flags while lapped drivers were still engaged in their battles.

- Lewis should have won, and if the rules were followed, he most likely would have. But rules were invented and ignored to prevent a possibly boring/expected result.

- It seemed that the race win had been given to Max. I can't even begin to understand what Lewis must have felt in those seconds, but I think the restart procedure was handled as written in the rulebook.

- The final lap should've been reinstated. What happened was not in line with the rules.

- Oh boy, there was nothing Lewis could have done in that situation; it was pure race manipulation (add on the whole great white hope saga); it was absolutely disgusting.

- I can see Michael Masi's intentions to ensure the race didn't end under SC, and technically, he was allowed to make that call, but he should have let all lapped cars through rather than the first 5 only. Red Bull took the gamble for fresh tires, and it paid off. Realistically, nothing was done illegally, but it could have been handled better.

- In my opinion, it was one of the most intense and interesting races in a long time.

- They should have followed the normal procedure.

- Both drivers received preferential treatment at various times throughout 2021. Masi was clearly under pressure to deliver a dramatic finish.

- Complete shitshow. Embarrassing. Completely robbed Lewis Hamilton of the title. Clear favoring of Red Bull.

- From what I understand, it's a mess, and I don't understand how that safety car decision was upheld.

- Obviously, I'm a Lewis fan, so take this with a hint of my bias. But they didn't handle it according to the rules, which was later even admitted, and even fired the man who changed the rules (adding this because it further proves that he didn't handle it correctly). They wanted the drama, and they got it; however, they exchanged their

credibility for that. Realistically spoken, Lewis would have won the race and championship fair and square; he had a big margin in the race. Also, in my personal opinion, but people saying that Lewis deserved the race and Max the championship don't make sense to me since going into the race, they both deserved the championship, but whoever won the race got it. Lewis would have gotten it, so he would have deserved both the race and championship.

- There had been a lot of races that finished under the safety car; they wanted the race to be exciting and decided to ignore all the rules to restart the race because they didn't have enough time, and they ended up rigging the season.

- The problem started way before the final race. The calls weren't consistent from the start, and the final race was the final episode of it.

- They should have followed the rule book and not taken a gamble. It was all in the name of the spectacle. They admitted themselves when it was too late, and that there was no way they could correct their decision.

- I think that no matter what, someone would have been unhappy, and after the 2021 title fight, if it had ended under a safety car, it would have ended the season in a worse light.

- Putting drama over fairness and a shocking lack of transparency.

- I was not a live viewer at that point, and "Drive to Survive" was my first exposure. I still find the situation confusing, and the rules around unlapping. Sounds like similar situations had not been handled that way, so that is suspicious.

- I'll get too mad if I talk about it. Lewis Hamilton should be an 8-time champion.

- I think that was the definite turning point where the sport as a whole started going downhill. It was very unfair to Lewis; the race results were clearly manipulated in Max's and RBR's favor, even the FIA admitted it. I think it lacked complete sporting fairness and integrity and showed that the FIA and F1 governing body are clearly biased.

- A farce. Lewis Hamilton was robbed, and I think it shows how badly F1 has gone to shit. I think it shows how as a result of the current F1 management drama and show have been prioritized over safety and fairness (@Netflix you know what you did 🙄).

- I think it's a shame that the stewards handled it the way they did. Even if they had made the entirely wrong decision, people likely would not still be bringing it up as often as they do because it was handled in such a confusing/non-defined manner. People are still arguing about what could have been.

- We all know Lewis Hamilton is the 8th-time world champion, and let's just leave it at that.

- I genuinely really like Max, and I think the whole situation was shit for EVERYONE involved because a lot of people didn't recognize his win back then/still don't. However, it's unfair to change the rules of the sport momentarily for entertainment value or whatever. That win should have been Lewis'.

- A shitshow. Masi directly contradicted FIA regulations with his handling of the safety car situation, and also with not allowing Verstappen to overtake Hamilton earlier in the race. Verstappen is a brilliant driver, and deserving of a world championship, but not in the way that it happened.

- I try not to think of it, but Lewis should have won.

- Don't know, don't care.

- No opinion.

- As someone who is not really a Hamilton fan, it was a disgrace, but it's not the first time the powers that be have interfered with the result of a season or race, and probably won't be the last.

- "As a Hamilton fan, it's still a memorable moment. I think the whole lead-up to that race was emotional for everyone involved and watching, and there were controversial moments during the whole season. Every season has them, but 2021 seemed to be a lot. Also because it was so emotional, with RB having a real chance of winning after years of Hamilton dominance and, at least in my opinion, RB is very good at being in the gray area regarding regulations which makes them so infuriating 🤔, and all those emotions just culminated during that race since it was championship-deciding."

- So anyway, the handling of the restart was wrong. The whole thing with televising team principles talking to the stewards (making it a show) was, in my opinion, part of what led to the decisions regarding the restart. Obviously, races can finish under safety car, even super important races like Abu Dhabi 2021. Championship-deciding races have finished under safety cars before, at least I think they have.

- ""Any doesn't mean all"" is still a sentence I remember. It's still hard to believe that they only let 5 drivers unlap themselves and that those 5 drivers were the ones between Hamilton and Verstappen after Verstappen got new tires. I think regarding the tire situation both teams got it right. Also, RB was right in trying to get the unlapping advantage since it seemed to be the way things were handled that season, and they found a gray area in the regulations and went with it (I also still remember the race prior when the stewards forgot Ocon during the restart and tried to make deals with RB). I just think it was wrong to publicly try to influence the stewards. It was Hamilton's win; he would have won hadn't they let unlap only 5 cars. The race could and should have just ended under safety car. The whole aftermath of that race and season was handled poorly; Masi losing his job was one of the only good things that came from it as he was obviously not able to handle the regulations and the

teams trying (and succeeding) to influence him. And it's good that they don't televise the TP talking to the stewards anymore; it kind of gives them a bit more credibility by exposing them less."

- I am a little confused again. I believe the restart had to be done anyway. Indeed, People would have been even angrier if the race had ended under a safety car. Masi took the decision at that time to ensure the show. But if he had let the time for all the cars to unlapped themselves, as it should have been done, they would not have had the time to restart the race. And Max Verstappen would have overtaken Lewis Hamilton for sure if the race had restarted as he had brand New soft tires and Hamilton was on used hard. Therefore, it was about giving the win to Verstappen or Hamilton. There was no Good choice. So I believe they chose the one that can be justified the easiest: ensure the show and restart the race.

- I don't consider myself well-versed enough to have an educated opinion.

controversial, intentional, inappropriate, spectacle, robbed, handled appropriately, biased, wrong, amended for entertainment purposes suspicious, bad, fixed, disgraceful, clear, unfair, stolen, mishandled, ridiculous, sham, unfair, horrible horribly handled, unfair, unorthodox, unfair, cheated, true, unfair, wrong, proper, stain, differently, unfairly, poorly, fun, fun, incorrectly, wrong, unfair, worse, driven, denied, unpredictable, bias, deserved badly handled situation, entertainment, deserving champion, controversial, incompetent, cheapened championship, exploitation of loopholes, prioritizing entertainment over rules, inconsistency in stewarding, unfairness to Lewis, artificial interference in team dominance, unfair, manipulation for controversy, F1 as a spectacle, unfair, dissatisfaction with the outcome, unfair, manufactured, lack of faith in the sport's integrity, mishandling of previous races. Disgraceful handling, failure to execute rules correctly, bitter aftertaste, dissatisfaction with the outcome, questioning the credibility of the race, bias towards Max, unfairness to Lewis, incompetent, frustration for Hamilton fans, spectacle, questioning the integrity of the competition, loss of interest in Formula One, acknowledgment of mistakes but resignation to the outcome, unfair treatment of other drivers, prioritizing spectacle over fairness. The situation caused disillusionment with the sport, dissatisfaction with the handling of the restart, acknowledgment of mistakes by the FIA, scapegoating of Michael Masi, belief that rules were bent for excitement, unfair, loss of interest in F1, questioning the legitimacy of the championship, criticism of inconsistent application of rules, recognition of Max's deserving championship, acknowledgment of Lewis deserving the Abu Dhabi race win, manufactured, perception of unfairness in the race, entertainment, criticism of incompetence or maliciousness in handling the situation, perception of blatant meddling for entertainment, belief that the situation gave Verstappen an advantage, incompetent, acknowledgment of human error but disagreement with the lack of effort to correct it. mockery, communication issues, past similar situations, favoritism, corrupt, unfair safety car procedure, dragging out the issue, theatrical spectacle, racist motivations, breaking rules intentionally, unfair, prioritizing entertainment over rules, no reparations, unfairness to Lewis, travesty, spectacle, robbery, bending rules for optics, shambles, focus on fairness over excitement. clear-cut rules, mockery, rightful winner, spectacle over correctness, pressure, strategy gamble, questionable restart, entertainment prioritization, investigation conclusion, spectacle, happy with final result, ending under safety car. pressure, unfair, break the rules, embarrassment, middle, entertainment, red flag, mistake, complicated, incorrect, joke, entertainment, prioritize, accountability, fairness, spectacle, mistakes, unfair, decisions, weird, manufactured, human error, unfair, inconsistency, rules, shambles, unnecessary, mess, blame, professionalism, bias, swing, handled incorrectly. death, terrible, legal, controversial, robbed, mess, trigger, wrong decision, sketchy, weird, unfair, unacceptable, appalling, priority, frustration. resumed, rushed, incorrectly, biases, failure, disgrace, insult, rules, hasty, justification, restarted, fault, hurting, investigated, legitimacy. unfair, incorrectly, error, transparent, messy, favoring, misruling, controversial, biased, poor decision, robbed, bizarre, competitive, mishandled, bias, drama, unfair, wrong. entertainment, robbed, changes, horrendously, fix, breach, handled, spectacle, exciting, mess, unfair pressure, spectacle, meddled, controversy, compromised, controversial, re-evaluated. changed, impact, difficult, controversy, fired, manipulated, corrupt, alone, protested, manufactured, handled, atmosphere, marred, restarted, adhered, unsure, spectacle, integrity. unfair, favoring, entertainment opinion, cheated, devastating, manufacturing, unfair joke, fix, incorrectly, deserved, shambolic, robbed, mistakes, biased, leadership, controversy, informed. confusing, entertaining, safety, confusion, win, procedure, rules, intense, interesting, incompetent, preferential treatment, pressure, dramatic, embarrassing, spectacle, favoring, mess, credibility, race, championship, rules, fairness, transparency. confusing, suspicious, unfair, biased, unfair, confusing, non defined, equally deserving, shit, shit, wrong, emotional, infuriating, wrong, wrong, wrong, poorly handled, confusing, angry, confusing, ensure the show, confused.

## Annex 5: List of responses to Stewarding question + adjectives

32/ What is your opinion of the stewarding in the turbo-hybrid era?

- Yes
- More bias for entertainment sake
- Been inconsistent
- Shoddy
- N/A
- Fairly good
- I don't pay enough attention to know
- It's fairer but also harsher in some cases, taking the piss
- None
- Sometimes they're not equally fair with the drivers.
- It's good for the planet and a good way to enhance the sport
- Not the best
- dk (don't know)
- Pretty bad.
- It is incredibly biased and needs to change
- Generally inconsistent
- As I mentioned before, decisions are more irregular, with questionable undeserved penalties in either short or long duration or the nature of the penalty itself (stop-and-go, drive-through...)
- Could be improved
- I haven't followed for long enough to be able to answer that.
- Inconsistent
- I think the timing of the stewards' reaction to incidents has gotten quicker, but I feel sometimes they're too quick to intervene and a situation could resolve itself without the intervention of the stewards.
- I don't have one. seems a bit shit
- No opinion
- I don't really have an opinion about the stewarding. I think the turbo-hybrid power units are more reliable but also showed less competitiveness between teams and larger performance gaps.
- I think the stewarding has become a bit too intense
- I dislike how penalties can be handed out after a race, a decision should be made within 2 laps of an incident. I hate how pushing a driver off the track simply because you "made it to the apex first" has been normalized by the FIA. And I'm not just saying that because Max does it all the time, it's a poor standard of racing and other racing series laugh at the standard F1 has set. As a whole, and to keep it short, far too inconsistent
- Not the best but safety increased, it was necessary, I'd rather prefer them to not take useless risks
- There does seem to be a bit of interference in the competitive running of races in the name of the Show.
- I would definitely have an opinion on this if I knew what it was.
- A total mess.really shit
- I find it tends to be more fair than unfair. There are occasions where I disagree with a ruling, but I suppose that's normal.
- Don't know
- Was exceedingly poor under Michael Masi but has improved since then and so far in 2024 has been to a high standard
- I am not a fan but it's okay
- It feels like punishments are handed out inconsistently and aren't harsh enough.
- I think they tried to implement a lot of changes in the hopes of creating better and more fluid races for the future. Can't be mad at that.
- Bad
- C'est une évolution avec son temps (It is an evolution with its time)
- I don't care even though I miss the sound of the V8 (I was too young to witness the V10)
- Reckless
- Mid
- OK
- Been okay as far as I'm aware
- It has been inconsistent
- I don't have enough information on it
- I don't know
- It's okay, could be better, but it could be worse. A little quicker would be nice. Inconsistent

- It has been spotty at best
- Could've been better.
- Good
- Inconsistent
- Not great
- Stewarding has always been a bit controversial. When they introduced a driver representative I thought it would improve, and at first it appeared to do so, but lately it has deteriorated somewhat. a lot of shit decisions I think a permanent team of stewards should be created.
- The decisions should be more consistent. Perhaps they should let them race more.
- It's inconsistent at times. Sometimes frustrating.
- Could be better.
- Really shit.
- Inconsistent.
- Inconsistent rule enforcement.
- You hope it's done to the best standards.
- I feel like the penalties are too often awarded and inconsistent.
- Overall okay but they have their moments.
- No idea.
- Not good. quite shit
- Inconsistent.
- No comment.
- It's a very hard job to do. You need to make split-second decisions if not it could destroy drivers' careers and the strategy the team has got.
- I don't know what that is.
- Okay.
- On the whole, the stewards do a reasonable job, but would prefer more ex-drivers in the mix. A tad bit inconsistent.
- Neutral. I think there have been some questionable decisions but this happens in all sports.
- I don't know.
- Inconsistent, shit, and biased.
- It can be inconsistent at times.
- Bad.
- Seems very inconsistent.
- I think it has gotten harsh for some drivers and very loose for others, and it shows bias towards drivers/teams.
- Unsure, I think it may be more like the VAR discussion in football as we have different ways to look closer and replay the action that may be penalized or not. And I think people really want to see a potential breach of the rules, the stewards look at it and give a judgment close together. Now we get a lot "Will be looked at after the race" which makes it feel like the race is not over when it should be.
- No opinion.
- Personally, I don't think there's THAT much difference. Stewarding is done by humans, there have always been calls that would go the other way if made by different groups of people. There've certainly been calls I thought were ridiculous, but I'm inclined to believe that that's sports. I actually think one good thing about F1 is that stewarding decisions are published afterward - whether or not that makes them more likely to be 'fair' is debatable, but I like that they're forced to justify their decisions to a degree.
- Good.
- I think it has been alright, but that the complexity of the rules has led to some inconsistent decisions. Formula One could do with a consistent core for the stewards in each leg, with perhaps some stewards who are experts on each track's specific considerations.
- Confusing, at times harsh and unjust.
- Not enough knowledge to form an opinion.
- Stewarding is what it is. It's never once been consistent but there are more rules and eyes now.
- I don't have one.
- I miss drive-through penalties. There are too many post-race penalties when the podium has already been carried out and then the win is stripped away for the driver. You're there to make a decision, so make it in the 2 hours that the race is going on.
- The decisions they make are not always consistent between races.
- It's not consistent enough so decisions can end up being overly harsh and unfair.
- I think it is slowly improving and becoming more consistent, but there is still more to be done.
- All over the place but that has always been the case.

