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# Voters' Emotional Response to Negative Campaign Messages: The Role of Incivility

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Negative political advertising motivates and persuades voters by appealing to their emotions (Brader 2005). Negative campaigning not only evokes more emotional responses than positive campaigning (Diagnault et al. 2013), but also different emotional responses, i.e. more negative feelings (Chang 2001). We have however limited knowledge on how these emotional responses differ across types of negative campaigning and groups of voters. In this study we examine the effect of uncivil, competence, integrity and ideological attacks on voters' emotions, respectively anxiety, anger, contempt, pride and hope. We conducted a survey embedded between subject experiment with a random sample of 1500 US voters. This study contributes to the field in several ways. First of all, it is one of few studies differentiating between different types of negative campaigning measuring its emotional response. Second, it is one of few studies taking the heterogeneity of these effects into account. The results show that the strongest emotional response is found for uncivil attacks, in particular among female and older voters.

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***Dr. Annemarie Walter** is a Nottingham Research Fellow in the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Nottingham. At Nottingham University she works on her research project "CSNCC": Comparative Study of Negative Campaigning and its Consequences. Her broad areas of research interests include election campaigns, political communication, political parties and party systems, party strategy and electoral behaviour. Her unique expertise is negative campaigning in comparative perspective.*

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