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Negative Campaign Advertising: Demobilizer or Mobilizer?

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Abstract

With political campaigns becoming increasingly adversarial, scholars have recently given some much-needed attention to the impact of negative advertising on turnout. In a widely recognized *Review* article and subsequent book, Ansolabehere and his colleagues *(1994, 1995)* contend that attack advertising drives potential voters away from the polls. We dispute the generalizability of these claims outside of the experimental setting. Using NES survey data as well aggregate sources, we subject this previous research to rigorous real-world testing. The survey data directly contradict Ansolabehere et al.'s findings, yielding evidence of a turnout *advantage* for those recollecting negative presidential campaign advertising. In attempting to replicate Ansolabehere et al's earlier aggregate results we uncover quite significant discrepancies and inconsistencies in their dataset. This analysis leads to the conclusion that their aggregate study is hopelessly flawed. We must conclude that attack advertising's demobilization dangers are greatly exaggerated by Ansolabehere et al., while they completely miss negative political advertising's turnout benefits -- at least in voters' own context.

Few developments have altered the character of American election campaigns as dramatically as the rise of negative television advertising. Long gone are the days of the **1948** Truman-Dewey contest, when the two major candidates went through the entire campaign without once referring to their opponent by name (McCullough 1992, 670). As the focus of presidential campaigns has shifted from the stump speech to the 30-second ad, charges and counter-charges have become both more frequent and direct. Darrell West's (1993,48) content analysis of prominent ads in presidential campaigns finds that negative appeals have dominated the national airwaves since 1980.

Although widely decried by pundits as polluting our national political debate, scholars have found that television advertising actually contributes to political learning (Brians and Wattenberg 1996; Patterson and McClure 1976). Currently, academic criticism of political ads concerns not how learning from them may manipulate whom people vote for but rather whether they will vote at all. Stephen Ansolabehere and his colleagues (Ansolabehere et al. 1994; Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995) argue that campaign advertising can be either mobilizing or demobilizing depending on its tone (hereafter these publications are collectively labeled 'Ansolabehere et al.,' unless specifically referenced individually). Through a set of controlled experiments, they show that subjects who view a negative ad embedded in a news broadcast are significantly less likely to say they will vote. [1] These findings are supplemented by an analysis of aggregate turnout and rolloff data from 1992 Senate races, which appear to show that participation is lower in states where candidates employ negative ads.

Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995,9) boldly assert that "attack ads can be and are used strategically for demobilization." They argue that political strategists intentionally employ

negative ads to discourage segments of the electorate from voting and are well aware that lower turnout is the result.   In our view, however, it hardly seems rational to limit the goal of campaign ads to influencing turnout. Imagine an election in which polling shows that 100 million people are expected to vote -- 53 million for the Democrat, and 47 million for the Republican. In order to win by reducing turnout, the Republicans would have to launch negative ads that would cause over 6 million Democratic supporters to stay home. But if they could *change* the minds of just over 3 million Democratic supporters then they would come out on top. Given that most voters repeatedly vote (e.g., Campbell et al. 1960, 92-93), would it not be much easier to change the criteria on which 3 million people make up their minds than to get 6 million to kick the voting habit? 2

       We believe the intent of most negative commercials is to convert votes by focusing on an issue that the sponsoring candidate has credibility in handling, but upon which the opponent is weak, As John Petrocik (1996) argues, each party has issues that they "own" and a campaign is a contest to focus attention on issues which favor them. From this perspective, even the infamous "Revolving Door" and "Willie Horton" ads of 1988 can be seen as part of a Republican strategy to change voters' minds rather than demobilize Dukakis supporters. They chose to focus on this issue not merely due to the weakness they perceived in their opponent's record but also because their party had long cultivated an image of being tough on crime. Certainly the message got through to a good portion of the public in 1988. Wattenberg (1991, 121) found that the most commonly stated issue-based reason for opposing Dukakis was that he had a "lenient policy toward criminals." Interestingly, 74 percent of the people who made this remark in the National Election Study (NES) pre-election interview later said they voted, as compared to 69 percent who did not make this comment. 3 Although we have no way of knowing whether these respondents

saw the ads in question, their message certainly permeated the electorate. The fact that respondents who showed an awareness of the ads' theme had higher turnout rates appears inconsistent with the demobilization hypothesis and thereby suggests the need for further empirical tests.