- There's no consistency with decisions made. Even with decisions about specific drivers across races. It's almost like they throw a dart at a wall and see where it lands.
- "I think it has been inconsistent, which is the main issue. Penalties haven't been applied evenly across drivers and teams, leading to anger online and lots of negativity. The incompetence is a secondary issue, which says a lot."
- All the stewarding I've seen has been... questionable at best. Though the stewards have been more consistent than other race officials.
- There seems to be no concise options throughout the different race tracks. One race someone could get a heavy penalty but the next race the same incident isn't even mentioned, how is this fair?
- It would be more sensible to have traveling stewards so the rules are enforced in a consistent way.
- Inconsistent.
- Very inconsistent.
- Questionable at times.
- Insanely biased, Red Bull and especially Verstappen seem to get away with everything they do.
- Slightly negative.
- Not great.
- The on-track stewarding is great. Those folks work really hard and clearly try to do the right thing. I feel like people complain a lot and I want to give those individuals their props.
- The consistency isn't like it should be which causes issues and confusion by both drivers and fans.
- I feel that sometimes the safety of the drivers isn't taken into account as much as it should.
- Too much inconsistency.
- It's inconsistent.
- There have been inconsistencies.
- It's not the same at every race.
- Not a fan.
- I don't know the ins and outs of stewarding, but I think there's a problem with stewards interpreting the rulebook differently and potential biases due to personal relationships and pasts with teams.
- Ridiculously inconsistent.
- Not much of an issue, more red flags have been seen especially in recent years but I don't think there is too much of a change, but more care to detail is required such as the obvious truck being on track at Suzuka (2022?) and the four restarts at Australia last season.
- I don't have any particular opinion.
- Inconsistent.
- Inconsistencies have been an issue, as well as over-reliance on just using 5 and 10-second time penalties, and not using the other penalties available to them. There have also been instances where they take in my opinion too long to make decisions, which can negatively impact the racing.
- I am not so experienced or knowledgeable to have a strong opinion besides the observation that it seems that more rules have been implemented.
- I haven't been a fan for very long, but from what I've seen during the three years I've followed the sport, the stewarding decisions have been very inconsistent and a bit shit.
- Inconsistent — between drivers and between races. Not so much favoring one team, just inconsistent generally. The rules seem to be applied subjectively rather than by a fixed guideline. It has got better since 2021 though.
- It's certainly not great, but I don't think it's as bad as people are making it out to be. The only real criticism I have is that their ruling doesn't seem consistent, especially in terms of time versus grid penalties.
- Inconsistent.
- Terrible shit decisions.
- I feel like there's inconsistency between steward decisions at different tracks. Particularly where penalties are concerned.
- I don't have anything to compare to because I'm a newer fan, but there needs to be improvement on things like track limits, pit lane impeding during qualifying, and time penalties that don't end up having any effect on the race outcome.
- Inconsistent.
- Horrid, to be honest.
- Inconsistent.
- I think it's created a lot of changes, some of which people are overly critical of. The sport has to adapt.
- Not the best.
- No opinion.
- Awful with little oversight.
- The stewards take too long to make decisions.
- It's a mess and quite inconsistent.



- The penalty system is really inconsistent and seems rather biased. It doesn't seem to have a consistent system for what counts as a penalty and how much time someone should get.
- They are anything but consistent, leading to shit situations because certain drivers can get away with stuff. The penalties that are given are also less harsh than they used to be.
- Very, very inconsistent.
- It's inconsistent and seems to be done on vibes.
- All over the place.
- They should stop enforcing track limits unless going off-track has given the driver a clear advantage, in my opinion!!!
- Uneven and involves a lot of politicking when it shouldn't.
- Absolutely deplorable, particularly of late. It was definitely better when Charlie was still here and running race control, but even then it wasn't great. The inconsistency is highly annoying, and is the amount of times the rules have been bent or broken in recent years, or occasionally just seemingly ignored, like Lando's jump start last weekend. Also, we've literally just seen the FIA president investigated for race-fixing where his organization did the investigating? Stinks.
- I think the stewards are doing the best they can with the little training/resources they seem to get. It's an issue on a management/training level, not the stewards' level.
- Not satisfied.
- It lacks consistency.
- Needs to be more consistent across race weekends.
- Overall, very weird. Both as a fan and a marshal, I feel like the rules are never applied consistently, not even for the same driver. Once it's a penalty, then the next time it's not. Punting someone into a wall is a laughable penalty, but slightly pushing someone off a track with no real damages except some grass is a race-ending penalty. Australia 2024 has been a special example of this.
- I wasn't watching F1 yet at the time, so I don't know the details well enough to have an opinion.
- Some interesting calls, overall it's been somewhat decent but the bad calls will always stand out the most.
- Needs to be more consistent, particularly compared to recent years.
- All over the place, inconsistent.
- It has gone downhill since the passing of Charlie Whiting.
- It's not consistent and gets worse as the time goes on.
- It's iffy and inconsistent at best.
- I think overall it's been fine. I do think you lose out on not having a level of consistency, but I think equally you lose out on not making your expectations clear of the people in those roles as a regulatory body - that's how you get consistency.
- Terrible. It is like they have not read their own rules.
- Stewarding has always been crappy.
- I think the cars do not allow for proper racing due to the size and the way the engines work, which affects how races are won and calls made.
- Needs to be much more consistent. The same stewards should be at each race to ensure this.
- Could be improved.
- No.
- It has both positive and negative aspects.
- Inconsistent and unfair.
- I haven't been watching long but the stewards make a lot of mistakes. They backtrack on decisions already made and depending on the driver they might give different penalties...it's messy honestly.
- I have limited knowledge so I don't think my answer can help.
- It's not consistent and lacks transparency.
- There have been many, many instances that I felt the stewards were not doing a good job, many cases where I felt like VSCs should have been physical safety cars, or even a red flag.
- Dreadful unless it comes to crossing white lines.
- I don't know enough to have an opinion.
- Their decisions aren't consistent enough between races.
- Overbearing.
- Much better.
- Some decisions were controversial and some not, sometimes it appears to be inconsistent with penalties.
- I have nothing to compare it to but it feels messy at best. complete shit at worst. Neither well handled on both too strong and too weak at times. And just inconsistency.
- I think a move towards making the sport greener is great. Innovation is a key part of Formula One and the motor industry as a whole.

- Sadly I don't know/remember how it was before, but there sure have been some faulty decisions in this era. Might I say, biased, but obviously that's just my opinion.
- As good/bad as it has ever been.
- I haven't watched the sport for long enough.
- No opinion, it's 50/50.
- I really don't know.
- Dangerous - most recently no red flag for Russell in Australia.
- Inconsistent and problematic, not centered around what actually matters: fair racing and safety of the drivers.
- Could be better.
- Inconsistent and confusing for new fans. Who eventually learn the stewards will do whatever they wish that weekend.
- Their approach often seems unserious when taking into account very similar situations between different drivers/teams. Specifically, I often find myself wondering about how they come up with their final decisions that seem so far removed from the matter undergoing the discussion.
- Don't have an opinion on that.
- Seems very inconsistent.
- Meh.
- Really hit and miss, a lot of stupid decisions have been made while others getting off lightly when they really shouldn't. Also, way too many important reviews are left until after the race where they are swept under the rug.
- Very inconsistent.
- Ridiculous. Penalties are unfair and decisions are dangerous.
- Appears inconsistent and variable. Doesn't seem to follow regulations consistently across multiple examples of similar occurrences.
- Inconsistent.
- It sucks. It's not there.
- Poor and inconsistent.
- Has been inconsistent at best, and unfair and occasionally dangerous at worst.
- No opinion.
- Can be questionable when it comes to constantly.
- It's become more and more wishy-washy and has failed to take full scope and advantage of technology.
- It has been very inconsistent.
- I think there is an issue with consistency in the decisions made, regarding drivers, circumstances, and the chosen penalties.
- Don't have enough physics knowledge to elaborate that.
- More consistency is needed, and a standardization for all drivers and teams regarding the same/similar penalties needs to be clearly implemented.
- Nothing yet, indifferent.
- It is far too inconsistent.
- It's a mess.
- Poor.
- As long as Derek "Max is our great white hope" Warwick is still given the reins it remains a joke.
- Still inconsistent, but not sure if more than before.
- Inconsistent. Even with some ironclad rules and more tech involved there seem to be some major inconsistencies in ruling from race to race or even within the same race.
- It needs to be more consistent.
- No strong opinion, I haven't done enough research.
- I like the improvement in safety measures.
- I think they allow for a lot of risks for the sake of a good race, but I can't find it in myself to fully care or be annoyed by the rule adjusting when suited, even if it means the driver I support is punished by this decision.
- The ultra-dominance of a team can overwhelm the sport a bit.
- None really, I don't know enough about it to comment on it.
- Inconsistent.
- The on-track stewards are trying their best, the in-office stewards need to do better.
- Not overly fussed.
- It's controversial sometimes.
- There have been some good changes and some bad changes.
- No strong opinions.
- Very poor, extremely slow to react and show clear bias towards certain teams and drivers as well as having increasingly more problems with safety, slow SC and VSC as well as track problems, e.g., drain covers. It's laughably bad.

- I'm not sure. I hear people discuss how the racing was better before the introduction of the electric hybrid engine, how the engine was more powerful, etc., which led to a better race.
- Could be better.
- Not great.
- It seems very dependent on who is on the stewarding board, and penalties often aren't consistent across races.
- I wasn't watching.
- I don't have an opinion on it.
- Not a fan of post-podium penalties affecting the outcome of the race after it has happened.
- There are more involved. A lot more penalties and everything is handled in a higher standard than before. It has depended more on who is being investigated than what they are being investigated for, which makes the rules lose any power they had. It's inconsistent.
- I think decision making among the stewards is often inconsistent.
- Seems to change every other race.
- It has been inconsistent and unfair.
- Not great.
- It's been very inconsistent.
- I don't particularly always agree with the stewards.
- There have been more inconsistencies with penalties from the start of 2019.
- A little intense and harsh with penalties, especially after a race rather than during, but it has made the sport an interesting one.
- I don't have an opinion, only that I hope teams and governing bodies try to make decisions as fair as possible. We all trust them to do so.
- It is inconsistent across different tracks and there is a need for more standardization.
- Mid.
- I don't know; I was a kid.
- Don't have one.
- It is poor. I don't really remember the stewarding beforehand, but from what I've heard, it has declined greatly.
- No opinion.
- N/A. I was only watching towards the end, but I didn't see anything major like what we see today.
- They're learning as they go, which has always been the case, but probably have bigger issues to worry about at times.
- No opinion.
- Inconsistent.
- Don't have too much of an opinion, since I don't have that much to compare it with. But doesn't seem that competent, tbh.
- From what I've heard from pundits, it has gotten worse over the years.
- All in all, I think they did much stuff correctly. It's only been recently in my opinion (since 2021) that they have been inconsistent with their own rules.
- Some people get a slap on the wrist while others get hard penalties for the same thing.
- As long as it's safe for the drivers and the environment, I welcome it.
- I loathed it. I wished we could still have the old cars. For the sound, the feelings that brought.
- 2021 was egregious. Very questionable calls in 2022. 2023 seemed better.
- No opinion.
- Awful.
- Not amazing, but I think if I share my true opinions the stewards will show up at my front door with a lawsuit.
- I'm not sure.
- I've not actively watched F1 before that so I can't really judge.
- Inconsistent.
- I don't have much to compare it to.
- Don't even know what this means.
- Shit.
- Not the best.
- People might say the sound of the car is a cosmetic problem but the atmosphere is severely damaged by these rubbish sounding cars. Bring back V8,10,12!
- There are moments when it's fair and everybody gets the same treatment and sometimes their decisions are unexpected.
- I believe the stewarding is most of the time right. I rarely feel like unfair decisions have been taken. But of course, in motor racing just as in any sport, decisions taken by humans can be discussed. So, even if there have been some cases when I did not fully agree with the decisions, I never feel like it is unfair. I just feel like I

would also agree with another decision. To conclude, I believe that every decision taken has been justified and explained the right way.

- Inconsistent, rules should be more clear.
- I think there have been many issues, the end of 2021 with Jeddah and Abu Dhabi, as well as having stewards with a conflict of interest such as Derek Warwick who works for Honda, inconsistent application of penalties etc.
- Penalties seem to become more consistent now but were very hit and miss.
- Generally, cars are to move towards better and sustainable technology; it's a good step.
- N/A.
- "I'm in my turbo-hybrid era, it's not a phase, mum."
- I'm a fan of the harsher penalty system introduced this year (Magnussen's 20 seconds worth of penalties at Saudi). I think it will encourage cleaner racing. Consequent undeserved penalties are being given frequently, ruining some drivers' races (like ten-second penalties for leaving the track by an inch), and consequent small penalties, even if deserved, aren't reflective of the driver's mistake (like five-second penalties for taking out another driver). Yet the rules are what they are, and if they are not respected then this is the problem.
- Stewards should undergo rigorous training as do referees in rugby and soccer, and it should be a profession. Due to the death of Charlie Whiting in 2019, there is a vacuum in leadership in race control leading to chaos and inconsistent decision-making.
- I don't think the stewarding issue is only in F1.
- I understand the need for new safety regulations in F1 and fully advocate for them. The introduction of the halo was tremendous for the sport. That being said, wet racing is basically non-existent anymore. Red flags during rain are so common, and it means drivers who have honed their wet driving skills have no way to show it.
- These are not like a V8 or V10, of course, ecology is very important but it distorts the sport in my opinion.
- Sometimes make decisions that do not make sense.
- Tractor on the track in extreme weather is dangerous.
- Not been great but could've been much worse.
- Just refs, innit.
- They got most of the decisions right but at times it was quite questionable.
- Different stewards will view things differently, causing the controversies we often witness from race to race. F1 Racing has never been so close as in the last few years. Obviously, 2021 was a great season, but the pack is still really close. The innovations seen in F1 are still overwhelming, and that's also an important part of the sport. Different reactions to similar incidents in different weeks. RB sometimes get away with suspicious activities.
- As above.
- Stewards have been too inconsistent.
- Nothing more to say.
- Penalties seem random, flags are falsely enforced either too soon or too late.
- People will always feel like it was better before because we're not in it there and then.
- Too varied at times, lacks consistency as to what is/is not a VSC or Red flag. Track limits are ridiculous, they need to resolve that with investment.
- People think Red Bull dominance is unprecedented, it's not. It's the way backmarkers are falling off that is. The history of this sport is long and everyone needs to brush up on it.
- Some decisions don't make a lot of sense, but I wouldn't say they're skewed towards a certain team.
- Takes too long for results to come back sometimes so penalties that happened during the race aren't given until hours after. Can seem biased sometimes. It's been pretty inconsistent.
- Sometimes they are very strict while being lenient with weird things.
- It's kind of crazy to me that stewarding/marshalling seems to vary so much depending on the race, place, and drivers involved. Feels very unprofessional, especially when stewards and marshals regularly express personal bias on social media and antipathy towards certain drivers to a concerning level.
- There was a steward who was a white supremacist who should not have been allowed to steward. Some races drivers do things that make them receive a penalty, however, in others, they don't. I think it was 2022 they said they'd change this and it did for a handful of races but now it's back to being inconsistent.
- A lot of decisions are made in the name of closer racing, so less severe penalties are given and often the penalties do not fit the action. A financial/5s penalty does not directly impact a driver's race in a way that a drive-through would; however, the stewards often still choose 5s penalties instead of penalizing more harshly when needed. Also, a lot of rules about political messages etc. seem uniquely misplaced in a sport that has many more dire problems. The stewarding standard varies race to race; penalties aren't consistent whatsoever - one driver may impede someone and not get a penalty, another driver can do the same and would get punished for it.

- The fact different races and stewards have different approaches for similar accidents does not feel right to me. At the very least, precedents should weigh on decision-making. I think stewards feel pressured, but they don't seem to be consistent. George Russell's Aus '24 crash took 12 seconds before they put out a virtual safety car, which is an absurd amount of time for a driver to be stranded in the middle of the track in the racing line for a decision which by the books should've been red-flagged immediately. I think this really sums up the way the stewards have been handling things recently. Utterly ridiculous. The 3-place grid penalty for the F3 driver who deliberately pushed another into the wall is in the same vein in that it took hours for them to decide and the penalty was far too light.
- I've seen people say that penalties seem to be given based on the outcome of an action rather than the action itself, which I agree with, but I feel like they're also biased towards drivers they may like. Like in Australia '24, Alonso didn't really commit a major violation, he was deemed too slow and given 20 secs, so it seems more like he was given those 20 secs not for being too slow, but for causing a crash with Russell. Russell's crash could have been fatal, as a FRECA driver was killed in a similar crash in 2023, where he crashed, was left lying in the middle of the track, and then was crashed into by multiple other cars, which ultimately killed him. But in Silverstone '21, Hamilton was only given a 10 sec penalty for a collision that could have very well killed Verstappen, being 51 Gs. And although the collision was the result of both drivers' actions, so was Russell's crash. So what really made Alonso get double the penalty when both accidents could have been fatal?
- The punishments seem inconsistent across the board - one driver gets 20-second penalties for something while another would get 5 for the same thing or not at all. A good example of this just occurred. Driver Fernando Alonso has performed the same move several times within the last year (Brazil '23, Abu Dhabi '23), but is only called out on it recently with a harsh penalty (Australia '24). While AM has stated they cannot challenge it further, it is a move that FA has been doing since 2003, and if there hadn't been a large accident (which was handled incorrectly by the stewards) it is unlikely he would've been charged. I also feel like steward Hebert's bias against driver FA pulled it more towards the penalty. Therefore, I think stewardship needs to be fair, unbiased, and consistent. I don't think former drivers, unless they sign a statement of neutrality, should be stewarding, as well as higher-ups from previous teams. I do agree with FA's penalty, but if he's being penalized, it's also due to his racing style. I also think all stewards of AD21 should be banned from stewardship from the FIA permanently. There's also no consistency in what level of penalty is delivered; for example, we've barely seen driver-through or stop-go penalties. It's just appallingly done at this point; there's a clear bias towards certain drivers (i.e., Max) in that certain people seem to never get penalties while others get onslaughts of them for ridiculous reasons.
- They very often don't seem to be sure of why they're using particular penalties. Plus, I will never EVER forgive them for accusing Norris of unsportsmanlike conduct. Not only is that an outrageous slur on a driver who's already incredibly hard on himself and can sometimes be TOO honest, but it just goes to show that they often don't give the right kind of penalty for the right reason.
- There have been so many decisions made that were seen as a "mistake": Verstappen not getting a penalty Monaco '22, not getting a penalty Brazil '21, not receiving a harsher penalty Jeddah '21. Also, Alonso's back-and-forth penalty in Jeddah '23 that made the sport look like a joke. Finally, Pierre Gasly receiving a penalty for speeding in Japan '22 when he could have died from hitting a tractor on track feels particularly awful. "The rotation in stewarding leads to different outcomes and penalties for the same incidents. The stewarding in general seems to get worse with each season, and sometimes the rules are changed just so that a team/driver won't get penalized. Also, 198 deleted laps in Austria..."
- It's an area that is kind of shrouded in mystery, in my opinion. And not so much in a transparency way, but a regular fan (who statistically would make up the majority of viewers) wouldn't have any idea how they work, why, or the reasoning behind decision making. It is ridiculous to have to wait sometimes DAYS to find out the final race decision because of how long it takes them.
- As everything moves on, so should the training and competence.
- Tighter stewarding has led to a higher racecraft standard and fewer incidents, but the introduction of new rules, which then led to rules on the new rules and so on and so forth quickly became quite the task to keep on top of, and where there's legal talk, there's always a loophole or a gray area or two. This has developed a whole new dimension for the teams to compete in; drivers will try to either catch their opponents in a position where a penalty may be argued or even put their opponents into such situations themselves. All of this has a very bureaucratic feeling to it, with the teams pretty much 'playing courtroom' during a race, and although it's absolutely every team's right to explore any and all possibilities to gain an advantage, races and positions should not be decided in an office.
- Some drivers receive harsh penalties, while others receive none for the same offense. Only non-British drivers get penalized.
- I also think it is pretty strange that not all the stewards are permanent.
- The Australia '24 should have had a red flag in the last lap for George Russell's accident, and that's just talking about the most recent race.

