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EXPERTISE AND SEX IDENTIFICATION IN DOGS

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Expertise and Sex Identification in Dogs

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ABSTRACT

Expertise is commonly recognized as having a significant impact on performance. Recognizing this, past research has shown that expertise improves performance on various domains ranging from facial recognition to chicken sexing. However, less understood is how expertise reduces cognitive biases when making decisions. Our study examines the effects of expertise in a novel domain- determining the sex of canines. We hypothesize that experts (i.e. dog show judges and dog breeders) are able to identify the sex of short-haired breeds of dogs more effectively than non-experts. Furthermore, we predict experts will have greater resistance to cognitive biases than non-experts. Specifically, non-experts will more often label aggressive and large dog breeds as male and small non-aggressive breeds as female. The data presented here is from a pilot study which confirms the existence of strong sex stereotypes for some dog breeds. Participants categorized images of 20 dogs as being owned by either one of two masculine or feminine archetypes, Cinderella or G.I. Joe, based on shared personality traits. The five most stereotypical masculine and feminine dogs will be used in the main study.

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