This paper presents national survey data demonstrating that recollection of negative campaign ads is actually associated with *higher* turnout. We also reexamine the aggregate data presented by Ansolabehere et al. and find no evidence that the advertising tone of Senate campaigns affects voter participation.

Election Study Data on Negative Advertising Exposure and Turnout

In the 1992 NES an open-ended question asked people **if** they recalled seeing any presidential campaign advertisements on TV, and if so, what they remembered about any of these ads. From these data we can identify which respondents remembered seeing negative ads and then correlate this information with turnout. Interestingly, the most common response was not about any ad in particular but instead was a broad response that there was too much negative campaigning in TV ads. Responses that either Bush or Clinton had been engaging in too much negative campaigning were also quite frequent. All totaled, 18 percent of the respondents who were asked the initial question about TV ads remarked that there were too many negative ads-- either in general or by one of the two major-party candidates. These individuals who were disenchanted with mudslinging on TV should be the most likely to fit the profile of demobilized citizens if Ansolabehere et al. are correct. However, the results indicate a *mobilizing* rather than demobilizing effect for negative ads. The reported turnout rate for those who complained about excessive negative ads was a healthy 82 percent as compared to 76 percent for those who did not

offer this criticism.

One can also ascertain from the data which respondents remembered specific negative ads that were run in 1992. There were six negative spots that some respondents recalled seeing--four produced by Bush and two produced by Clinton. Fifteen percent of the respondents spontaneously mentioned one or more of these attack ads. Once again, the evidence for this group contradicts the demobilization theory. Among those who recalled a specific negative ad, 84 percent reported voting.

Given that respondents who complained about the abundance of negative commercials had turnout levels similar to those who discussed specific attack ads, we have combined these groups into one category of respondents who showed an awareness of negative ads. Table 1 compares the turnout rates of respondents who commented about negative ads to those who did not, controlling for a variety of variables that are commonly known to be related to voter participation. Among groups that are most in need of political mobilization, recalling negative political ads is most clearly associated with higher turnout. For example, respondents without a High School degree were 16 percentage points more likely to vote if they discussed negative ads than if they did not indicate an awareness of these ads. Other groups that were especially more likely to vote if they recalled attack ads include young people, Independents, those with little interest in politics, non-Whites, and people who scored low on the efficacy scale. Groups that traditionally have high turnout rates, such as those who are very interested in politics and strong partisans, have little potential to be further mobilized and thus recalling negative ads had only a small impact on their turnout rates. It should be noted, though, that not a single group we examined had a lower turnout rate if they had something to say about negative ads than if they did not.

In addition to the clear lack **of** evidence for the demobilization theory, the survey data provide evidence contradictory to the argument made by Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995, 112) that "negative messages tend to alienate nonpartisans from politics further and to discourage their participation in a tainted process." Decades of survey research have demonstrated that nonpartisans are no less trusting of government than partisans (Wattenberg 1994, 55-57), and that feelings of political cynicism have no significant independent impact on turnout (Teixeira 1992, 33). Thus, there is no reason to expect Independents to be demobilized by attack ads, and indeed the NES data point in the opposite direction. In particular, a comparison of Independent leaners and weak partisans -- two groups that Keith et al. (1992) argue are usually alike -- reveals that recalling negative ads is more associated with higher turnout among the Independent leaners.

Another key part of the argument made by Ansolabehere et al. is that citizens' sense of political efficacy is reduced by exposure to negative ads. We also tested this assertion with 1992 survey data and found the reverse pattern. Respondents' mean efficacy scores were significantly higher if they recalled negative ads ($p < .01$) If negative ads deal with issues that citizens are concerned about -- a goal that every political consultant would no doubt strive for -- citizens could reasonably infer from them that public officials care about what people like themselves think. They need not like the technique to recognize that politicians are at least trying to address voters' contemporary concerns.