- Safer, faster, and more efficient.
- I'd like to elaborate on the quality of racing question: I think both yes and no. Having a team so above other teams both diminishes it and makes it better in the sense that the on-track racing has diminished but it's incredible to be able to see a team build a car so much better than the others, but overall I think it would be more fun to watch with more equal cars.
- About the racing: the cars are just too reliable which takes away a crucial element of motorsport: unpredictability.
- Some courses have great marshals, others are terrible.
- Not sure, generally, but I do believe sometimes that penalties should've been given when they haven't
- Unnecessary penalties or vice versa no penalties. Recent examples: Checo violated track limits during the race in COTA 28 times (if I'm not mistaken, someone counted this, I may be wrong) and even though it's seen on onboard and Haas tried to give a complaint about it to FIA, it was declined. Lando Norris' jumpstart in Jeddah or Alonso's penalty in Australia. Controversial. Also, the decisions are taking too long time.
- Penalties are handed out rather randomly and with flimsy reasoning. The kind of penalties handed out are also wildly inconsistent even for similar incidents and sometimes even from race-to-race. Lewis at Silverstone in 2021 got a 10-second penalty for his crash with Max, but Fernando Alonso gets a 20-second penalty, post-race too, for "potentially dangerous driving" relating to Russell's crash in Australia even when Russell was nowhere near him and binned it in the wall because he overreacted to Alonso lifting off and lost control on his own. Lack of consistency.
- Inconsistency and incompetence.
- Odd decisions, clear favoring of certain teams, reports of the FIA president interfering with results? It's all pretty shocking and embarrassing for the sport as a whole.
- I don't have any suggestions to make it better or changing it. The F1 rulebook is already too big and incomprehensible for the average fan.
- The incident in Japan with the tractor being on track during heavy downpour is enough to need a rethink (thankfully Japan has now been moved to a different month).
- I think the majority of the calls are correct, but every now and again there are some ridiculous calls from the stewards.
- They should have gone to Specsavers.
- Stop red-flagging wet races; I want to see them race in the wet! It is very inconsistent.
- There should be a set group of stewards who actually know the rules and treat every driver the same.
- They make so many stupid decisions and go back on said decisions multiple times in some cases. I also think that they punish some people but not others for doing the exact same thing.
- The use of rotating stewards means less consistent calls (a problem in other sports). Especially with other sports, the location is the same regardless of where you play (a football pitch is virtually the same everywhere around the world, tracks are very different). More hard and fast rules would be welcome for everyone to understand where they are, and context should be used if necessary but overall, cutting across someone or putting someone wide should be the same whether you're in Monaco or Silverstone.
- When Michael Masi came in, there began to be a lot more inconsistencies and some rules weren't as clear, and there was a gray area that there shouldn't be.
- Less street circuits are needed. Need to bring back dedicated tracks such as Hockenheim.
- They need to be more consistent with their calls and ensure fair and interesting racing.
- Similar infractions are punished differently, or enforced differently.
- There seems to be a culture in which different rules apply to different drivers. There's no clear precedent, and every steward interprets the rules differently, so an offense that would not be investigated one weekend could lead to a 10+ sec. penalty the next. I feel like it's because before F1 was more or less dominated. Sure there were fights here and there, but in the end, one man won it all. In 2021, however, this changed, and it sounds stupid but I really feel like they didn't know what they were supposed to do because they weren't familiar with this situation anymore. However, I only started really being interested in F1 in 2016, before that I just watched and that was it so I'm probably not aware of everything.
- Multiple instances of penalties being handed out for racing incidents (spa 2023 sprint, Hamilton on Perez) or penalties being deserved but not given (Lando Norris jumpstart, Saudi Arabia 2024).
- I personally think they should remove the stewards from the racing. It is hard for me not to see the bias in their decisions with the penalties, particularly on who, what, why & how long.

inconsistencies intense harsh interesting inconsistent standardisation poor declined questionable learning  
inconsistent competent recently inconsistent egregious questionable awful shit rubbish fair unexpected right  
unfair justified Insanely biased, redbull and especially verstappen seem to get away with everything they do  
Slightly negative not great great hard right a lot props consistency issues confusion safety account much  
consistent same newer improvement crappy proper consistent special weird marshal applied penalty damages  
race ending shit special decent bad worst dangerous shit inconsistent problematic fair safety shit questionable  
unserious inconsistent stupid important inconsistent unfair dangerous sucks inconsistent fair standardization  
mess poor joke inconsistent ironclad consistent improvement risks dominance controversial good poor clear bias  
increasing laughably better could be better not great dependent consistent inconsistent inconsistent decision  
making inconsistent unfair not great shoddy, shit fairly good, harsher, inconsistent, fairer, biased, intense,  
questionable, unreliable, quicker, frustrating, spotty, wishy-washy, confusing, problematic, shit questionable,  
inconsistent, laughable, slow, controversial, egregious, awful, terrible, poor, inconsistent, unfair, awful, rubbish,  
inconsistent, unexpected Insanely biased, slightly negative, not great, great, inconsistent, not a fan, ridiculously  
inconsistent, inconsistent, inconsistent

## Annex 6: List of responses to DTS perception + adjectives

44/ What kind of impact do you think it has had on the sport?

- I think it has brought more fans, it has humanized the athletes and shown people that Formula One is truly interesting, however, it has dramatized some stuff.
- Made drivers more relatable.
- Involves fans like me who like the personalities rather than the politics.
- Lead to a huge amount of buzz and interest in the sport.
- Brings in more fans but is also misleading.
- Negative impact towards drivers such as Max who are shown in a bad light.
- I think it helped gain the sport a lot of audience but it also had the same effect as a shit reality tv show. Can I just say season 6 was absolute dog shit. They didn't even show Piastris FIRST EVER race win albeit a sprint but whatever.
- Good impact. I think recent popularity has come through exposure through Netflix.
- Negative. It's brought in a new type of fan who solely focuses on the off-track drama rather than the actual sport itself. It's also brought about this unnecessary idolization of certain drivers such as Lando Norris.
- More people watching the sport but the drama is too much.
- Positive for global markets like the USA, pre DTS understand its more fabricated drama now then anything else. But I appreciate the impact of global viewing and interest its created for F1.
- Positive.
- Increase its popularity.
- It has brought a lot of new fans, especially younger ones.
- Good for viewership but too fake.
- The series depicts the sport in a very specific way, that sometimes can be far from reality, so people watching should be aware it's a sport and not a fiction of some sorts.
- Great for getting new eyes on the sport.
- It's brought a lot of fans to the sport, but also hasn't really educated them.
- I definitely would not have given a singular fuck abt F1 if I hadn't watched the show, it def made it more "starter friendly" in that even though I still don't actually get a lot of it it feels more approachable and doesn't have as high a bar of entry to watch.
- Brought greater visibility and coverage, more new fans which is good for the sport, however, due to the incredible bias for certain drivers and hypersensitization/dramatization of races, it can often lead new fans to particular views of drivers/teams that may be unlike the general F1 community.
- Has probably made it more famous across audiences that didn't watch it, I don't mind it.
- It's great that it brings newcomers to the sport and it's really garnered popularity for the sport, however, I don't think it accurately portrays all that happens. In the most recent season, they didn't even show some of the best parts of last season, like the CarLando podium, and Verstappen won nearly every race and not one episode was about his success.
- Allowed more expansion to people to get into F1.
- A mixed impact because it isn't an accurate representation of the sport which leads to new fans having false views or impressions. It is also very over dramatic however it does bring new fans to the sport.
- A positive one, bringing more exposure and new fans, but very overdramatized.
- Showing the bravery of the pilots mainly and the craziness of this sport!
- More viewers for sure.
- It's brought a lot of new fans to the sport, which in my opinion can only be a good thing. However some of the longer-term fans have decided to divide the fanbase and single them out, which I don't agree with.
- It had and still has a huge impact on the sport, mediatically speaking. It allowed a lot of people to get interested in the sport, and even if the actual facts aren't always correctly shown to the public, it serves as a good introduction to Formula 1.
- Brought in many new members to the sport. Doesn't have a lot of history of F1. DTS fans are shallow fans but good to have development and a way to get into the sport.
- It brought an enormous amount of fans to the sport. And even if some people are against that, it has brought an enormous amount of wealth to the sport.
- I've watched the first 2 seasons then I gave up since it's over sensationalized nonsense.
- None.
- Bringing younger people into F1.
- I think it's had a great impact on the sport along with an increased interest in the life of the sport and all who participate rather than just individual races.



- I don't mind the fact that it's bringing in more fans and supporters and I enjoy the creative aspect of it, which offers a different perspective than when we watch the races live. I do think that it should be taken lightly because it is very focused on drama and sometimes lacks context, as such should be interspersed carefully. Some fans who have only watched the show should be aware and maybe educate themselves further (just not taking everything they say as gospel basically).
- Definitely helped grow the fanbase and attract younger fans, which was needed. It also helped showcase drivers' personalities.
- As a long-term fan, I was happy to see it bring a whole new audience to the sport. It's been really nice to have old friends gain an interest in F1 and have people to watch races with. However, it's definitely led to some created "drama" and tension.
- A positive one. Old F1 fans like to gatekeep the sport, and they all need to grow up. DTS has made the sport one of the most popular sports in the world. I remember in 2015 when F1 was less popular than Beach Volleyball. People need to understand that DTS needs to dramatise the sport to make it watchable, and interesting to new fans. As an old f1 fan, I can separate the actual sport to DTS, and enjoy it as a separate thing.
- Positive, bringing in millions of new fans
- Bigger mediatisation i guess, it attracted new fans
- As a non-watcher, it seems to me it's turning the sport into more of entertainment than focus on the driving. But I also appreciate it's brought many new people to the sport.
- Positive, bringing in millions of new fans.
- Bigger mediatisation i guess, it attracted new fans.
- As a non-watcher, it seems to me it's turning the sport into more of entertainment than focus on the driving. But I also appreciate it's brought many new people to the sport.
- Positive more people are into the sport.
- A lot have said some very negative things about the show which angers me a little bit since it has actually done quite a bit for the sport. Some of those things I agree are negative like the fact that even more celebrities and influencers are showing up and it's more money related. But the positive thing about it is that it has allowed for young people to get into the sport and has also allowed for issues like women in motorsport to be questioned and resolved to an extent.
- More coverage and viewers of F1.
- That brought new people watching F1 like me but I think more criticism and harassment on the drivers.
- I think it's an interesting insight into the sport and the drivers.
- Definitely brought new fans like me but maybe has become more of a TV reality than an informational show about F1.
- It has led to the dramatization of parts of the sport. Drama has always been a part of it, but I don't like the way it's overshadowing the sport and I believe it ultimately led to the 2021 Abu Dhabi result.
- Who knows?
- It helps fans who do not have a large amount of knowledge for the sport, get some more interesting facts about the sport.
- DTS has had an overall positive impact on F1 although it has created some unfavorable attitudes in the fan base of F1. The amount of people brought to the sport outweighs the negatives however.
- Good! The sport was watched by far fewer people before it, it's nice to have more fans.
- More dramas/personalization of teams.
- It allows for new fans to be introduced to the sport and is positive that way but recent seasons there's some BS.
- It brings new people into the sport which is good. The past 2-3 seasons feel a bit worse than the first 3 but I still enjoy that it is happening.
- Had a huge impact as it has but more eyes on the sport.
- It gives you a better watch of the sport from the inside, as a football fan it would be great to do the same with the trainers.
- Ça impacte la popularité du sport et l'intérêt pour les sports auto et la mécanique en général chez les jeunes surtout.
- Growing popularity in the US. Too much fake drama though.
- It sensationalizes it but also brings more fans to the sport.
- More US and sensational fans.
- Increased viewership.
- It shows such an insight into what happens in the background.
- More viewers are always good even if they have some questionable opinions.
- Made it more relatable.
- Maybe a more guarded approach of teams knowing they are being filmed.

- It has a positive impact by introducing people to the sport in an accessible way, however, some of the storylines are overdramatized and inaccurate. Furthermore, when there is a less interesting season (like last year) DTS suffers as well.
  - It has brought a lot of new people to the sport especially women which is I think is good but also turned it more into a reality TV than it should be.
  - The benefits are that it has encouraged more people to be involved with the sport, especially young women. However, I think it dramatizes the sports and racers' lives, potentially leading to unfair opinions about specific drivers.
  - More popularity.
  - I think it has been good for F1, younger fans are getting interested.
- 
- Gives more insight as to what happens within F1 & a race weekend with Teams.
  - More spectacular, more fans on F1 but not only for the cars, it's for the entertainment too.
  - Brand awareness.
  - It has been very successful in drawing in the American audience.
  - Increased popularity.
  - It's part of the reason I watch Formula 1 and many people in F1 say they have seen an increased interest in the sport since DTS first aired.
  - Too much. Episodes should not be released until the end of the following season.
  - It's good because more people are getting into F1, however, sometimes DTS makes you feel like every lap of every race is exciting which is not always the case.
  - Brought fans. Set unrealistic drama expectations.
  - Has brought in more fans, but I don't think they are true fans.
  - I think it has injected a whole new generation of fans.
  - Positive impact on exposure.
  - Brought new fans.
  - I'm on the fence with the amount of new fans, and the type of new fans it has brought to the sport.
  - Increased fan numbers and given appreciation of how difficult is to drive an F1 car. Great way to get to know other people involved other than just drivers and major team managers. Also more money into F1, potential for more corruption?
  - Interesting for fans.
  - See previous answer about the changes since 2017.
  - It has made the sport more accessible to new fans.
  - Different fans.
  - It has put a strain on friendships (Max and Daniel) which isn't ok, they're pushing into their private lives which is weird just let them race we don't need to see the background or if we do then it should just be engineers and how the car works with the occasional driver rather than the drivers being the main focus.
  - Positive.
  - It's definitely helped bring more people to the sport.
  - Another "show" to show the behind the scenes of F1.
  - I have already said this in a previous question but DTS has increased fan base and media coverage.
  - As someone who has been introduced in F1 by family and mostly Drive to Survive. I think, it made it more accessible and entertaining to learn and grow an interest in F1.
  - Bring a lot of new fans, made the driver more human.
  - Popularized it.
  - Big (USA).
  - A pointless sideshow to bring reality TV fans to a complex sport.
  - It is a massive dramatization of the sport. I think it is made for a viewer who has no experience of F1 but is done in such a way that I'm not the biggest fan of. For example, they swap in team radio chats from different races and such to create tension where there may be none. I like it as an experienced F1 viewer to see some of the conversations and insight from the paddock that you wouldn't otherwise see.
  - Makes the sports more known to the public but also makes leads it to a business more than a sport.
  - As I said a lot of people watch F1 today because they first watched DTS so that's positive.
  - Good and bad too much "fake fans".
  - Brought more fans, even with false narratives.
  - Positive in terms of exposure but negative impacts on certain drivers.
  - I think it has made it far more popular and I think it has been genuinely positive for F1.
  - It has brought the drivers closer to the fans but it has made the sport a 'reality show'.

