

**GREEN WITH EMOTION: THE EFFECT OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL  
APPEAL INTENSITY ON COGNITIVE PROCESSING OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
PSAS**

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**ABSTRACT**

Emotion and cognition are two interrelated concepts in mass media research. This study examines the effect of negative emotional intensity in environmental public service announcements on cognitive processing and behavioral intent. Environmental PSAs with three different levels of negative emotion were used to determine effects on secondary task reaction time (STRT), recognition, and behavioral intent. The data collected showed that recognition performance was highest at the moderate intensity level, and significantly dropped at the low intensity level. STRT results were interesting in that STRT was fastest at the moderate intensity level, and dropped significantly at the high intensity level. Behavioral intent data showed that participants were most likely to support the message sponsor when the message used moderately negative emotion. Future research will shed more light on interpreting STRT as well as the relationship between emotion and cognition.