By placing emphasis on issues that are usually different from those of the previous campaign, negative ads could well have an impact in bringing different segments of irregular voters to the polls from year to year. To employ Angus Campbell's (1960) terminology, it is likely that the mobilizing impact of negative ads would be most apparent among peripheral voters. Core voters would likely vote in any event, and Table 1 shows that regardless of their exposure

to attack ads virtually all those who voted in 1988 voted again in 1992. Among those who sat out the 1988 race, however, turnout was about 17 percent higher if they recalled something about negative advertising in 1992 than if they did not. 4

Finally, a multivariate analysis is required to rule out the possibility that other factors--such as following political news via newspapers or TV -- could explain the relationship between turnout and exposure to attack ads which we have found.   Table 2 presents a logistic regression equation predicting turnout employing a number of demographic, attitudinal, and media exposure variables. 5 It demonstrates that even controlling for all these various factors, respondents' recall of negative political advertising is significantly associated (p = .05) with voting for president in 1992. One should note, however, that reading a newspaper for political news is more strongly associated with turnout voter participation than recalling negative ads. Because newspaper reading has been sharply declining in recent decades, the net impact of changes in American political communication have probably contributed to falling turnout levels. In other words, whatever role negative ads may have played in mobilizing the electorate has probably been more than offset by the decline in newspaper readership.

Reanalyzing Aggregate Voter Participation Data for Senate Elections

To their credit, Ansolabehere et al. do not limit their analysis of the demobilization theory to laboratory data. In an analysis of real-world data, they assess the advertising tone in 34 Senate races in 1992 and relate this information to aggregate patterns in voter participation. They summarize their findings as follows:

> We estimate that if all of the Senate campaigns in 1992 had been
> positive 6.4 million more people would have gone to the polls.
> Rolloff would have also been cut substantially, leading 1.2 million

people who voted for President to make their voices heard in the
Senate as well. (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995, 109).

Besides the fact that this would contradict our national survey findings reported above, we

are skeptical that the advertising tone of Senate races could have much influence on turnout or

rolloff (the difference between the number of presidential and Senate votes). Regarding turnout,

it is important to remember that voting for the Senate is only one of many decisions that American

voters are called upon to make. We find it hard to believe that the advertising tone of one out of

the many sub-presidential races could have a measurable impact on turnout. As for rolloff,

previous research has shown that the primary reason voters skip a particular office on the ballot is

that they have not had any exposure to the candidates (see McAllister et al. 1996).   This would

suggest that lower rolloff would be found where there is more advertising -- regardless of its tone.

With these theoretical considerations in mind, we set out to replicate the aggregate

participation data gathered by Ansolabehere et al., and then introduce some relevant control

variables. However, our first pass at the official election statistics revealed a markedly different

pattern of turnout and rolloff by advertising tone than that reported by Ansolabehere et al. Table

3 compares our findings to what they reported. Given the substantively different results, we

contacted Stephen Ansolabehere in an attempt to identify the source of these discrepancies. He

indicated that one facet of their data is that absentee ballots were excluded, based on the premise

that these votes would have been cast before the last minute advertising barrage (Ansolabehere

1996). We decided to test this assumption -- which was strangely omitted from both their *Review*

article and subsequent book -- by returning to the NES data. In 1992, 7 percent of the

respondents who reported voting said they cast an absentee ballot. Compared to in-person

voters, absentee voters were 1 percent less likely to recall seeing a presidential commercial and 1

percent more likely to comment about negative ads.

The fact that absentee voters are just as likely to have been exposed to political advertising should come as no surprise to any close observer of California elections, where 17 percent of those who voted in 1992 cast absentee ballots. 6   Most campaigns in California start their advertising early enough to make sure that this large bloc of voters views their message before voting. Given the huge size of the absentee vote in California, excluding these votes could make quite a difference, and perhaps the same is true in other states as well,

In order to explain the differences between the official complete election results and the Ansolabehere et al. figures, we compared the raw numbers in each state after Stephen Ansolabehere kindly sent us their dataset. The results reveal a series of apparent errors and irreconcilable patterns in their data. The following are just three of many examples:

> 1) In Ohio--a state classified as having a negative Senate race -- their dataset shows a 9.4% rolloff whereas an analysis of the official returns yields a 2.8% rolloff   We believe their numbers do not reflect the non-major party candidate vote (other than Perot), which totaled 0.5% of the presidential votes and 6.9% of the Senate votes.

> 2) In Alaska--a state classified as having a positive Senate race--their dataset shows that 200,458 votes were cast for president and 201,128 for the Senate. The official returns, however, record 258,506 votes for president and 239,714 votes for the Senate. In order for their figure on election-day voters to be correct, the rolloff rate among absentee voters would had to have been 32 percent. When we adjust the official numbers to exclude minor candidates we still cannot come close to replicating their implausible results.