- It's definitely brought more interest to the sport but the narratives may sometimes be boggled and one might need to do some research to know the full story.
  - It has definitely given it a better reach.
  - It has aided the process of making the sport more into an entertainment aspect than a true sport, attracting many people who are more interested in the drama than the actual racing.
  - It's certainly increased visibility and viewers and brought new fans in. However, it's turned everything into a storyline and increased interest in the interpersonal angle more than the sporting or technical angle. This, for me, promotes commercial decisions to be made by Liberty Media that have greater potential for a show, rather than sporting excellence.
  - Changed how the media game is played. Although it was going to change somehow due to changes in culture. Very false though.
- 
- It has drawn in more of an audience, and led to more focus on the drivers and other large personalities in the paddock. I will not judge its effect on the sport as good or bad, but it is not the sort of content that I value in a sport, and I have found it to occasionally misrepresent and sensationalize.
  - Broadened the horizon of the sport and increased engagement.
  - It brought new fans to the sport, but it seems not very accurate and quite dramatic.
  - Increase in interest.
  - More fans who don't watch the races. Fandom spaces enweirdening. Valtteri Bottas's naked ass.
  - Negative, stirs up a lot of unneeded drama.
  - Negative, it creates unnecessary hate and tension and dramatizes the drivers' personal lives. I think a lot of team/sponsor/FIA decisions now take into consideration the DTS impact that whatever decision they make will have and it has made the sport feel less serious.
  - Exposure and popularity.
  - The influx of fans is undeniable, but I'm well aware of the lies it peddles so I think the misinformation is not good.
  - Good for bringing in new fans, bad if you're already a fan and want additional content. The show surrounding it is fake and cringe.
  - It creates an opportunity for new fans however the representation of the \*sport\* is inaccurate.
  - It is very sensationalized and dramatized, and doesn't focus enough on explaining older precedents that affect the sport to this day.
  - It allows more of the drivers' personalities to be seen and makes them more likeable but if they are portrayed negatively they can end up being hated on.
  - Positive in terms of engagement, but it tends to give a different picture of the drivers than what feels authentic. It also tries to create a lot of drama and change the context.
  - It has brought in new fans, which has been positive, but at the expense of misrepresenting key events and increasing PR pressure on drivers.
  - Forms a narrative that leads to idealization of certain drivers and villainization of others. Forms the most annoying genre of fans and the drivers who are bullied shut down and most just refuse to have any stand on anything however trivial.
  - It introduces new people to the sport which is great. However, fans have turned on new fans who have been introduced to the sport which has created a hostile environment.
  - Negative. It's very much focused on being reality tv in the sense that everything is overdramatized and key parts of stories are often missed out.
  - A mixed. It's brought a huge number of fans in (including myself), and has changed the demographic of the fans. Unfortunately, it also has created a push for the consistent increase in viewership (both for DTS and the race broadcast), which is damaging as the FIA and FOM push for more races and more content to the detriment of the employees.
  - Brought in a lot of new fans, mainly.
  - It's had both negative and positive impacts.
  - Added lots of fans, which is good, then propelled over-expansion which was dumb.
  - Great increase in popularity.
  - Lots of new fans. Prioritization of entertainment.
- 
- I think it has grown the sport in popularity, but I'm not sure in a healthy way. The way rivalries are presented on there and even sometimes made up altogether has turned the fanbase toxic and not enjoyable to be involved in.
  - I think it has had a harmful impact. A lot of the fans that come from DTS seem to have a weird perception of what F1 is. It has sadly brought a lot of K-Popification to the sport and drivers.

- Negative, but that's because personally I don't think F1 needs any more publicity. I think it is positive for the sport as a business endeavor.
- Plus de visibilité et de fans.
- I think it brought more viewers to the sport, however many of these people expect the races to be exciting and full of drama from start to finish.
- Positive as it has brought many more fans into it, but has also arguably caused the sport to be over-dramatized and made less accessible for things like Grand Prix tickets.
- Not good, it sensationalizes the wrong part of the sport with made up or exaggerated drama instead of actual racing.
- It's made it a lot more accessible for more fans to come into the sport. It's partly why I got into F1. It's also hurt the sport a bit as it overdramatizes and sells fake storylines. F1 also hasn't adapted to the new fan base it's gained.
- Good and bad. It has brought new fans to the sport (like me) but it clearly has storylines being made and biases. I think it has also made some fans view each race like a reality tv show instead of a sport.
- A bad one. It shows things we may already have forgotten or push things that were "harmless" into big things. It puts some drivers in a bad light and makes hate easier.
- I think it's gotten a lot of people into the sport, especially through its portrayal of certain relationships and narratives. Personally, I got into the sport through hearing my roommate talk about the relationships between drivers and then used DTS as a way to boost my knowledge of these and to put faces to the names. I am currently going through DTS to catch up on what I missed in the years I wasn't watching. What I've seen from many of my friends is that DTS provides a good entry into the sport for people who get into it through word of mouth.
- It has definitely brought in more fans worldwide, especially over the pandemic lockdowns. There's a stereotype that all those fans are young women, which in my experience is both inaccurate and disparaging to those young women fans. Hell, my 70-year-old dad is a DTS fan. I do not think it's affected the sport in a negative way, other than maybe irritating some of the drivers.
- Definitely a boost in popularity, especially in the USA! It also got me to be a fan because the cut and staging are thrilling. Once you actually watch a season live it decreases in value.
- Made it more popular but also more of a spectacle.
- It has definitely brought in new fans and increased the 'celebrity' status of drivers.
- Positive in some ways but negative in others.
- I started watching F1 because of DTS so I am assuming it's giving the sport more exposure albeit sensationalized.
- It tells stories which results in people believing that there is more drama/different drama and it impacts the way people view the races itself. It draws people in but it can also mean they have a different expectation of how watching the sport is going to be.
- More popularity for the sport and individual drivers.
- It has grown the sport.
- It's turning F1 into a spectacle.
- I think it sensationalizes things that don't need to be and has prevented the teams from doing their own behind the scenes media.
- I think it has definitely brought a lot of fans into the sport, but I know many people are frustrated with the way that they portray the drivers and overdramatize the season/conflicts.
- Positive, overall brought more interest into the sport. Could do without unnecessary drama being added (e.g., teammates fighting).
- I think it has made fans have a more emotional connection with not only the drivers but the sport and its history. It has made fans more invested and knowledgeable.
- It's brought in a new audience particularly in America.
- It allowed me to get back into it by demystifying the sport and making it more accessible so I am glad it existed for that; it drawing in a younger and more diverse audience is good as well. At the same time, it feels like it hasn't evolved with its audience, it still feels like a show for beginners without depth, honestly it feels like it has gotten worse and less authentic over time and nowadays knowing the sport better I often feel it's inaccurate, too sensationalized and boring. It has accelerated the focus on the entertainment aspect leading to a bloated calendar that just feels exhausting to follow, questionable stewarding decisions for the sake of entertainment, etc (but I feel that's more a governance issue in general rather than just DTS's fault). Also feels like certain drivers have become TV reality personalities and get their seat because they're popular/as a marketing tool rather than ability which is honestly annoying (thinking of Ricciardo in particular). Also making other characters into TV personalities making it easier for them to escape accountability (thinking of Horner in particular).

- Centered interpersonal drama as opposed to technical innovation, but also opened the door for F1 to be emotionally invested in by a lot more people. Great starting point to enter into the sport.
  - It has exploded in popularity really, made the drivers more accessible as celebrity figures more than athletes.
  - Not a huge one to be honest. It's definitely brought in more viewers but I think people love to blame every single issue on DTS when that's just not true. It hasn't had an effect on actual racing at all in my opinion. I know people complain that DTS has made the sport more about "content" than an actual sporting event, but I don't think that's because of DTS - I think the sort of social mediafication would've happened regardless, just because everything is focused on social media nowadays.
  - Brought a lot of fans which is good. Easy for new fans to understand which is good. But more with the newer seasons they fake so many things that's very unneeded.
  - Even though I haven't watched it, I know for a fact it brought in more fans and brought more coverage, but I also think it's more of a reality show televising drama, rather than an accurate guide/documentary for the sport, so I can't say I like it.
  - Much greater interest, more fans, especially among young women. But potentially had turned the sport more into reality TV than a sport.
  - It has brought in a tonne of new fans, I myself was partially drawn in by the early seasons (as I became a fan towards the end of the race season, and had a whole winter break to entertain myself through). It has introduced a lot of new fans, but due to DTS's tendency to misrepresent reality (whether that be how race weekends/sessions actually work, or faking rivalries) I think it sets these new fans up for failure.
  - I think it attracted a lot of new viewers but it also sensationalized the sport and made it a bit more of a spectacle than it originally was.
  - I think it has drawn more people's interest into the sport, however it has also changed the perception of the sport to be more dramatized.
  - I think that it's made some really great strides in opening the space more to be more friendly towards fandomization, which I said above I'm more than happy with, but I think it's definitely dramatized the divisions between drivers in a way that's created some quite toxic splits in the fandom that just don't need to exist. The over-dramatization of a lot of it creates tension in the fandom and it just kind of sucks. Also recently there's been a wave of other access-all-areas shows in F1 being shut down because of how they conflict with what's shown in DTS which is just absolutely ridiculous and unnecessary. Tbh I think DTS has run its course but that's just my opinion.
- 
- It's brought in tons of new viewers (including myself), which is always good for the sport. It's made it into more of a "sensation".
  - It's obviously very dramatized and over the top, but I think it's done a great job of introducing new fans to F1. Especially younger ones that wouldn't have got into it otherwise.
  - I think it's good overall, it's certainly brought more people into the sport, which is a good thing. I don't think the actual problems are from "DTS fans" but more so a natural consequence of the sport's popularity exploding in such a short amount of time.
  - More American and female fans.
  - It has broadened knowledge of the sport and increased the fan base, especially in the US, where F1 has not historically been as popular.
  - It has ruined the sport. Most of it is performative and it's filled with morally bad people being interviewed like Danica Patrick and Will Buxton. It also stops teams from filming their own content, depersonalizing the sport.
  - I believe it's made significantly more people, particularly those from the USA, more likely to be fans and know about F1.
  - Mostly positive. It connects fans to narratives that may compel them and explains the sport at a high enough level that fans can enjoy the sport and dig deeper if they want to. When I recommend F1 to others, I always say to start with DTS. I agree with Max Verstappen's take that it unfairly paints some drivers in a bad light, and that can't happen if they want drivers to continue to want to participate.
  - In a way, it's weird. Edited to tell a story so much it seems a scripted "reality" program.
  - Gave new fans the wrong idea of what the sport is like, who the "main characters" are.
  - I think it has led to an increase of new fans in the sport.
  - Both negative and positive. It brought a wider audience to the sport but made the fan base more toxic, tickets went up in price, became less about racing and more about fan bases arguing with each other, it made everything become a show (Miami and Las Vegas entrances).
  - I think it's brought a lot of people in, it's a bit embellished so skews reality a bit, but overall, I don't think it's awful.
  - The comments made by Horner in the earlier seasons about girls watching F1 for the drivers were not necessary and did more to harm the women who watch F1 for the cars and the racing.

- While it has brought more attention to the sport, I also believe it strays too far from teaching people about the sport itself. The drivers are treated as characters.
- I think it has had a positive impact. I mean there are fans that came from DTS.
- I think I already said, but definitely that it has made the sport more accessible to people who wouldn't usually be into it. I can see why the sport didn't seem appealing at first (essentially it's just cars going fast in the same circles over and over, right?) but DTS must've put F1 in an entirely new light for some people.
- More viewers.
- I think it has had an overall positive one -- it has meant that F1 reaches a wider audience and also I think it can make it more interesting for people that don't have someone to support as it shows what goes on behind the scenes which is usually quite dramatic and gives an insight into why the sport can be so intense, and also can make people start supporting certain drivers if they like who they are. I do, however, think that it over dramatizes and fabricates some things, and I don't blame Verstappen for not wanting to participate anymore.
- Good because it bought more fans.
- More coverage and new fans but also the restrictions on the teams making their own behind-the-scenes content are stupid.
- It brought new fans, which is great. But it also made a reality show out of it and caused a lot of unnecessary drama, which is not great.
- It definitely over dramatizes things, it also does a lot more harm than good. I've been watching it with my Mum to try and get her into F1 (I was a fan before I decided to watch DTS) and I saw how it made her feel about certain teams and drivers rather unfairly.
- I think it's helped get a lot of people into the sport, but it's not the best source of information, so people can form wrong assumptions.
- It has pulled in new fans that are more concerned with entertainment and drama than car racing.
- It surely made the sport more popular, but a lot of it is made up and taken out of context. Also, it appears as a drama show with actors playing roles and not real people driving fast cars with consequences...
- I think it's certainly opened up the sport to the US market where it was previously much smaller and seemingly unknown.
- It made it accessible to those that did not watch the sport.
- While it's nice that it's brought more eyes to the sport - it's turned it into more of a spectacle with made-up drama, and it means teams cannot curate their own content.
  
- More money, more problems!
- Negative. I think it creates a false narrative around the drivers that then has to be undone. If we're presenting people, it needs to be fair. They're athletes, not reality TV stars, and it isn't spelled out well. Netflix also uses polarizing figures and shows heavy bias, and it impacts the sport. If someone watches and is a DR3 fan, then watches the race, they're going to be confused.
- It's brought a large audience to it, particularly Americans, but a large portion of them are fans who don't actually know much about the real sport. It creates lots of fake drama and has heavily contributed to turning F1 into more of a spectacle than a sport.
- I think it's allowed the sport to have a wider reach and engage new fan bases, but it dramatizes the most extreme moments in a way that doesn't allow the show to focus on the sport.
- Brought a larger audience who wouldn't otherwise have been interested in the sport. My dad watched F1 my whole life growing up, and I didn't care about it at all until I watched DTS and understood the human element.
- I like that it brings in new viewers.
- Huge! I would never have known anything about F1 otherwise.
- A negative one.
- VERY negative. DTS is at least partly responsible for F1 going to hell in a handbasket.
- In the beginning, I believe it had a good way for existing fans to gain behind-the-scenes information/access to drivers and team principals whilst drawing in a new fan base. Nowadays, it's more about the number of viewers and the story they can spin.
- Negative. It has introduced toxic fans with no real interest in the sport or if they are, they get into it with wrong ideas and knowledge. Has done more harm than damage. I prefer the BTS videos from the teams' YT channels.
- It's brought in a lot of new fans and given many entertaining moments.
- It is the main reason why I became a fan. I find it very hard to care about sports if I don't have an emotional connection to any of the competitors. I imagine a lot of people feel the same, which is why it has been powerful at attracting new fans. I think it has also introduced a lot of people to F1 through the glitz and glam angle, which piqued their interest.
- On one hand, it helps get new people into the sport, on the other, it keeps making more drama than there really is (and there already is a lot of drama). It is writing F1 into a reality show rather than treating it as the sport it is.

