

PERTINACIOUS IMAGE: INVESTIGATING A DIMENSION OF IMAGE
MANAGEMENT IN SPORTS PUBLIC RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Seeking to explore new areas of image management, this dissertation applied the constant comparative method to in-depth interviews of sports public relations practitioners. The result is the discovery of a new concept not found in current image management literature: pertinacious image.

Pertinacious image occurs after an athlete (individual) has committed or allegedly committed some type of offensive act and, as a result, is now saddled with a new, more negative image based on the offensive act. Though the new image is considered undesired, evidence suggests that the athlete could leverage the new undesired image for profitable gain.

The evidence offered in this dissertation redresses traditional assumptions found in the current image management literature and in traditional image management practice in the marketplace. The pertinacious image model is advanced as a way of helping to explain and understand the concept. The implications of the findings offer a new concept for scholars to study and for practitioners to employ relating to the field of sports public relations, with the possibility of extending into other areas of public relations.