> 3) In Kansas, where Bob Dole was easily reelected in a race without any negative ads, Ansolabehere et al's data show a rolloff of 8.1% compared to the official figure of 2.7%. This discrepancy is probably due to a failure on their part to count the minor candidate votes, which amounted to 0.4% for the presidency and 6.3% for the Senate.

These examples are fairly typical depictions of the numerous problems we found with the numbers used by Ansolabehere et al. The most common error they appear to have made is excluding votes cast for minor candidates, as illustrated in the first and third examples. Yet, this is not a

consistent error, as in some states they have clearly counted the minor party votes.' Nor does this type of error explain all the discrepancies between their figures and the official returns, as typified by the mystery of how the numbers shown in the second example could have been derived. Overall, the direction of the errors in the Ansolabehere et al. dataset tend to favor their theory, as is the case in two of the three examples above.

Given the unreliability of the raw numbers that Ansolabehere et al. worked with, we believe that the profession should disregard their entire analysis regarding the impact of advertising tone on aggregate participation, Returning to the figures presented in Table 3, we find that an analysis of the complete official returns provides little support for the demobilization theory. 8 Rolloff was virtually the same in races in which neither candidate ran negative advertising as in states where both did so. Turnout for Senate races was not linearly related to advertising tone, though it was significantly higher in positive than negative races. However, a quick glance at the state by state data reveals the familiar patterns of the highest turnout being in states with election-day registration or no registration at all, while the lowest turnout occurs in the states of the former Confederacy. Once we control for these factors, the relationship between advertising tone and Senate turnout is insignificant (p > .1 5). 9

In sum, we find no support for the demobilization hypothesis in the aggregate Senate participation data. Likewise, there is no evidence for the view that in the aggregate negative senate campaigns help mobilize voters either. However, as stated above, there is little theoretical reason to expect to find a relationship between the tone of sub-national political advertising and participation. It is instead the ***amount*** of advertising that is expected to have a positive impact on participation in these races -- regardless of its tone. Future research should focus on testing this alternative hypothesis.

Summary and Conclusions

This paper has presented both survey and aggregate data that lead us to question the demobilization hypothesis put forth by Ansolabehere et al. (1994, 1995). In contrast to their theory, we posit that the informational benefits of negative political ads possess the capacity to promote political participation, particularly among those otherwise least well equipped for political learning. Empirical testing confirms that citizens who are aware of negative advertising are more likely to vote than those who do not comment on such ads. More broadly, recalling something about negative TV spots has the greatest mobilizing impact among the least politically involved citizens.

Although our survey results are theoretically supported and statistically valid, some may hesitate to accept these findings. It is conceivable that those who recall negative ads differ in some politically salient manner from the rest of the population, or that mentioning ads is a proxy for another political characteristic. Acknowledging these concerns is definitely warranted, but there are several reasons to believe that they are unlikely problems. The analyses presented here control for relevant voter turnout and media use covariates (e.g., political efficacy, education, campaign interest, and other media sources). Additionally, this paper's findings are presented conservatively. The empirical results report two-tailed significance levels, meaning that the breadth and significance of these results may well be understated. Had one-tailed tests been employed, the negative advertising findings would have been much more significant.

It is also possible that some viewers learned about ads from news reports or that the negative ads used in the 1992 presidential campaign were unusually factual compared to other elections. While viewers obtaining ad information from second-hand reports cannot be controlled for, this situation would not disrupt the findings reported here. It would certainly validate

journalist's efforts if their coverage of attack ads promotes participation among those recalling them. Indeed, experimental evidence suggests that "Adwatch" columns in 1992 may have helped viewers critically process advertising information (Milburn and Brown 1995). This paper's findings are not altered if voter turnout was more associated with negative advertising because the 1992 presidential campaigns may have employed particularly factually accurate ads. [10] Further research might usefully determine if either negative ads' influence was affected by the press attention or if campaign ads differed in 1992. Even if both of these circumstances occurred, though, this paper's empirical results need not be questioned. It would simply serve to reinforce the finding that negative ads *within the current electoral context* do not reduce voter turnout.