- A lot of bad drama, fake situations, and overall bad coverage of things we already know well. They try to change the story of something we've already watched happen.
  - Overall negative, having caused it to become more of a show than the sport.
  - A massive impact. It has increased the audience and the reach of F1 by large amounts. The fandom has grown, there has been an increase in media duties and celebrity status of the drivers.
  - A bad one. It encourages a lot of hate towards Lewis and solely consists of invented narratives.
  - New fans, lots of media attention, and now it's kinda mainstream.
  - It's brought more attention to it, but also has brought more attention than ever before to the off-track actions.
  - Net positive, but it hasn't been leveraged the way that I think it should (as a vehicle for new eyes, not the be-all and end-all of the coverage). There's a symbiotic relationship in there somewhere, just nobody is leveraging it.
  - A bad one. It limits the content that teams can put out during the year. For some teams, this hurts their income from YouTube hits, etc. It also creates horrific narratives and fails to explain the rules. Example, episode one of the current season implies Lance Stroll just turned up to qualifying and got in the car. He was there all Friday. There are rules about when and how drivers can be changed, etc.
  - I think it has brought in a wider demographic of people into the sport, and it's a good thing.
  - Positive as it has brought new fans to the sport, but the way Netflix conducts the episodes in a way that alters the truth is very damaging to the sport and to drivers.
  - Brought more fans in.
  - It increased the popularity of F1 in the USA. This has had a positive impact (more fandom spaces etc.), but has also arguably led to an increase of more modern race tracks (e.g. Miami and Las Vegas) that have needlessly lengthened the calendar and produced more spectacles than racing.
  - I think it has brought in new fans from a demographic that they weren't reaching before by drawing people in with the more dramatic side of the sport.
  - It has brought in a lot of new fans but exaggerates a lot of stuff and unnecessarily villainizes some drivers.
  - It has greatly enhanced the sport's popularity and helped shape its image under Liberty Media, though not without its issues as it tends to push a narrative and make the facts fit their story more so than provide accurate and objective behind-the-scenes content.
- 
- It brought hype to the sport and more money.
  - It brought a lot of new fans (me included), but now that I watched a whole season of racing without DTS having come out first (the 2023 season), I find it really boring to watch after. Everything is way too dramatized.
  - It attracted people who like drama, and there isn't much actually. People who came from DTS expect teammates fighting, talking bad about each other, and crashes, etc.
  - It introduced the sport to a larger audience, but I wish it would've done it more factually accurate.
  - It has dramatically increased the number of people who watch F1 and changed the way certain people view team and driver relationships. However, I don't understand why some people view it as a strictly non-fiction presentation of the sport; it's meant to be dramatized and fake. It's a sport's reality television.
  - It brought in more fans for sure, which I believe is positive. However, it also opened the door for a level of accessibility to the drivers which we haven't had before, which has potentially led to some inappropriate behavior by fans.
  - Bigger interest in the show.
  - Brings more viewers to the sport but also more negative opinions to the sport.
  - It has turned F1 from sport to spectacle.
  - It has certainly grown the sport; in a way, it has turned it into a reality-show type spectacle. Some things no longer feel genuine, almost staged.
  - It's brought new fans and provides an interesting insight into the inner workings of F1, but it spends too much time building suspense on the races when the outcome is already known.
  - Commercialized it, and maybe has put more focus on creating drama for entertainment.
  - Increased popularity but also dramatics of the sport.
  - New fans and increased profile.
  - It brings in a lot of new fans, especially younger ones with different backgrounds, which I find really important for a sport to develop and go forward.
  - Gained viewers.
  - It sure brought a lot of new fans and made F1 more feasible but also gave a lot of false narratives. But it is a good show to get into the sport.
  - Not a good kind of impact. Teams seem to be keen to keep some DTS fan favorites in the sport and essentially blocking the entry of new talents (ehm Daniel Ricciardo).
  - I think it's allowed people to enter into the sport myself included who would have never known otherwise.
  - It has brought in a larger range of viewers from more areas, but it has also brought in a lot of negative drama and images and have moved focuses off racing and onto scenarios they've often emphasized.

- It's very Americanized I feel like. The show is so overly dramatized and only shows some true aspects of F1—that brings non-F1 viewers into the sport. I found that with newcomers to the sport, it set them up with false expectations.
- It's increased the spotlight and money fed into the sport and created a fanbase-driver relationship unlike previous years in the sport.
- It sure did bring in new fans, which I don't really mind; why should we gatekeep F1? My only issue is that DTS is like reality TV content, with unnecessary made-up conflicts and warped portrayal of both drivers and the sport itself. I think it's better to get to know F1 and its people through watching races and maybe team social media videos. New fans should not expect that "dramatic" vibe DTS shows every weekend.
- It's nice that it has brought new fans to F1, and I find DTS fairly entertaining as long as you view it as a not-so-serious reality show (that is full of BS sometimes) and not as a documentary. What I don't like is that thanks to DTS (it seems) many fans—especially newer and younger fans online—seem to view drivers more like characters than real people. To me, this is worrying.
- It attracted a lot of fans that only know the spectacle of 2021 and often only care about the lead of the race, even though a lot of exciting battles are happening in several places on the grid.
- Maybe controversial, but I honestly enjoyed it more than the racing of the last couple of years.
- It has increased the fan base for sure, but not necessarily to people who are actually interested in the sport. This isn't inherently a bad thing, but I do think it's led to the "tiktokification" of the drivers and teams. It's a risky and fine balance, as the fandom aspect includes stuff like shipping and fanfiction, but we don't want that getting back to the drivers. However, the seemingly younger/newer fans don't appear to follow this unspoken rule, and are pushing this content in their faces.
- Allowed more fans to get into it and caused a great F1 revival, however, has overinflated its value, feels too much like a show rather than a sport.
  
- Negative, as it creates false narratives that are then believed by new fans.
- I liked it overall, I thought it was a fun way to show the sport to new watchers. Unimpressed by all the fake driver beef, but that's sport.
- Sensationalized it and successfully created the image that the sport is about petty drama between drivers and teams rather than the actual sport and racing.
- It's been an effective gateway for people to enter the world of F1, but it's not representative of every facet of the sport. It's very much a Netflix Series and less of a documentary series.
- I think it could have had a positive impact if they actually showed the true behind-the-scenes, without fueling up dramas and focusing more on the sport, and what actually happens on race weekends. A lot of stuff gets omitted too, and I think that that can give the wrong impression or idea of the sport to people who are approaching it and decide to do so by watching this show.
- I believe it was good promotion for some drivers and teams, but the narrative it pushed (as shows in general tend to create and then follow) have greatly damaged the reputations of other drivers and teams in not just the viewers of DTS, but also those who have only followed F1 through the clips and summaries of DTS they have seen through the internet or others, leading to less impartiality and more bias in the general population.
- More popular and accessible to new fans.
- Bringing unnecessary drama, but created a good amount of memes.
- It helped grow the sport and gave fans a great way to connect with and emotionally invest in drivers and teams.
- I think it has no right to call itself a docu-series and has brought fans who don't actually watch the sport to call themselves F1 fans. That said, it has also been a gateway for fans who do actually watch the sport. In recent light of the McLaren unboxed series being dropped, which I didn't even watch, I think unless it drastically changes what it does for season 7, it will start damaging the sport more than it helps it, when it already minimally helps.
- Massive popularization in the USA. Every American I know (myself included) started watching F1 because of DTS.
- Mainly positive.
- Their melodramatic way of spinning actual issues makes F1 seem less like a sport and more like reality TV.
- It obviously made it even more popular with a younger generation.
- It has sensationalized it.
- It certainly exaggerates a lot of the things happening. I like the extra content, but I treat it like any other TV series. It's based on truth but it's obviously been edited to seem more dramatic and attract more viewers. It does make brands out of drivers/team principles even more.
- I think that it has made the drivers more conscious of what they say to media.
- It seems to have drawn more people to the sport.
- Hugely positive, if dramatized/simplified.



- I think it works to get people interested in the sport and invested in the drivers and the behind-the-scenes elements, but it creates a lot of false jeopardy and drama where there isn't any, while not addressing a lot of very important moments within the season.
  - Has brought more fans to the sport but has also led to decisions to make the sport more for TV viewers.
  - Terrible. It has turned F1 into a soap opera and popularity contest.
  - Good for new fans but recent seasons fake/overdramatize the sport and give less insight into what the drivers think, and they interview pundits more, and that's not what I want to watch it for.
  - I think it's increased viewership and brought a different group into the sport. It's largely a positive thing in terms of accessibility for the fans (sometimes can't watch all the races, fascinating to see internal politics, strategies however I think in later seasons it has gone downhill). But its impact on the structure of the sport and its narratives is negative. The increase in marketing towards the US (spectacle rather than races), and perhaps some types of fan who only watch DTS and so their opinions are based on a Netflix narrative are negative. Plus the increase in want of accessibility to the drivers is a hugely negative impact on the safety of the drivers. Overall, positive marketing, possible negative byproducts.
  - Overall positive, brought more people in and then those who realize it's overdramatized often stay because they develop a genuine interest.
- 
- Depends. I think mostly positive because it made the audience wider, but the fanbase got worse.
  - It's good to get other people into the sport, but the show itself creates fake drama.
  - I think it has drawn new fans into the sport (which is good), but also doesn't give an accurate representation of what the sport is really like.
  - Made it unnecessarily more dramatic, but brought many newer fans to the sport.
  - Attracted more younger, female fans. Made the fandom bigger. But I think it has its negative part too. People feel too comfortable with the drivers, blurring some lines like the last thing with Russell in the bathroom.
  - Brought a bigger female audience.
  - Negative, far too many people think it's a factual documentary.
  - It introduces new people to the sport but has been making the events too dramatic in the last few seasons and focusing on the wrong things.
  - It has given the sport a bigger platform and introduced many new fans, something I don't dislike, but it has also slightly shifted the general view on F1 from legitimate motorsport to "reality TV"-esque. Another issue is that many (definitely not all, but many) of the newer fans lack understanding for both the broader picture and the more in-depth details (ex: data, perspective, conditions, and circumstances that affect race results), and that many of these have gained publicity speaking about F1 without proper knowledge.
  - Big increase in F1 popularity for sure.
  - Though it has brought in new fans and resulted in increased international interest in F1, I do think DTS has also caused a lot of discourse, controversies, and scandals with how they created falsified narratives and often omit things entirely, thus giving new fans – who are impressionable, as DTS may be their only source of F1 knowledge – the wrong ideas about the sport or individual teams and drivers.
  - It definitely paints a very broad and disconcerting picture about the racers.
  - Positive. It humanizes them, which is probably why I don't just support Alonso anymore. I want every driver to have a good race. For example, I don't support Red Bull Racing (and never will) and I especially don't like what happened in 2021, but I like Max, especially his friendship with Charles and how he is always explaining things.
  - DTS has brought lots of new fans, but it also dramatizes way too much of the sport and gives new fans a false view of just how exciting the sport actually is 90% of the time.
  - It made me a fan. I haven't watched since the 2020 season, though.
  - Definitely creates a bit of prejudice for new drivers who don't watch the races, the other interviews, etc. (Verstappen, Stroll).
  - It has definitely made driver personalities a more important part of the sport. You can see that drivers like Daniel Ricciardo, even though he is not performing well on track, still have seats (currently) because of their PR value. I think it also creates some false narratives around driver relationships (who hates who, people arguing, etc.), but I do like seeing past races and being able to experience some behind-the-scenes moments. Also, like any fan, I love being able to get to know the drivers more and feel as though you are closer to life on track and in the paddock (even though you're not).
  - Mostly negative. It has been used a lot as a tool to discredit (mostly) women who are fans of the sport and created this whole theater of it when in reality these people aren't as dramatic.
  - It has for sure brought in new fans, not always for the best, but it achieved its goal of bringing in more fans and more US fans.

- It's the reason I watch the sport, so it has to be beneficial for bringing more people in. But it also has apparently forced teams to cut back on the behind-the-scenes content they put out themselves (but I haven't verified that), so who knows.
- It improved popularity tenfold, but I also feel that ensuring that they have drama and excitement to showcase directly led to some of the poor stewarding decisions. It's also brought an influx of fans that engage with the sport very differently to the traditional fan, as many of them aren't even necessarily sports fans generally. This definitely makes for some interesting takes and interactions. DTS has definitely moved the sport away from being purely a sport and more into the realm of entertainment media, in ways I'm not sure the teams, drivers, or the sport itself were equipped to handle.
- I think DTS brought a lot of new fans to F1, especially younger generations.
- I think it's the same as any other figures in the public eye where they are eventually made to be entertainers as well. It's kind of annoying and they should focus on racing but it's inevitable I guess. I don't like how they force narratives a lot.
- Created a lot more fans, brought in new sponsors, and opened the American market more. I see especially the first season as a positive influence, since the big teams didn't participate, so it focused on the smaller teams, which was really cool.
- It's brought more eyes to the sport which should be a good thing, but it has resulted in absurdly expensive American races which is disappointing.
- It dramatizes the off-track relationships between drivers to the point of creating false dynamics (usually of the negative kind). However, it has boosted the sport's popularity, creates a good starting/learning point for beginners, and gives more behind-the-scenes content however dramatic it may be.
- I think that initially it was positive; bringing more eyes onto the sport. However, in years since it has begun, the sport has structured itself around the more commercial interests and feeding into the dramatization and American audience, which reduces the sporting aspect.
- Kinda just think it's silly. The biggest impact I can tell has been bringing in new fans, which is good.
- Without a doubt, it brought a new audience to F1 and is the reason I paid more attention.
- Added to the dramatization, but provided an easy access point for new fans. They need to be clearer that it is a dramatized series because people take everything they show as truth, which impacts their perception of certain drivers/teams as they come into the sport.
- Remarkable.
- I'm not inherently against DTS, but they purposely misrepresent some drivers and happenings for drama and often just spread general misinformation about what actually happened.
- I feel it was positive because lots of people saw it, but then again when I first saw the first season and looking back it's lots and lots of just straight drama.
- Increasing popularity of the sport.
- It's brought people in.
- Both negative (dramatizing the sport unnecessarily) and positive (exposing new people to the sport).
- Unnecessary drama blown out of proportion, focus taken away from racing.
- It brings more fans to the world of F1, but also brings more insecurities for the drivers who are swarmed like they are K-pop idols with 0 regards for their security.
- I think Drive to Survive did a lot in terms of growing F1's popularity, especially in the USA. I also think it radically changed the way the sport is perceived by the general public: I feel like it kind of "dramatized" very mundane, basic dynamics (for example, the whole Ricciardo vs Norris storyline, which made them look like archenemies for the sake of the series). It also propelled F1 as a whole to "polish" itself into a much more marketable product, one that can be consumed by a large public: sometimes it all comes off as rehearsed to me, like what they're showing us is more for the sake of "drama" than it is of racing. There's also the issue with how the public has started engaging with the drivers in the last few years: they've become celebrities in every sense of the word, and I feel like sometimes it's easy to forget they're athletes.
- It just makes it bitchy and like a reality show.
- It makes it more accessible to a wider audience but shifts focus from the sport itself to individual actors.
- It does bring in new fans which is great, but the way it shows the sport is too fake-drama-filled, and they don't always portray certain drivers in a good light.
- It introduced many new casual viewers to the sport but has fabricated some storylines to make it look more interesting.
- Brought more attention to F1.
- Brought lots of new fans in, shown that even if the same person is winning races there's still a lot of exciting battles going on elsewhere.
- Dramatized it so appears more for entertainment than a sporting event.

- Huge increase in popularity and money but a lot of fans who go for the experience and way too many uninterested celebs.
- I'm a U.S. American. It's readily apparent they're trying to appeal to us and I hate it. Racing should be racing, not a spectacle, not reality TV, and the fact that they thought Drive To Survive would appeal to actual existing, passionate motorsports fans here is a pathetic miscalculation. I've loved seeing its downfall and them losing the U.S. audience they thought they had gained.
- It has promoted it to the masses without a doubt. On first-season watch, it seemed very exciting and dynamic. To put faces to these names made it more interesting. In subsequent seasons, after watching a race year, I have come to see that DTS is a bit empty, makes things appear to be more contentious than they were, makes a lot of supposition. Doesn't really contain interviews by all the major people so is skewed to someone's opinion. It's candy - a lot of sugar and no substance.
- It has brought in more fans, but I think what interests those fans more is the drama in the sport rather than the actual racing, which is fine, but to me not ideal. Although DTS is a great behind the scenes, it does include some false information. But it's Netflix and a series that's meant to capture an audience so it was expected.
- It has drawn more people to the sport and provided an important demographic of younger people. On the other hand, I do feel that this has contributed to manufactured drama and sensationalism within team management and overall media handling, such as chopping and changing drivers erratically, so much hype being put around rookie drivers which is immediately retracted when it turns out that, shock horror, someone new has to learn the ropes and build up, and are allowed to have off days and not perform. Everything must be instantaneous, consistently exciting, and obviously life isn't this way, so I feel that it has led to a lot of unnecessary drama creation for content.
- Bring it to a younger audience.
- DTS has had positive impact and negative impact; the spectacle is the same as the kind of spectacle we used to have about drivers in the 2010s (Jenson Button on newspapers) but it has brought a lot of fans who do not know the basics of F1 into F1. If DTS made the show more informative on the actual, like race day for a fan, I think the problems would be less so. But also, old school fans use DTS as an excuse to be against the new diversity and new fans.
- Weird celebrity worship towards drivers.
- Brought in new and younger fans and made it more of a spectacle.
- A lot of people started to watch Formula One because of DTS.
- I think it's brought more viewers to the sport, but I don't think it has had any positive impact on the actual racing.
- It has increased its following and highlighted some behind-the-scenes stuff that goes on. However, it does miss some key points from seasons in my opinion and over-sensationalize some things for entertainment.
- It definitely brought a lot more fans. Some of them stayed, some of them didn't. Many people don't consider Formula One a sport and a lot of fans "whine about it"; most of them also complain about DTS fans. If you want a bigger part of the world to view F1 as a sport you should also expect what comes with it, hence documentaries and series and all of that. Conclusion, stop whining about DTS fans.
- It could have shown the things that make F1 incredible, the real behind the scenes, and adrenaline. But instead, it's all manufactured for good TV and doesn't reflect the sport in its entirety, so those who come in because of that are not fully educated. It is better to just watch the races and understand as you go.
- Negative as I mentioned above.
- Makes it too dramatic and too focused on the rumor and gossip of the drivers and teams, seems to take away from the racing. However, it does allow teams to be held accountable for internal issues, whether this is a good thing or not I don't know.
- I think it has led to greater accessibility to the drivers, resulted in more hate towards them whilst also bringing in new viewers to F1.
- It seems to dramatize the sports.
- It has made the sport reach a wider audience. I don't think "DTS fans" are a thing or a problem, but it created a group of people who don't watch races and only care about the drama.
- Overdramatizes the sport and makes it into a spectacle, not a sport.
- I think that it's has had a good impact as it has brought a lot of new fans.
- I think it brought a lot of new fans — I started following the sport because of social media coverage, which I think was influenced by DTS.
- It's both positive and negative as it's helped people find out that they like F1, but it's also made some drivers out to seem rude like what they did with Max Verstappen.
- It seems like people act up to DTS when they know they're on camera. And it spins storylines that aren't real or are exaggerated.

