

This paper

- Part of accountability literature: Corruption -> Media coverage -> Voting behavior -> Policy outcomes
- Detailed analysis of media coverage of corruption scandals in early American newspapers, as a function of newspaper affiliation and competition in newspaper market
 - ▶ shows that media competition ensures impartiality, while monopoly newspapers substantially underreport scandals about members of their parties
- Results imply that corruption was associated with media coverage, especially in places with more competitive media markets, but is it possible to explore the mechanism further?
 - ▶ media coverage - > voting behavior
 - ★ is it true that in places in which scandals were covered people voted differently for the candidates of involved parties?
 - ▶ media coverage -> policy outcomes
 - ★ subsequent scandals, behavior of Members of Congress (NOMINATE data)

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Questions and concerns

- Main concern: demand side explanation
 - ▶ places with more newspapers were different from places with just one newspaper (show covariate balance? use matching?)
 - ▶ could be that people in places with more newspapers are less extreme and interested in more impartial coverage
- Investment in digging for information
 - ▶ competing newspapers might exert less effort than a monopoly newspaper, thus a difference between the amount of coverage of opposite party scandals
 - ▶ in such a setup, not clear if competition is always better from social welfare point of view!
- Monopoly newspapers might be larger
 - ▶ placebo test: any search term (e.g. article “the”)
 - ★ coefficient for newspaper frequency is positive and significant suggests newspapers reporting are different from non-reporting newspapers

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Additional suggestions

- Newspaper competition vs political competition - any interactions?
 - ▶ e.g. effect of competition might depend on competitiveness of local/state politics
- How often the same newspapers covered different scandals?
 - ▶ can entries or exits of competitors change its behavior
- Use binary measure (monopoly newspaper or not) as an alternative specification
- Effects of change of political control, from RDD based on close elections (a-la Gentzkow et al. 2012)