Certainly due caution is advised when negative advertising research extends beyond the academy and has public policy implications. Some politicians have argued that negative political ads are poisoning the political process and have called for their regulation. One bill introduced in the Senate even proposed that targets of negative ads get free response time if the sponsoring candidate fails to make the charge in person on camera. [11] Clearly, the intention of such a proposal is to discourage negative ads. Those who wish to do so ought to consider the beneficial aspects of negative advertising reported here.

In conclusion, this study's findings clearly undermine previous assertions from experimental research that negative ads discourage and alienate potential voters. In the face of this paper's evidence it becomes quite difficult to maintain that an awareness of negative advertisements demobilizes voters in the real world. In fact, the 1992 NES data provide counter-evidence that attack ads actually stimulate participation in a presidential campaign.

Notes

All data and the documentation to replicate the analysis of survey data presented here are available from ICPSR (#6067) We are grateful to the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research for providing us with the 1992 American National Election Study. The data were originally collected by Warren E. Miller and the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan. Neither ICPSR nor the original collectors of the data bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretation presented here.

1 Jamieson and Cappella (1996, 16) question the external validity of these experiments. They contend that the ads less resemble modem political ads than the more amateur ads of earlier years.

2 Ruy Teixeira (1992, 87) makes a similar argument that it is much easier to change election outcomes by converting those who intend to vote than mobilizing new participants.

3 Nine percent of the entire sample spontaneously discussed this issue when asked what they disliked about Dukakis. Independents offering this comment were about eight percentage points more likely to vote compared to those not offering a negative comment.

4 Of course, we excluded respondents under the age of 22 from this portion of the analysis.

5 Because we discovered more negative advertising exposure in October, we control for this by interacting interview period with negative ad comment.

6 Oddly, the numbers in the Ansolabehere et al. dataset would indicate that 7 percent of California voters voted by absentee whereas the actual percentage was 17 percent. We are at a loss to explain this difference. Data on absentee voting in California elections from 1962 to the present can currently be found on the World Wide Web at
<http://www.primary96.ca.gov./e/stat/avchart.html>.

7 At one point we theorized that the patterns in their rolloff figures might reflect a higher vote for minor candidates in negative tone Senate races. This hypothesis was not supported by the official election returns.

8 These figures, published by the Federal Election Commission, are truly complete. The *FEC* even noted that one person in Delaware voted for "She-Ra Princess of Power."

9 We also started to work through a more complex model similar to the one presented in the *Review* by Ansolabehere et al. (1994). However, we found a good deal of collinearity present between some of the variables -- most notably a .55 correlation between the margin of the Senate race and its tone. With only 33 cases (i.e., states), it seems unwise to introduce yet more variables that are so highly inter-correlated.

10 It is important to remember that political ads may have a different effect on less visible, sub-national elections.

11 The constitutionality and First Amendment implications of a similar, earlier proposal is discussed in Clinger (1987, 728).

APPENDIX

Measurement of Variables

General Variable Coding:

Negative Political Ad Comment: A dummy variable coded 1 for yes, and 0 for no, reflecting negative comments made about the content of presidential election ads in response to an open-ended question. Coding details are provided below.

Newspaper Political News Index: Coded from 0 to 28, with 28 denoting the highest attention to politics in the newspaper and daily readership. It is a multiplicative index combining a frequency and an attention measure.

TV Political News Index: Coded from 0 to 28, with 28 denoting the highest attention to politics on TV news and daily news viewing. It is a multiplicative index combining a frequency and an attention measure.

Age in Years: The respondent's reported age in years.

Campaign Interest: Operationalized as two dummy variables, coded 1 for yes, and 0 for no, reflecting two of three possible responses in the original survey instrument regarding the respondent's interest in the current presidential campaign. The two variables are: 'not much interest' and 'somewhat interested,' with the 'very much interested' category absent from the equations.

Education: A series of three dummy variables, coded 1 for yes, and 0 for no, reflecting three of four educational categories: < 12 years, High School graduate, and possessing some college education (up to a Bachelors degree) -- with 'post graduate education' being the omitted category.

Political Efficacy: Coded from 8 to 40, with 40 representing the most efficacious. It is an additive index combining internal and external efficacy measures. In Table 2, this continuous political efficacy variable is operationalized in terciles.