- I think it has enabled F1 to become more accessible. They do, however, really amplify the drama and create their own narratives, so you have to go in with an open mind.
  - It's brought in more fans to the sport but has given the wrong impression of some drivers that they are bad and exaggerated rivalries.
  - It dramatizes it more, which could cloud some judgment on the parts of fans who started watching because of it.
  - It feels like it's dramatized it in a way that is unhelpful for current events. If it were covering past seasons and races, a few years behind the present, I don't think it would be as much of an issue.
  - I think it has attracted a new fan base myself included, but unlike others, I have a genuine interest in the sport and the show helped me discover it. I think that it has also made it much harder to attend races (Australia 2024 had many more fans than normal for example), which could also be a side effect of the show.
  - Negative. It's an inaccurate and purposefully misleading piece of media that is a thorn in the sports side and should be scrapped.
  - It has had a massive impact on the sport, especially in the US.
  - Designed perception towards some selected characters, leading to the construction of truth by the audience that these people are the way they are in DTS (which, in my opinion, is inaccurate and overdramatized).
  - It definitely propelled the sport to be more known. It gave a sense of realness to the sport and the drivers.
  - I think it's painting F1 to be less of a sport and more of a reality TV show. Sure, the drama is part of the sport itself, but Netflix spins the drama to fit some narrative and has shown to stray away from the truth at times. This impacts the perspectives of the casual viewers who don't follow the racing side of things. Also, the marketing of "friendships/bromances" in the show is certainly adding to the reality TV side of things.
  - Positive and negative. It's brought Formula 1 to many screens, made people aware of the sport, and consequently made said people fans of it, be it casual or passionate. However, the bad side of things is that because DTS is basically a TV show, then people will subconsciously view the sport itself as such too, which it clearly isn't.
  - It definitely can change how some more casual watchers view relationships between drivers and teams, but it can also bring more fans to the sport. I go on, but I don't want to, so I will just say that it was definitely a money thing, to bring (this is just an assumption) more American watchers to the sport.
  - It's made too much focus on drama/telling a story that will get good ratings rather than focusing on the facts.
  - Increased the popularity of the sport majorly.
  - I think it has definitely boosted interest in the sport and increased the popularity of certain drivers and teams (team principals, CEOs, etc.). However, this coverage is certainly not unbiased, and I feel that DTS and the realities of F1 can often conflict in many ways.
  - Some positive (introduction for new fans), some negative (presented races and radios wrong).
- 
- Made it hugely commercial.
  - Difficult to answer because while it has shone more of a light on the sport, it has added a level of tackiness and some toxic fans are clinging to the drama that DTS creates. Plus, the recent news of teams not posting as much behind the scenes because DTS now has a monopoly on that apparently is really [bad]. While fun to watch, DTS should be seen as something similar to keeping up with the Kardashians, in my opinion, very much fabricated.
  - Lots more overall interest but doesn't bring to light the actually important issues, controversies, and smaller successes.
  - It brought more awareness to the sport. With the show, the sport got a better chance to attract fans.
  - Introduced more fans and give behind the scenes a little.
  - Made it much more popular in North America, created a younger audience, and made drivers more into celebrities. I'm from rural Canada, and before the DTS era, I was aware of Schumacher, Hamilton, and the movie Rush.
  - Brought in new fans, for better or for worse.
  - It's obviously brought in some fans, but they seem to come with some false impressions. Plus, DTS leaves out many important things that happen during the season (the championship winner not appearing on the show and Haas having so much spotlight is crazy, to be honest), so it's not an accurate documentary to depend on to get information.
  - More popularity. And probably way more money as well, but I don't think it really only impacted F1 in a positive way.
  - I think it has lifted the curtain on the behind the scenes, but also made a lot of people in high places even greedier because they see that the spectacle sells.
  - It brings many new viewers, yes. But with that come people who think they know everything about this sport due to watching this series which obviously twists stuff for more drama. Also, the "new" fandom is very toxic, in my opinion. Drivers get hated to death on a daily, people are way too interested in people's private lives, the

WAGs get hated for existing, the driver x driver ships are toxic, and all in all, I don't think it was a favor to the F1 fandom. Sure, this stuff has also been there before, but it's never been this crazy and over the top.

- Now F1 has more fans because of it, but people get a little bit disappointed because DTS paints F1 as something it's not.

- Created a different need of content expected from those that watch the spectacle created by the narrative of the show.

- It definitely attracted a lot more fans. There is obviously some written drama forced on the drivers and their team dynamics, but ultimately it's a drama documentary so take it with a grain of salt.

- Honestly, it did make me interested to watch the actual sport, but I can see how it can skew perceptions of drivers and the sport itself. Some people who have no interest in the sport itself probably really enjoyed DTS.

- I don't think the show accurately portrays F1 as a whole, the drivers and their 'relationships' with each other. They misconstrue things and push their narratives of people on the show.

- The first season was good, but the rest was trash. Especially because it turned into the Steiner and Ricciardo's show. So not a good thing in my eyes.

- I think it brought in a lot of people and it is the reason some of these athletes are so popular. It's also the reason why they're trying to add more North American races to try and strengthen their global presence.

- Positive, but I don't think it knows what its audience is anymore.

- It's made it more popular and accessible.

- Made it more mainstream. Extreme fans.

- More fans, more accessibility to teams and drivers, but I think it crossed over to being overproduced in recent years.

- I think people it blurred the line between the sport and the off-track drama, spectacle. Some people treat it more like a reality TV show, rather than a sport.

- Bigger audience.

- Net positive. Overdramatizes many aspects but allows far more people to become fans.

- I think it has widened the fan base of the sport. However, I think it has also increased the toxicity of the F1 fan base and has had a negative impact on the racing as it seems like drama and show are put above safety and fairness.

- I think it's brought in a new younger age group, and certainly a lot more American viewers, which I think is good! Why complain about more people enjoying a sport? The more the merrier.

- It shows the trials and tribulations all teams, drivers go through, and that not everything is what it seems on TV. It's an in-depth view of what the Team, CEOs, and drivers all experience and how they become their best selves and overcome obstacles and create strategies. Also, the fun look into drivers' lives is interesting.

- It has definitely brought more fans to the sport, but it has to be said that it is not completely accurate with the way it portrays certain drivers or certain things that happened throughout the season.

- Brought in new viewers through drama.

- Negative. It has for sure made the sport more popular but also made the drivers into some kind of reality TV stars for a lot of people. Also, the way DTS twists reality to have a more interesting story is [bad].

- I think it's definitely has a huge impact in bringing in new fans - as seen by the growing numbers of female fans. However, Netflix, of course, are always looking to convey a certain narrative which is not always representative of the way events actually happen.

- Making it more accessible and easier to understand for new fans.

- Skewed view of drivers.

- I think it has made us understand the behind the scenes more rather than believe gossip.

- I think it has turned the sport into more a spectacle. I am very happy that it can bring more people into F1; however, I think it has created more drama and tension between fans, almost tribal.

- Good as it has introduced new fans but there is editing in the later seasons.

- Quite negatively impacted. I feel as though with the growth of any fan base there are many issues that arise, and without DTS there would still be all the issues with the fan base there currently is (in fighting, invasion of privacy, etc.) but probably to a lesser degree.

- More viewership, more fans, way more show, sport itself less credible as it's more showy. Also, the drivers seem to be characters in their own sport. Drive to Survive makes things more dramatic and out of context with their storylines.

- For my part, I'm into F1 because my brother was into it first, but especially because of Drive to Survive. Therefore, I believe DTS is the factor that gave Formula One its popularity back over the past few years.

- Mixed: Good to get fans in and has some comedic moments that I like. Bad because it gives completely inaccurate information.

- Brought it to a larger audience, also negatively impacted media on the sport.

Increased fan numbers, humanizing athletes, creating buzz and interest, attracting new fans but potentially misleading them, recent popularity boost, negative impact on fanbase focus, drama overshadows sport, mixed impact on representation, showing bravery and craziness of sport, attracting younger viewers, mixed views on authenticity, division among fans, gatekeeping criticism, bringing in millions of new fans, increasing mediatization, turning sport into entertainment, positive impact on exposure, introduction of new fans, insight into sport and drivers, potential for more guarded team approaches, positive but overdramatized, turning into reality TV, encouraging involvement especially among women, increasing brand awareness, drawing in American audience, part of increased interest in sport, episodic timing issues, setting unrealistic expectations, injecting new generation of fans, positive impact on exposure. Wider audience, more interesting, over dramatizes, fabricates, restrictions on teams, reality show, unnecessary drama, unfair perceptions, not the best source, more concerned with entertainment, false narrative, toxic fans, negative impact, bad drama, glitz and glam angle, drama than there really is, reality show, negative coverage, more of a show, increased audience, celebrity status, invented narratives, mainstream, off track actions, net positive, limits content, wider demographic, alters truth, more modern race tracks, brought hype, exaggerates, factually accurate, changed view, accessibility to drivers, non-fiction presentation, turned into spectacle, turned into reality-show, commercialized, put focus on drama, increased profile, develops and goes forward. Gained, new feasible, false view, new drivers blocked, enter into sport, larger range, Americanized, increased spotlight, changed perceptions, forced narratives, sensationalized, gateway, less representative, good promotion, minimal help, massive popularization, melodramatic, overexaggerates, conscious of media, drawn more people, positive marketing, wider audience, genuine interest, negative byproducts, wider fanbase, fake drama, inaccurate representation, unnecessarily dramatic, bigger female audience, far too many people, introduces new people, increased international interest, falsified narratives, broad picture, disconcerting picture. Growing, dramatizing, false view, made a fan, creates prejudice, important part, false narratives, brought in new fans, forced narratives, brought more eyes, absurdly expensive, dramatizes, boosted popularity, commercial interests, silly, brought a new audience, dramatized series, remarkable, increasing popularity, both negative and positive, unnecessary drama, brings more fans, changed perceptions, polished, rehearsed, engaged as celebrities, reality show. Growing, radically changing perceptions, dramatizing dynamics, making it more marketable, rehearsed, dramatizes, fabricated storylines, more attention, exciting battles, appears more for entertainment, much more popularity and money, attempting to appeal to US, promoted to masses, empty, skewed, drawn more people, positive and negative impact, weird celebrity worship, brought in new and younger fans, highlighted behind the scenes, increased following, sensationalizes, manufactured for good TV. Too dramatic, focuses on gossip, dramatizes sports, wider audience, amplifies drama, creates own narratives, positive and negative impact, brought new fans, exaggerates rivalries, dramatizes unhelpfully, attracted new fanbase, negative impact, inaccurate and misleading, had massive impact, designed perception, propelled sport to be more known, paints F1 as less of a sport, adds to reality TV side, positive and negative impact, changes viewers' perspectives, brings more fans, likely a money-driven decision. Focuses on drama, increased popularity, boosted interest, biased coverage, some positive, some negative, hugely commercial, added tackiness, toxic fans, more overall interest, brought awareness, introduced more fans, made popular in North America, created false impressions, lifted the curtain on behind the scenes, attracted new fans, painted F1 differently, created different content expectations, attracted more fans, skewed perceptions, pushed own narratives, reason for athletes' popularity, strengthened global presence. Positive, more popular, accessible, mainstream, extreme, overdramatized, widened, toxic, negative impact, brought in new viewers, more accessible, easier to understand, turned into spectacle, introduced new fans, negatively impacted, less credible, showy, dramatic, out of context, popular, comedic moments, inaccurate information, larger audience.exaggerated, accessible, harmless- increased, worldwide, inaccurate, thrilling, popular, positive, emotional, diverse, exhausting, questionable, interpersonal, exploded, accurate, unnecessary, toxic, divisive, tension, accessible, dramatic, friendly, dramatized, conflict - tons, thrilling, accurate, increased, broadened, ruined, likely, compelling, scripted, wrong, toxic, embellished, unnecessary, accessible, overall, fabricates, unfair, athletes- polarizing, heavy bias, sensationalized, over the top, fake, inaccurate, disparaging, thrilling, exaggerated, dramatic, misrepresent, sensationalize, toxic, false, inaccurate, sensationalized, overdramatized, dramatic, fake, cringe, wrong assumptions, fake drama, fake storylines, fabricated, dramatizes, over-dramatizes, fictionalized, sensational, scripted, performative, morally bad, personalizing, depersonalizing, biased, unfair, over-hyped, over dramatized, heavily contributed, glitz and glam, bad drama, bad coverage, invented, off-track actions, horrific narratives, alters the truth, unnecessary,

villainizes, toxic splits, wrong assumptions, emotionally, explosive, negative, net negative, negative, fake situations,

## Annex 7: List of responses to Spectacle precisions + adjectives

52/ Is there anything else you would like to add or develop on?

- I think developing into a spectacle is bringing more fans and those fans will learn more about the race.
- There's wayyy too much content being pumped out as if the race isn't good enough. TikTok accounts, instagrams and Twitter for all teams and all drivers. YouTube too. I just think the principles all like the money and attention. It's seems to be just about the money recently.
- N/A
- F1 is becoming more focussed on money than the sport, going to the middle east, street tracks etc where its not entertaining to watch
- No
- Just because its becoming more mediatised doesn't mean its becoming a spectacle, if they start including a half time show then yeah
- I mean with the introduction of all these races in the USA, and the price of tickets, then yes. It's definitely not like how it used to be.
- It is hard to comment when we are in the max dominance because without the competitive side to the race it does feel less like a sport but hopefully with the new regulations coming in it should become more competitive in the front of the field which will lead to a more sporty feel rather than the current races which are just watching the back of the field which doesn't have many people rooting for as it won't effect the championship
- Too much money in F1 , let's get back to drive with Real gear box ! Bring back more competition between drivers .. the 2024 season will see Verstappen and Red Bull winning again ... so boring and unwatchable !
- The spectacle aspect is fully assumed with what is organized before races, in the paddocks and outside, and also with the locations the races take place. The sportive aspect remains, as driving fast during a hundred minutes is sportive enough to make drivers lose kilograms during a race.
- Max wins every single race. It's not even fun to watch anymore
- It always has been both
- In the USA it's a spectacle
- I think that formula is losing its appeal when one driver and one team win everything everytime and its in danger of heading the same way as football. The playing fields need to be leveled more so that all teams can compete.
- It is inevitable that this sport is spectacular, but I think close attention should be paid to the original purpose of developing engineering speed and skill to the safest highest levels of competition and victory
- It always was a showy sports and had that wow factor from the beginning. I do understand where the statement comes from. Races like the one in Vegas spend so much on creating a show before/after the race. In most cases I don't think it's too much but the focus should still be on the racing.
- they're putting more effort into making it into a show rather than a race. let f1 be a sport.
- I'm not for all the Vegas shows, but I can't see it as particularly damaging, I just don't watch it.
- Because of new tracks and new partnerships. I dont watch nascar because this is just too much spectacle and glitter, I'm afraid f1 is going in that direction. There's more money than ever!
- Sadly I think this is true. An example of what's been called enshittification. Late stage capitalism trying to make as much money out of the sport as possible. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enshittification>
- I do feel that it has definitely become money and politics based with many celebrities and influencers attending a lot of which aren't even fans. But then again what sporting event hasn't become money and politics based.
- With the development of tv/news surrounding the sport it feels it has almost taken over the sport itself.
- The cars should be smaller and lighter making the cars harder to drive and easier to overtake
- Stop adding more street races. Go back to designed race tracks pls. Some are fine, but they make less good races
- This statement can be applied to most sports
- No
- Fewer street races and definitely no more in America
- That's the direction it's being taken by the men at the top. The bubble of entertainment popularity will burst at some point but the sport will always remain even if tainted while in the bubble
- No
- It does seem a little bit more showy now. Especially in Mexico & Las Vegas.



