



AP Poll: Janet Jackson's act bad taste, but not federal case

WASHINGTON DC (AP) -- Most Americans think the exposure of Janet Jackson's right breast during the Super Bowl halftime show was crass, but few believe it's a federal case.

The Associated Press Poll is conducted by Ipsos-Public Affairs. Between February 16-18, 2004, the AP/Ipsos poll interviewed a representative sample of 1,000 adults nationwide, including 774 registered voters. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 for all adults, +/- 3.6 for registered voters.

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WASHINGTON DC (AP) -- Most Americans think the exposure of Janet Jackson's right breast during the Super Bowl halftime show was crass, but few believe it's a federal case.

An Associated Press poll found 54 percent of those surveyed said they thought the act, in which singer Justin Timberlake snatched off part of Jackson's bustier and revealed her breast to millions of television viewers was bad taste. Only 18 percent thought it was an illegal act.

The Federal Communications Commission is investigating whether the broadcast violated federal indecency laws.

According to the poll conducted for the AP by Ipsos-Public Affairs, the FCC ought to spend its time on other things. Nearly 80 percent of respondents said it's a waste of money to investigate.

"I can see how parents wouldn't want their children to see it," said Diana Foster, a 50-year-old resident of Nicholas County, Ky., in the central part of the state. "But an investigation is a waste of money. Sure it wasn't very nice, but they're using our tax money for this."

In the AP-Ipsos poll, women were more likely than men to say the halftime show should be investigated, and whites more likely than blacks. Republicans were twice as likely as Democrats to favor an investigation. Young adults were less likely than other age groups to think an investigation was called for.

A fourth of those in the poll said the act was neither in bad taste nor illegal. Almost half of young adults between age 18 and 29 said the display was neither. Unmarried men, people without college degrees and those who made lower incomes were more likely to think it was not in bad taste or illegal.

Despite limited public concern about the incident, there is evidence of public support for government action to clean up regular television channels.

Recent polling found a solid majority, about three fourths, who say they would support stricter rules on nudity and sexual content on regular television channels.

"They need to clean up television generally," said Michael Zannella, a 70-year-old retiree from Wheatfield, N.Y. "That one incident at the Super Bowl is nothing compared to what's on television all the time."

The AP-Ipsos poll of 1,000 adults was taken Feb. 16-18. It has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Ipsos Public Affairs

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