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Tweeting, Turnout, and Tone: How Might Media Coverage of Politics Shape 2020 Election?

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Tweeting, Turnout, and Tone: How Might Media Coverage of Politics Shape 2020 Election?

Explorer Café

Dr. Kelly Daily, Communication Department



How to register to vote... Find your state at vote.gov Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 3

In Pennsylvania? - Go to votespa.com

- Last day to register in PA is Monday, Oct. 19
- Last day to request a mail-in ballot in PA is Oct. 27 by 5 p.m.
- Mail-in ballots must be postmarked by Tuesday, Nov. 3

Why do you vote? What motivates you to vote?

In the chat, tell us the reasons why you vote...

In the chat, tell us what turns you off from politics/voting...

As we talk about research and tweets today, I want you to think about what types of messages motivate you to vote and why

Question: Do negative campaign messages increase or decrease voter turnout?

Research on the impact of message tone on voter turnout is mixed

- Overall, meta-analyses do not support the idea that negative messaging decreases voter turnout
- So researchers have started to look at more specific factors of negative messages that might impact voting and turnout

Negative attack ads/tweets – if perceived as truthful, can help sponsor and hurt opponent





Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump



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 59.4K

What different reactions might people have to this message?

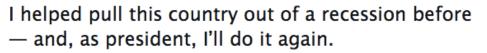
Other message features

- Incivility (i.e., disrespect, name calling, rudeness) modest increase in voter turnout (Brooks, 2010)
 - Incivility also increases enthusiasm, perhaps because some people find them entertaining (Kosmidis & Theocharis, 2020)
 - However, incivility in Trump's tweets once President associated with decline in approval, warmth, dominance (for all but die-hard supporters) (Frimer & Skitka, 2018)

How does positive messaging impact voting and turnout?

Trump doesn't ONLY go negative, especially in tweets
Trump's tweets positive in 10 days leading up to the 2016 election
Many "Thanks!" in 2016; messages in 2020 about winning
Clinton's tweets were negative in 10 days leading up to election
Twitter universe also negative toward Clinton in 10 days before election

Biden goes positive too, but are his tweets motivating people to go to the polls?



5:30 PM · Oct 11, 2020 · TweetDeck

How do you use social media to motivate voters?

What **similarities** and **differences** do you see in message tone/strategy/content between the **2016 campaign** and **2020 campaign**?

What social media content about the 2020 election **do you retweet/share or favorite/like**?

What type of tone/strategy/content makes you want to vote or not vote?

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