- Time continues and peoples like less race than before, they like stories and the life of drivers, they want to go to a race to say I was here, it s the sport to watch so it s starting to be more spectacular, starting to be a show to see and not a race to see.
- I haven't watched formula one long enough to have an opinion on the matter
- Liberty Media is in it for the money. Therefore they inject spectacle off track to bring in the punters and they money. I believe they care not for the traditions of the spor or what is happening to it while they generate income from it. When they have had enough they will see at an enormous profit and hopefully not to another American money-making media company.
- Some of the choices for race tracks feel based on money an not fans opinion
- Drivers want to drive but they're being turned into celebrities. It's clear most aren't happy with that. Look at the state of Vegas and how happy they were about being stood on those stupid podiums. Ridiculous.
- I used to watch/listen to every race but have been so put off by corruption within the sport. Not surprised though since there is so much money involved in the sport. But the public spectacle of the final race in 2021 and the FIA not doing the right thing has left me completely disinterested, other than seeing Red Bull taken out of their current winning streak!! Still raging!!
- The focus on street races over traditional circuits is detrimental for the sport if continued
- They HAVE to add more glamor and spectacle to the Formula One otherwise it will be always and only be a rich, old white dudes sport! It's boring sometimes so the tracks have to be more difficult or in cities (like Monaco, Las Vegas, Singapore) to get a few more viewers!
- Nahhh
- In regards to your previous question, I think sport is a spectacle. It's why we watch it, to be in awe of the physical and mental strength of humans regardless of if it's a tennis player or an F1 driver.
- Bring back noisy engines running on carbon neutral fuels, forget the hybrid rubbish, focus on making a formula where they can race. So, smaller wheelbase, more power, more strategy, best driver wins, not best car.
- It's always been about spectacle to some degree
- I agree but I fear this is a wider trend within sports, rather than just an F1 problem. The superbowlification of sporting events if you will.
- It can be both at once, It doesn't really need to choose. You can have your race and you can have the fun.
- Of course the races has to be interesting to sell tickets, the drivers/characters/personas must also be interesting. And we may be slowly transitioning to where sponsors are more likely to support attractive, physically or personality, drivers more than the ones who are better on paper but don't have a persona that they can market easily.
- It comes from the media mostly.
- Too many other events happening instead of main race spot light.
- Formula 1 has always been a spectacle. That's why we like it. We're not watching darts or some shit.
- the sport is the spectacle
- the drivers only care about racing. I think the sport is at risk of losing what made it so popular for so long though. bells and whistles are not needed
- I hate how long the calendar is getting, and adding more sprint races etc. It feels like Liberty Media is squeezing every pence out of F1 without regard for the longevity of the sport (by causing issues like fan burnout and work/life balance for employees)
- I believe it's always been more spectacle than sport, in the sense that I don't believe motorsport is sport. But as far as the racing, it's the same as ever, just more public, and that's not a bad thing.
- Everything surrounding F1 is becoming more of a spectacle. If you don't follow F1 online and only tune in for the races, I don't believe there will be that much of a difference. The racing is the same.
- The amount of races in the usa is insane, the tracks arent that good and the viewership in the us is not good enough to justify three races in one country
- i liked your quiz :) good luck on your thesis
- While I came into F1 from DTS, I wrote my MA Thesis on early Irish motorsport so I do have an interest in the history of F1 and I think that plays a large part in my perception of the sport.
- It's a sport for rich (kinda racist) white men
- This is the case with many types of sports. Tennis, for example, saw the success of DTS and decided to do its own show on Netflix.
- People who complain the most about F1 seem to not have experience with other sports and sports fandoms. I regret to inform them that the governing association of almost every sport is also pretty evil!!

- generally i think the sport and it's fan base is in a bad state and moving towards football/soccer level in terms of primitivity. simple „we race as one“ or „we stand against bullying“ campaigns etc won't do it. and f1 as a whole desperately needs to listen to it's drivers and representatives. too long of a season and too little changes for the racing itself
- Formula 1 has always had some element of spectacle (champagne, grid girls etc), but it seems to be adopting a more 'Americanised' approach to sport, and that may not always be well received by a sport that has strong European links. Personally I don't really care, I just want them to stop showing celebrities in the paddock. Tyre degradation is much more interesting.
- There does seem to be more of a focus on sponsorships and branding rather than the racing itself over the past decade.
- For all problematic that it is I love F1, the sport, so much !!!! Watching it with my dad is one of my fondest early memories. It could and should be so much better than it is right now and honestly i don't know if it's going in the right direction. I mean obviously most sports are big business and very corrupt, that's not news, but I felt for a while it might evolve in a better direction which contributed to me starting to watch again. But recently I am not so sure. It doesn't help that most races these days are just really boring
- Fuck Danny Ric
- In a way, it's always been more of a spectacle than a sport. It's largely an engineering competition, after all
- I dislike the trend towards more street races and high paying tracks as opposed to actually good racing tracks. Vegas, Jeddah etc and losing tracks like hockenheim because they don't pay as well. Definitely more about sponsors and spectacle than racing now. It's got worse in the last few years. The trend towards more races per season is part of it too.
- No
- They have got to stop catering race attendance to influencers and celebs over actual fans that will translate into long term supporters. Slightly related, but FOM making teams cut back on BTS content (like McLaren Unboxed) in favor of DTS is another huge mistake. BTS content is huge for retaining fans, especially highly invested fans in both time and money.
- They started to lose me when they dropped We Race As One
- Nope
- The amount of spectacle and street races is becoming too much, the focus is becoming less the sport itself
- It's all about money of course, which doesn't help. Also adding even more races seems unnecessary and dangerous and especially the races in the US don't seem genuine and like more of a spectacle.
- Liberty don't care about results or who wins they want to sell F1 to the Saudis
- Liberty media can definitely been seen changing it to more of a spectacle with how the Austen and Vegas GPs are very much spectacles of USA culture first and a race second.
- Penalties are given or not given, not because of not following racing rules, but to obtain a certain end result. Rules for car changes, or to let in a new team or not, etc are also clearly done for this reason.
- it is very boring having max win every race (I know he just lost in Australia but my point stands)
- I think F1 is doing a poor job catering to the US/Canadian audience. Why have a race in the States if it's on at 1 AM EST????
- Again, I hate to agree but I'm beginning to question how many more years I'll watch if it carries on like this. Liberty Media is largely responsible for this and I can't begin to describe how much I loath that organisation.
- I think the spectacle has been part of the sport since day 1, it just appears in different ways over the years. Now the spectacle seams bigger but it's proportionate to how the sport has grown. If you have way more viewers, why not invest into every part of the sport, including the spectacle. Think of the olympics/super bowl/world cup
- Not just slowly, it's happening rather quickly, faster and faster
- N/A
- formula one the racing series isn't but F1 the brand is focusing less on racing
- I think the spectacle thing is narrative that I won't buy in to because it's a framing thing more than anything else, in my opinion. You need to tell people why they should care about the sporting aspects, not rely on them to find it.
- I'm very bitter than my silverstone tickets have gone up 150% in price since I Was last there in 2011 and a lot of it is stuff I don't want. Access to a 3 night festival at the track? I did not ask for that? I don't want to listen to music, I want to listen to cars. All this extra nonsense is in the way and if fans can't afford to go to f1 then we won't have the stars of tomorrow. F1 is on channels people cannot afford. Leclerc himself is saying it will cause a crisis but no one listens.

- No
- It is still a sport, but the spectacle takes away from it
- F1 as a sport is facing a hurdle. It is a rapidly growing sport with more and more media engagements for fans to interact with. But, at the same time, more races are being too expensive and inaccessible. The question becomes who is the target audience and what is Liberty Media trying to accomplish. Do you want new fans or are we pricing them out? Are you trying to match the more diverse world or trying to keep only luxury sponsors? Who is F1 for? I have a lot of thoughts about this and not nearly enough space.
- Sports are ultimately a form of entertainment, but usually feel more organic and genuine than F1 has felt lately.
- Vegas
- Some races, like Vegas, seem to be more about making it flashy whereas others it doesn't. There's obviously a growing addition of things to do at races instead of watching the race which I think doesn't transition it into a spectacle as it's just to interest fans that are there but more and more races are becoming a flashy show but I think this will start to slow down due to complaints.
- I agree, but it has always been a spectacle, we cannot deny that. The most important thing is balance. I'm okay with new ideas around races BUT it should never be done to the detriment of the sporting code, the stewards should never disregard the rule book in favour of creating a show.
- If F1 truly means to become more environmentally friendly, they need to stop building new tracks - especially in the middle of a desert, that's not sustainable. If they need more venues, there are plenty of old tracks that could be reconstructed to meet the needs of modern day racing and show.
- The popularity of the sport ebbs and flows, and so it has always gone through phases of being hugely popular vs not very well viewed. I don't think it's wildly different now.
- I've been watching F1 since I can remember, it's always been on in my house. The sport has certainly evolved over the years, and now I feel like it's coming away from being all about engineering to being more about petty dramatics and politics, poor FIA decisions etc. The fundamentals are being drowned out by social media waffling and dramatics. Not to say the new generation of drivers aren't cool or anything, the publishers just can't decide where their audience is anymore
- "traditional" fans often like to blame female fans for ruining the sport rather than looking at the actual problem which is that F1 is catering to that kind of audience more rather than "dts" fans "taking over".
- I agree that it's becoming slowly a spectacle, that puts the show before the sport. I think that the Las Vegas GP has been a clear example of that, where all the focus was on creating a show, rather than actually check if the street circuit was safe or not
- Formula one has always been a commercial, capitalistic spectacle; its entire purpose is as a marketing exercise for the companies that associate themselves with teams. I think the recent concerns around the sport becoming "more" of a spectacle are overblown.
- I very much agree to the last statement but feel like even though it's very obvious to me how the sport has changed in the last 10 years, it's been going on for longer than that.
- I don't like the addition of more US tracks when they aren't that entertaining. There are already built tracks all over the world that are just as entertaining and some that have interesting history built around them. If the US tracks brought something to the table, rather than just being in party areas like LV or Miami. I understand a change-up of tracks is needed, and the US is a big country, I just wish there was more on the table in terms of RACING entertainment.
- They are trying to appeal too much to the US, and it is becoming far too much of a drama. They should get rid of Vegas and Miami.
- I don't know, I joined when it was at the peak of spectacle, so can't comment on development trajectory
- mostly the weekends still are pretty normal. maybe this concept come in terms cause of the reality we live in? media and PR performance now has an influence more than it was ever before. so it's expected to things become more show-ish. likeable team has more chances to find sponsors. maybe it also appeared cause of RBR domination, not everyone finds it enjoyable so it has to be more show to still have an audience. tho I don't think that it'll ever be as it was, there's no way back. maybe the audience just became a bit flatter in their perception. idk. I do slightly agree esp with an LV 2023 show, hope it won't be like this this year. it just becomes embarrassing and tiring. but the race was good so no grudges to Las Vegas are held.
- I think the development of F1 Academy is one of the best things to come out of recent years of F1.
- It's always been a bit of a spectacle, but lately there has been more and more emphasis on marketability of the sport (especially to a US audience) that does not always benefit the sport.
- In the last few years there has been too big an emphasis on making the calendar longer and having street circuits in cities that rich people and influences are invited.

- Less publicity focus (removing tracks like Las Vegas and Miami and putting less time and effort into the unnecessary amount of PR challenges for the drivers)
- 3 races in the USA even though they don't have the public for that, racing in war proximity, racing in countries who violent human rights just because the amount of money they receive
- Like any business, investment and profit is key and marketing is not a bad thing.
- It has always been a spectacle as well as a sport. Monaco, Singapore, Abu Dhabi and now the return of Vegas. All places pretty much specifically built for the rich and famous, and so is it really much of a surprise that the people steering F1 want to race in these locations?
- I think formula 1 is developing to be more of a spectacle. I think a lot of the American races go overboard with the entertainment, aesthetics and opening ceremonies. Also the media duties seemed to have picked up a lot more for the drivers and a lot of the stuff they do feels superfluous or just kind of stupid. I love watching videos of drivers as much as the next person, but I feel like the best videos are always the ones related to racing, because the drivers themselves seem more engaged, and sometimes you learn something new. A lot of videos just seem a bit goofy or sometimes plain stupid. It makes the sport feel really unserious, and when I compare it to older eras, sometimes it can feel a bit less authentic. It feels like a lot of the relationships between drivers really developed on track and were true to whatever emotions they had, rather than putting it on for the camera.
- Sorry some of the responses are so long, apparently i have opinions
- "F1 has always been a spectacle, it's part of its allure. However saying that it's not a sport is a ridiculous statement. But I think some people forget that f1 is mostly a sport for nerds. It's about the design of the car more than close racing. If people only want close racing they can just go watch f2 or indy instead. No shame in that. And I see absolutely nothing wrong with the grand things/events surrounding the race. When the ticket is getting more expensive and there are more fans fighting to be a part of it, then why not make it a whole spectacle. "
- Good luck on your thesis!!!! You got this
- Due popularity growth in the US, we've seen an increase in the number of US GPs and the attitude towards the sport at these events, the spectacality is at its highest in the US and less so in other countries as a means to profit off of the over the top, capitalist and over consuming American audience.
- Formula 1 is not prioritising the sporting and competition as much as they are prioritising what they can make money on. By increasing the non-sporting aspects of Grand Prix events, they can charge more money. It is the pursuit of greater capital for those at the top that drives it, not a desire for spectacle.
- Ultimately every sport is a spectacle.
- It's always been a show but the scale has tipped over to mostly spectacle
- There's no denying that after DTS and Liberty Media F1 has become a sort of touring act; endless media days, all the "challenges" and "games" involving the drivers. The last Vegas GP was greatly talked about because of how "showy" it was with all the lights, the music, the Netflix Cup but, all in all, I think it's a natural process for a sport that has gained sudden and now has to work in order to keep it. It's much easier to keep people entertained with the added bonus of media and such rather than "just" the sport.
- I think there's always been a certain spectacle feel to F1 and as the sport grows it's only natural that the spectacle side grows along with the sport. But in it's core F1 is and will always be a sport. The drivers do emphasize the actual sport over any spectacle so I think the sport part will stay bigger than the spectacle part.
- Sprint races. Miami and Vegas. Oil states with shitty street circuits (racing in those countries would be fine if they built well-designed purpose-built tracks) taking up places that could go to Hockenheim, Sepang, Buddh, Watkins Glen, Kyalami, Magny-Cours. The race calender's length ever-increasing despite stories of the teams having to use heavy narcotics to keep up, and the most qualified people quitting because they want to see their children, which is going to reduce the quality of work and make the cars and the pit lane both more unsafe. The cars are too big for either aging circuits designed for smaller vehicles or new street circuits with shitty, narrow designs so no one can overtake anyway. Every single team having a preferred driver and ALWAYS deferring to them with team orders, no matter what. F1 isn't racing anymore, it's a spectacle.
- It's becoming too gimmicky definitely
- the addition of races where the main features arent racing features but are "oh its that vegas strip" "oh its under the lights" needs to be abandoned asap to keep f1 from being a spectacle
- The addition of races is one example of this exact point
- F1 has always been about the spectacle. Maybe not in the way of Vegas, but the races that people remember, the bits they enjoy are the massive crashes, on/over the edge racing and the off track drama (Hunt Vs Lauda, Senna Vs Prost, etc). It is possibly more sensationalised now

- seeing it as more of a spectacle erases the hard work of the teams and drivers, and diminishes their humanity. they are also seen as spectacles and that is incredibly unhealthy. they should not sacrifice their wellbeing and energy for a spectacle. they should be putting their effort into the sport. so should the fia.
- There's too many American/Middle Eastern races, as Lewis says cash is king in F1 & it's very disappointing
- I feel track quality has taken a dive in recent years, location and name is more important than the nature of the track and driver skill
- To add to the DTS thing I think that using that as an insult specifically towards female fans is stupid so what if they are it doesn't make them any less of a fan just as not knowing every little bit of information about F1 history doesn't make you less of a fan.
- The word I least agreed with is "slowly"
- It's always been a spectacle, it's just that more people are paying attention to it and it's being brought in front of people like myself who have never had an interest previously but suddenly there is a race an hour away (Abu Dhabi) who become aware of it and its spectacles
- With the tv show and Vegas race, they have started to lean on spectral but there has always been that element in the sport as countries make it a place to show off
- I think it's always been a spectacle in some way or another. I think rather than spectacle I'd say it's becoming more commercialised
- i think certain races are and that the length of the race calander is heading more towards a spectacle but it is still a sport and if these issues are removed things would be very different
- there for sure some races where it is just for show, like most of the us races but for most of the calender it is still racing.
- It's very embarrassing to see drivers having to parade themselves with such lack of enthusiasm, I wish they didn't have to do that
- It's always been this way, if you don't attract enough people you don't have the money to race.
- You can see where the spectacle part has come in but in my opinion that's mostly just with the USA races I mean the miami and las vegas driver intros c'mon
- Just watching the Vegas Grand Prix last year showed that very clearly.
- It's OK to have a small show before the race to entertain people in the stands, but that doesn't mean you have to involve drivers and disturb them when they should focus on preparing for the race(see:American races) plus it gave me second hand embarrassment seeing the drivers being treated like circus members, I would have been mortified if I were in their place
- They are completely disregarding the f1 teams staff and drivers mental and physical race of having so many races. Especially the staff has to travel so so so much and they have to be there way earlier to build everything for the team.
- The addition of Vegas would definitely hint at this, as do the many street circuits because they often make for a more exciting race. The discussions surrounding the new Saudi Arabia track also show that the people in charge of the sport care more about the entertainment value of things rather than the sporting side.
- thank you so much for this poll and i'm sorry for my long rants 🙏🙏🙏
- The human population is constantly attracted to so many things. They need something to stay rooted to the sport
- It's a shame, since these drivers are so talented and have dedicated their whole lives to what they do. They want to race, so why don't we focus on that?
- F1 should go back to it's roots, meaning a Engineering sport first, with talented drivers. The spectacle will come with it soon.
- It's always been a spectacle it's just becoming a different kind of spectacle
- Isn't all professional sport viewing spectacle and entertainment?
- Sure but I'd argue it's always been somewhat of a spectacle. Even been Middle East and American interest, its marquee race was hosted in a tax haven for rich Europeans.
- I'm fine with showmanship being more important but it ABSOLUTELY CAN NOT come at the cost of the safety and wellbeing of the drivers and the fairness of the sport.
- Similar answer to Q50
- It's always been a spectacle
- I think Max Verstappen is doing just great, but I think Lewis Hamilton is way too obsessed with Ayrton Senna. I'm sure Lewis is an amazing person, but it's become more of an obsession.
- as per q13

