

Ah Ça Ira!

Gojira at the Olympics

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Abstract

Gojira made history by performing a Heavy Metal rendition of the revolutionary French song *Ah Ça Ira!* at the Paris 2024 Olympics. But can we quantify this and its importance to Social-Economic measures? The answers are - Yes, and very. We utilize this exogenous natural experiment exposure of a kickass track to the entire world to study its effect on consumption of awesome music. Using could-be-much-more-detailed data from Spotify, we find daily streams of Gojira's music increased by 163.5%. Forecasting the trajectory of Gojira into the future, we find it will go up to 11. Our policy recommendations are twofold: Release Gojira's *Ah Ça Ira!* immediately and include a Metal band performance in every opening ceremony of every event.

Introduction, Findings and Summary

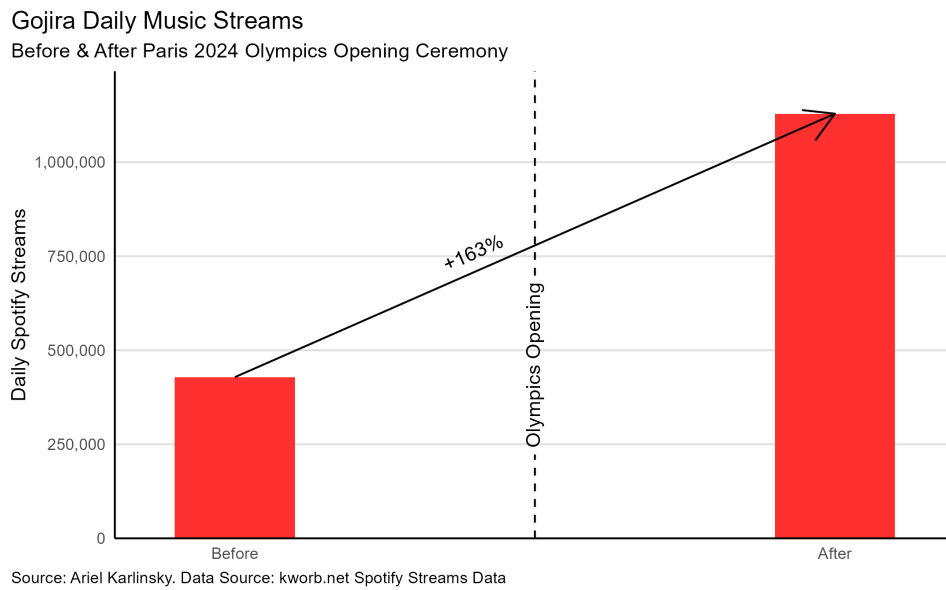
What is the effect of a global exposure on cultural consumption? At the 2024 Paris Olympics opening ceremony (July 26, 2024), Gojira (1996), a French Heavy Metal band, collaborated with Opera Singer Marina Viotti on a rendition of the French revolutionary song *Ah Ça Ira!* (Ladré, 1790). The effect of this performance was described as: "Gojira's performance made headlines in many news outlets as the first metal band ever to play in an Olympic opening ceremony" (Wikipedia, 2024). However, the topic of how this performance and the media exposure have affected Gojira's popularity remain criminally understudied.¹ We set to study this question by exploiting data on Spotify streams of Gojira's music, collated by [kwordb \(2024\)](#) from July 21 2024 and August 7 2024, providing us with data both before and after the 2024 Olympics opening ceremony.

Total lifetime Spotify streams of Gojira on Spotify have increased from 972,186,895 to 991,379,062, a modest increase of only about 2%. However, Using the 17 days difference have passed between the two data captures - we calculate daily streams during this period of 1,128,951. Luckily, The before data-capture also provides us with daily streams for the preceding period, which stood at 428,477. Figure 1 visualizes this finding in graphic format, showing that daily streams increased by a massive 163.5% due to the Olympic opening ceremony performance.

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¹As of time of writing, 14 days have already passed, emphasising the sluggishness of social science research to address critical issues in a timely manner.

Figure 1: The Olympic Effect on Gojira's Daily Music Streams



To put this finding into perspective, if daily streams of Gojira continue as such, it will go up to 11 (Reiner, 1984) very quickly. This is despite the fact Gojira's performance of *Ah Ça Ira!* is itself not on Spotify, indicating that the increase represents large potential positive spillovers.

It should be noted that Spotify undoubtedly has much more detailed data on streams but it is, to the best of our knowledge, not available publicly. Thus, we had to rely on the data-captures kindly provided by kworkb (2024). If Spotify's data was available to researchers, the analysis would be much more accurate.² For example, we could estimate heterogeneous treatment effect by country or region. Information on other artists in Spotify could allow us to create several possible control groups in order to control for other possible changes in listening patterns which might be correlated with the Olympics opening ceremony (Angrist and Pischke, 2009). However, this should be treated with caution, as many artists, such as other Metal bands, might benefit from positive spillovers stemming from the exposure of Metal music to new audiences. Additionally, information from other digital music services such as Apple Music, which might target different audiences than Spotify could be used as a robustness test on the Olympic treatment effect. This, and more, are fruitful areas for future research.

Given our findings, we have devised two important policy recommendations: First and foremost, Gojira has to release its rendition of *Ah Ça Ira!* through Spotify and other digital-music services as soon as possible. The current state of relying on disparate YouTube videos to enjoy the track is a net welfare loss. Secondly, the success of Gojira at the Olympics should lead policy-makers worldwide to add Heavy Metal bands to every opening ceremony of any national or international event.

²If you are from Spotify, please email me!

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