

Aggression is in the shape of the logo: subtle threat cues in professional sports team logos

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Abstract

The present study explores the relationship between visual characteristics of professional sports team logos and measures of aggression, in order to better understand how subtle threat cues are communicated in real-world contexts. The study investigates the relationship between luminance, angularity, and redness with penalties and flags in the NHL and NFL, as well as the relationship between these visual features and the emotional valence of team names in the four major sports in North America. Finally, the study compares logos across leagues with differing levels of violence tolerance to assess potential differences in these features. Digital images of team logos were obtained and standardized. Measures of luminance, redness, and angularity were calculated in MATLAB using digital image processing techniques. Preliminary evidence suggests that these visual characteristics may play a role in conveying threat cues in professional sports teams' logos, but further research is needed to fully understand their impact.