- Formula one has nearly always been a spectacle. The aim has always been to lure new fans to develop the sport. Therefore, formula one has to be a spectacle, an entertainment. But i believe we've seen it with las vegas last year, it goes sometimes to far beyond the sport in my opinion.

spectacle, entertaining, wayyy, good enough, showy, wow factor, glitter, enshitification, money-based, politics-based, popular, story-driven, spectacular, show, race, competitive, sporty, spectacular, showy, wow factor, glitter, enshitification, money-based, politics-based, popular, entertaining, story-driven, spectacular, show, race, entertaining, spectacular, show, race, spectacular, spectacle, off track, punters, traditions, income, enormous, profit, American, money-making, race tracks, celebrities, Vegas, stupid, corruption, disinterested, street races, glamor, boring, difficult, physical, mental, noisy, carbon neutral, hybrid, strategy, superbowlification, persona, media, spotlight, bells, whistles, burnout, longevity, motorsport, public, quiz, thesis, rich, racist, evil, primitivity, bullying, changes, racing, spectacle, 'Americanised', strong, European, problematic, corrupt, boring, engineering, street, high-paying, genuine, penalties, end result, boring, poor, responsible, loath, spectacle, rapidly-growing, media, inaccessible spectacle, diverse, luxury, flashy, interest, balance, sporting, environmentally friendly, sustainable, popularity, engineering, dramatics, politics, commercial, capitalistic, marketing, show-ish, marketability, emphasis, publicity, investment, profit spectacle, authentic, sport, nerds, grand, capitalist, over-the-top, competition, spectacle, spectacle, gimmicky, crashes, racing, drama, spectacle spectacle, Americanised, flashy, unserious, authentic, grand, capitalist, over-the-top, sporting, competitive, nerds, sensationalised, hard, unhealthy American, Middle Eastern, disappointing, track, quality, DTS, female, slow, spectacle, commercialised, spectacle, show, embarrassing, mental, physical, entertainment, spectacle, showmanship, safety, fairness, spectacle, obsessed, spectacle, entertainment, spectacle spectacle; content; media; money; politics; celebrities; influencers; TV/news coverage; street races; traditional circuits; glamor; noisy engines; hybrid; wider trend; superbowlification.target audience: attractive, physically or personality; more media engagements; balance between show and sport; focus on entertainment over racing; longer calendar; concerns about fan burnout; emphasis on sponsorships and branding; concern about losing core identity; dislike of street races and high-paying tracks; dissatisfaction with current state of F1; focus on spectacle rather than sport; dissatisfaction with ticket prices and extra events; dissatisfaction with Liberty Media's direction.F1 is facing a hurdle. A growing sport, but races becoming expensive and inaccessible. Who's the target audience? New fans or luxury sponsors? More media engagements, but less genuine feel. Some races, like Vegas, flashy for the sake of it. Need for balance between show and sport. Environmental concerns about new tracks. Sport's popularity ebbs and flows. Concerns about over-commercialization. Disagreement on whether F1 becoming more of a spectacle. Concerns about emphasis on entertainment over racing. Mixed feelings about American races and flashy events. Debate on F1's core identity as a sport or spectacle. Discussion on the role of marketing and profit in F1. Some prefer focus on engineering and racing. Others appreciate the showmanship. Disagreement on whether spectacle diminishes the sport. Some see spectacle as inevitable in a growing sport. Mixed views on the direction of F1's development.Sprint races. Miami and Vegas. Oil states with street circuits. Heavy narcotics for teams. Quitting for family. Unsafe cars and pit lanes. Aging circuits. Narrow street designs. Preferred drivers. Team orders. F1 as a spectacle. Gimmicky additions. Racing features abandoned. American/Middle Eastern races. Cash is king. Track quality decline. Track location more important. DTS insult. More people paying attention. Commercialization. Some races just for show. Lack of driver enthusiasm. Money attracts viewers. USA race intros. Second hand embarrassment. Mental and physical strain on teams. Focus on entertainment over sport. Rooted to the sport. Back to engineering roots. Spectacle evolving. Professional sport as entertainment. Safety and fairness paramount. Verstappen vs Hamilton. F1 as spectacle and entertainment. Las Vegas race going too far.

## Annex 8: Occupations breakdown

Industry and commerce executives - 2  
Liberal professions and senior executives - 8  
Middle managers - 17  
Employees - 134  
Workers - 50  
Service personnel - 2  
Other categories - 17

0. Farm owners/operators - N/A

1. Agricultural employees - N/A

2. Industry and commerce executives - Company Director, Marketing Director

3. Liberal professions and senior executives - Attorney (2), Barrister, Doctor (2), Financial Consultant, Management

4. Middle managers - Admin (3), Content Manager, Finance Manager, Marketing Coordinator, Marketing Manager, Operations Manager, Project Manager, Project Manager at IT-company, Retail Manager

5. Employees - Admin Assistant (local government), Analyst (2), Animator and freelance illustrator, Antiquaire, Antique vintage dealer, Apprenticeship, Bartender (2), Bookkeeper, Caregiver for people with disabilities, Casino attendant, CCA, Child therapist, Cinema employee, Civil engineer, Civil Servant, Civil servant (central government), Classroom assistant, Cleaner, College Admissions Counselor, Company Director, Consultant/Counselor in education, Corporate slave, Data Analyst (2), Database manager, Designer, Electrical supervisor technician, Electronics engineer for industrial engineering, Employee in the public sector, Finance (2), Finance Analyst, Garden Store Employee, Gardener, Graduate student, Graduate student (engineering), Grocery Store Clerk, Guest scientist at university, Healthcare, Healthcare worker, Historian, Hospitality manager, Hospitality - Hotel Front Desk, Housekeeper, Librarian, Life insurance underwriter, Logistics, Manager, Marine sales assistant, Marketing field, Marketing specialist, Bandai Namco, Mechanical Engineer, Mechanical engineer in car industry, Media Consultant and Programme Director, Nanny, Night shift public transport cleaner, Office assistant for a trading association, Office Manager, Office worker, Pharmacy assistant, Phd Student, Policy Advisor, Policy Researcher, Political Scientist, Preschoolteacher plus Bachelors in Social Works, Primary TA, Procurement Contractor/Director, Proofreader, Receptionist, Research Associate, Researcher, Retail, Retail sales person, Retail management, Sales Advisor, Scientist, Secretary, Service technician, Social media writer, Software developer, Software Engineer, Sound Engineer, Specialist professional, Speech therapist, Sports Marketing, Station manager, Teacher (high school biology), Teacher at a high school, Teacher in vocational training, woodworking and politics/economics, Teaching Assistant, Theatre producer, University administrator, University Instructor, University Student, University Student studying film editing and sound design, UX designer, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary Surgeon, Video editor, Warehouse Worker, Work in a post office/cheese monger, Work in an Association, Work in education, Working in medical field, Writer

6. Workers - (Construction-) Mechanic (2), Agency worker/Bartender, Bar Tender, Bartender, Barista, Casino attendant, Chef, Cinema employee, Early childhood educator, Hospitality, In school, Independent contractor, writing editing and design, Intern public affairs, IT person, IT Specialist, IT Technician, Legal admin, Minimum wage Retail, Night shift public transport cleaner, None, Retail, Retired (3), Retired, Sales, Scholar, Service, Social media writer, Station manager, Student (6), Student and barista, Student and Librarian, Student at uni, Student in Management's Master degree, Student/teacher, Support worker/care assistant, Teacher's Assistant/unemployed, Ukraine, Unable to work due to disability, Unemployed, Unemployed, recently graduated, Warehouse Worker

7. Service personnel - Au pair, Senior support worker and well-being coach

8. Other categories - Environmental Sustainability Masters Student, Freshly finished my masters, currently looking for a job, I study at university, I work in a library, I'm a florist!, I'm a uni student, I'm still in school but want to study political communications in the future, In between things after getting my bachelors degree (only do a couple of mini jobs rn), IT consultant, Lawyer, Student (FIFB BABY), Student.

## Annex 9: 46 other responses to if other type of content should be pursued

Yes, But it should make sure to not impact on the sport  
Yes, Actually these types of documentaries exists (Canal + with Alpine or Ferrari)  
yes and no it has to be done right but it is still a great tool to make the sport more known  
To an extent  
Yes, Yes but without manufacturing drama in the paddock  
I don't know, No opinion  
Yes, I don't know  
No, I don't know  
DTS=no, F1 TV=maybe  
Yes, No  
Yes, I think other types of content would be better - I agree with the criticisms of DTS that they edit too much. I would prefer more content like McLaren's "Unboxed" series from 2023 or Prema's "Live at Prema" series they've been doing since 2021.  
Measurely  
Yes, but not at the cost of teams being able to make their own behind the scenes content.  
F1 TV content yes, we don't need DTS to expand as it currently stands. 10 episodes a year is plenty unless they want to focus on more interesting storylines.  
Yes, but in a different way than it is being done in DTS  
F1 TV yes, DTS no (as long as it stays that way)  
F1TV yes, DTS no  
In f1 tv? Yes, but not in dts no  
Yes, i think having more documentary's on drivers careers, deeper dives into history of the tracks, Stuff on influential moments from F1  
Only if it sticks to the reality of the sport and doesn't create false narratives  
I think behind the scenes content is good, but there has to be limits  
Yes, it just came oit that teams cannot show any more behind the scenes videos like "mcl unboxed" and "behint the charge" because netflix wants to be the only one able to show this world, then I think that this is certainly a step to far and if dts starts to restrict f1 teams then they hold too mich power. Especially because dts is not known to show the events as truthfully as possible whereas the teams do it more accurately.  
Both yes and no. It's important to increase viewship and interest in the sport but I think it should be done differently. For example, in DTS, make it less dramatised.  
F1tv is pretty neutral so i enjoy that, but dts is to dramafilled and biased for me.  
It should be pursued only when it comes to interviews or challenges, fun things that could connect the fans even more to the sport  
To an extent it is positive, however the quality of projects also need to be considered  
Yes, i like the additional info i can find on F1 TV who DTS sucks and better be stop, its role is completed.  
I think we should have meaningful content from the drivers and the team with regards to the sports so that it can serve as a starting point for many of the new fans  
I don't know, No opinion  
No to DTS, yes to F1TV, as it has more racing focused content, nothing that I would compare to DTS  
Yes, but with a little more objectivity.  
Yes, Yes, but I think there should be more documentaries and behind the scenes content that are not fabricated for drama like DTS  
I think it depends on the goal of the sport. Liberty quite clearly want to squeeze as much money out of F1 as they can, but that's come at the expense of the integrity of the sport, as well as to the teams and drivers themselves. They've become bona fide celebrities, which is perhaps something nobody really expected. I also think that as long as Liberty's main goal is to make more and more money, they won't be able to focus on the core elements of the sport.  
Yes, I don't know, No opinion  
Fans like behind the scenes content, but DTS currently holds a monopoly on that content which I think is a major issue.  
No, As long as there are checks and balances in place to ensure said content is accurate and ethical  
Yes, I think that media coverage of F1 such as TV coverage could be a good thing for the support --> it increases awareness and can create more interest. However, I also feel that changes need to be made in order to protect the security and prevent exploitation of the people portrayed.  
Yes, I don't know



I don't know, No opinion

I think it's difficult to answer because it generates an income for Liberty Media, but how does that wealth then gets distributed across the sport?

It can be managed but not as a priority (DTS)

Yes, I don't know

Yes, I think they should be but with more care around how the content produced impacts the sport. depends on the type of content. dts no, but stuff like tech talk on f1 tv is fine (and not weirdly biased lol)

Not the drama filled show like DTS but documentaries abt other aspects of f1 would be interesting

No, F1 doesnt need more show, it should be a sport first and foremost

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Framework.....	8
Literature review.....	13
Dynamics of formula one.....	13
Fan behaviour.....	14
Sport Fandom.....	16
Globalisation in Sport.....	18
The Sports/Media relation.....	19
Research Question.....	22
Methodology.....	23
Preview of the structure.....	27
<b>Chapter 1 : Unveiling Formula One's sporting Essence: Liberty Media's Impact in Perspective.....</b>	<b>28</b>
I. Tracing Formula One's Journey: From Sporting Origins to Global Triumph.....	28
A. Grassroot Days: Formula One's Beginnings as a Sporting Event.....	28
B. Bernie Ecclestone's Legacy: The Sport's Transformation into Global Media Event.....	30
II. Liberty Media's Acquisition: Transformative Vision and Implications for Formula One's Future.....	33
A. Liberty Media and the Shift in Formula One dynamics.....	34
B. Liberty Media's Vision: Revolutionizing Formula One for Popularity and Marketability..	37
<b>Chapter 2: Understanding Formula One's Evolution: Factors Driving the Transition from Media Event to Global Spectacle.....</b>	<b>41</b>
I. Formula One's U.S. Expansion: Implications for the Sport's Future.....	41
A. Americanizing Formula One: A Strategic Push to Captivate the U.S. Market.....	41
B. The Superbowlification of a Grand Prix.....	44
II. Commercializing Formula One: From Elite Club to Mainstream Sport.....	48
A. A New Era of Fan Engagement: Formula One's Innovative Commercial Strategy.....	48
B. Digital Revolution: Transforming Formula One's Presence in the Digital Sphere.....	51
C. Fan Perspectives: Understanding the impact of these changes in Formula One.....	55
III. External Forces at Play: Factors Influencing Formula One's Evolution.....	59
A. The Power of Brands and Sponsorships: Shaping Formula One's Identity.....	59
B. Host Countries: The Influence of Race Locations on Formula One.....	62
C. The importance of Fan Retention: Objectives and Implications in Formula One's Evolution.....	68
<b>Chapter 3: Formula One's Changing Fanbase: Exploring the Influx of New Faces.....</b>	<b>72</b>
I. Deciphering the Formula One Fandom: Understanding its Composition.....	72
A. Who makes up the Formula One Fanbase: Methods for Identification and Analysis.....	72
B. Survey Demographics vs. Fandom Reality: Assessing Representativeness and Discrepancies.....	74
II. A Catalyst for Change: The Impact of "Drive to Survive" on Formula One Fandom.....	77

A. "Drive to Survive": A Phenomenon of the New Era.....	77
B. Mixed Reviews: Assessing Fan Sentiment Towards "Drive to Survive".....	81
<b>Chapter 4: Strong Fan Perspectives on Formula One's Evolution and Current Landscape.....</b>	<b>85</b>
I. The Depth of Survey Responses: Exploring reasons for Extreme Fan Engagement.....	85
A. The Unexpected Popularity of the Survey: A Deep Dive into Fan Passion.....	85
B. Decoding Fan Dedication: Insights from the Survey Engagement.....	87
II. Spectacle Over Sport: Fan Sentiments on Formula One's Transformation.....	90
A. Formula One as a Spectacle: A Growing Consensus Among Fans.....	90
B. Demographic Trends in Fan Responses: What Drives Opinions?.....	94
C. Fan Perception of Declining Racing Quality: Safety Concerns and Inconsistent Stewarding.....	97
III. The 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix: A Turning Point Highlighting the Spectacle-Driven Transformation of Formula One.....	101
A. Deciphering the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix: What It Signifies for the Sport.....	101
B. Fan Reactions: The Impact of the Abu Dhabi Controversy.....	106
C. Long-term Ramifications: Trust and Integrity in Formula One.....	109
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Bibliography:.....</b>	<b>117</b>
Sociology of Sport, Sport fandom and Fan Behaviour :.....	117
The Sport/Media relationship, globalisation and digital age:.....	119
Formula One:.....	122
Methodology:.....	128
Images:.....	128
<b>Annex:.....</b>	<b>129</b>
Annex 1: List of articles referencing Abu Dhabi.....	131
Annex 2: List of questions.....	132
Annex 3: List of tumblr comments.....	135
Annex 4: List of responses to Abu Dhabi question + adjectives.....	137
Annex 5: List of responses to Stewarding question + adjectives.....	151
Annex 6: List of responses to DTS perception + adjectives.....	161
Annex 7: List of responses to Spectacle precisions + adjectives.....	177
Annex 8: Occupations breakdown.....	184
Annex 9: 46 other responses to if other type of content should be pursued.....	185