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## ***The Effect of 9/11 on the Heritability of Political Trust***

**July 2014** – Quantity versus quality is an adage that, according to a forthcoming article in the August 2014 issue of *Political Psychology*, applied to information seeking as well, particularly among individuals with anxiety.

Christopher Ojeda used the issue of immigration to explore the role of anxiety in responses to political appeals. According to previous literature, anxiety motivates citizens to learn and pay more attention to news coverage. Literature in psychology demonstrates that anxiety is associated with a tendency to pay closer attention to threatening information. Through an experimental process, Gadarian and Albertson induce anxiety about immigration and then subjects had the opportunity to search for additional information in a website designed to mimic online news sources. The website had both immigration and non-immigration stories, and the immigration stories were split between threatening coverage and nonthreatening coverage.

Gadarian and Albertson argue that the implications of their findings are critical to understanding how citizens operate in a threatening situation and that political scientists should be aware that people think and process information differently when experiencing anxiety induced by what they deem threatening. The authors found that anxious subjects exhibit biased information processing in the way that they read, remember, and agree with threatening information.

The article can be accessed on the *Political Psychology* website at the following link:  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/pops.12034/abstract>

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