

### New Perspectives on Negative Campaigning: Why Attack Politics Matters



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Have you ever seen a politician fiercely attacking his opponent? Sure you have. Election campaigns without attacks on the rival candidate's performance, policy propositions and traits simply do not exist.

Negative campaigning makes up a substantial part of election campaigns around the world. Though heavily covered in election news, the practice is strongly disliked by political pundits, journalists and voters. Some are even concerned that negative campaigning damages democracy itself.

Negative campaigning has inspired numerous scholars in recent decades. But much of the existing research examines the phenomenon only in the United States, and scholars disagree on how the practice should be defined and measured, which has resulted in open-ended conclusions about its causes and effects.

This unique volume presents for the first time work examining negative campaigning in the US, Europe and beyond. It presents systematic literature overviews and new work that touches upon three fundamental questions: What is negative campaigning and can we measure it? What causes negative campaigning? And what are its effects?

'The study of negative campaigning has mostly been about American elections. Refreshingly, the essays in this book look at what happens in other countries. By so doing, they truly offer new perspectives and thus advance our understanding of attack politics. Recommended to anyone interested in elections and campaigns.'

John G Geer, Vanderbilt University

'Negative campaigning, where politicians attack rivals, is a ubiquitous phenomenon, such as Trump belittling his Republican Party adversaries. Mud-slinging in the US is widely blamed for polarising party politics and demobilising citizens, yet the use of this strategy elsewhere, and its full consequences, remain unclear. In this first-rate new volume, Nai and Walter present fresh evidence from international experts covering a wide range of countries and contexts to examine how negative campaigning is best measured, what explains the adoption of this communications strategy, and what effects flow from this practice. This fascinating and accessible book provides a milestone in comparative communications research, settling the US case in comparative perspective.'

Pippa Norris, John F Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

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