Strength of Party ID: A four-category variable, ranging from 0 to 3. Partisanship intensity is coded from 'independent' to 'strong' partisan.

Interview Period: A dummy variable coded 0 for those assigned to the September sub-sample and who were interviewed in September. Coded 1 for those in the October sub-sample interviewed October through Election day. Of the 2,485 cases interviewed, 3 **19** were not interviewed in their scheduled month and were dropped from the analysis to strictly maintain the original sample frame in the results presented here.

Race: A dummy variable coded 0 for other and 1 for white.

Sex: A dummy variable coded 0 for male and 1 for female.

Selected Variable Questions and Detailed Codings:

Negative Political Ad Recall: The filter question "Do you recall seeing any presidential campaign advertisements on television?" was first asked of 2,3 10 respondents (177 of the total 2,485 respondents interviewed using a short form or in Spanish were not asked this question). The 1,667 interviewees responding favorably were then asked "Please tell me, what do you remember about any of these ads?' This was followed by "Do you remember any others?", allowing for up to five responses (Miller et al. 1993). 1,263 respondents offered substantive presidential ad comments. In operationalizing this negative advertising variable we narrowed the pool of responses from the political ad recall variable to those mentioning a specific negative political advertisement or recalling negative ad content.

This variable does not include those offering an appraisal of advertising's effects on the respondent or other viewers. This might take the form of a comment that political ads "made R[espondent] angry/disgusted" or that "R[espondent] is tired of seeing negative ads."

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TABLE 1

Percent Reported Turnout by Recollection of Negative Ads in 1992

	Commented on Negative Ads	Did Not Comment on Negative Ads
YEARS OF EDUCATION		
11 or fewer	61	45
High School grad	79	70
College, up to BA	89	87
Advanced Degree	95	96
AGE		
18-29 years old	72	58
30-49	84	75
50-69	90	82
over 70	90	77
RACE		
Non-Whites	84	63
Whites	83	76
CAMPAIGN INTEREST		
Not much	51	44
Somewhat	77	74
Very Much	92	90
POLITICAL EFFICACY		
Low	73	56
Medium	81	78
High	92	92
STRENGTH OF PARTY ID		
Pure Independents	67	58
Independent Leaners	86	68
Weak Partisans	78	76
Strong Partisans	91	86
TURNOUT IN 1988		
Did not vote in 1988	58	37
Voted in 1988	96	93

Source: 1992 American National Election Study
Note: Figures are percent voting, using case weights. The variables are defined in the Appendix.

TABLE 2

Logistic Regression Predicting Turnout by Media Exposure and Other Variables

Independent Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	Coefficient's R
Negative Political Ad Comment (dummy)	.646*	(.331)	.031
Newspaper Political News Index	.034**	(.011)	.063
TV Political News Index	-.003	(.009)	.000
Age in Years	.028***	(.005)	.128
Campaign Interest (dummies): Not much	-1.548***	(.234)	-.151
Somewhat	-.774***	(.189)	-.089
Education (dummies): <12 years	-2.656***	(.488)	-.123
High School Grad	-1.201**	(.476)	-.049
Some college (up to BA)	-.649	(.478)	.000
Political Efficacy	.078***	(.015)	.120
Strength of Party ID	.358***	(.074)	.109
Interview Period (dummy)	-.131	(.166)	.000
Race (white)	.454**	(.185)	.047
Sex (female)	.514***	(.143)	.077
Interaction Interview Period • Negative Ad Comment	-.570	(.381)	-.012
Constant	-1.055	(.702)	
Percent Correctly Predicted	84.31		
Number of cases	1733		

Source: 1992 American National Election Study

Note: Figures are unstandardized logistic regression coefficients, using case weights. The variables are defined in the Appendix.

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

two-tailed test

TABLE 3

Comparison of Aggregate Senate Participation Data Presented by Ansolabehere with Complete Official Election Return Data

	Ansolabehere et al. results	Complete Official Election Results
Average Rolloff		
Negative tone states	6.0%	3.6%
Mixed tone states	5.7%	6.0%
Positive tone states	3.3%	2.8%
Average Turnout		
Negative tone states	49.7%	51.8%
Mixed tone states	52.4%	50.3%
Positive tone states	57.0%	58.9%

Sources: Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995; Federal Election Commission 1993.