# Online Appendix

## Media scandal coverage coding procedure

- Using the LexisNexis news database, Associated Press articles from the January 1, 1977–December 31, 2010 period were collected that included "governor," "Gov.," or "gubernatorial" in the headline or lead paragraph or "governor" in the terms and the word "scandal" anywhere in the text.

- To reduce false positives in the search results, all articles originating in the following sections were excluded: international news, business news, Washington dateline, sports news, entertainment news, lifestyle, commentary, and feature material.

- News articles were recorded that described a specific controversy involving the sitting governor or her state's executive branch (including their past actions before taking office) as a "scandal" in the reporter's own voice or in the headline or a photo caption. This definition excludes uses of the term in quotes and transcripts or those that are explicitly attributed to others by the reporter, descriptions of "alleged" or "potential" scandals or other qualified references to the term, or general references to scandal (e.g., "scandal-plagued") that do not identify specific controversies.

- Scandals that concern independently-elected officials in the state executive branch or specific elementary or secondary schools are excluded, as were news columns/analysis, book reviews, and opinion articles such as commentaries, op-eds, and editorials.

- Controversies about actions taken by the state executive branch under previous administrations are excluded unless the governor was previously lieutenant governor and was held politically responsible for the scandals of the previous administration. Scandals can only be new once and thus cannot be counted as beginning under both the administration of a governor and a successor.

- Scandals involving executive officials appointed under a previous governor were attributed to the serving governor if those officials continued to serve under her (including lieutenant governors who succeed the previous governor).

- Scandals involving state government contractors were excluded if there were no allegations of misconduct on the part of the sitting governor's administration.

- Applying the rules above, the scandal onset measure takes the value of 1 for each state-year in which at least one article with a qualifying reference to "scandal" devoted at least one of the first three paragraphs to the controversy. (The initial paragraphs of a news article describe the focus of a story or summarize its most important elements in the inverted pyramid structure typically used in American print journalism.)

- In two cases, more than one scandal began in a year (Ohio in 2005 and New York in 2010). In both cases, I treat the dependent variable as binary because the scandals were closely linked.

- In years in which one governor stepped down and was replaced, I count the number of media scandals and scandal articles for both governors and control for the number of months that each served in office during that year.

- The scandal coverage measure was calculated as the total number of articles with qualifying references to "scandal" each state-year. (Controversies that were never referred to as a "scandal" in the first three paragraphs of a story were excluded from the coverage data.)

The results from this procedure were highly correlated with the more detailed state-level coverage for a shorter time period (1999–2010) from the AP State and Local Wire, suggesting they are measuring the same underlying phenomenon. The correlation in scandal articles per year by state during the overlapping period is 0.83. Moreover, all 28 controversies first described as scandals in the AP's reporting during this period were also described as such

in AP State and Local Wire coverage (61% were described as scandals in both the AP and AP State and Local Wire in the same month, 85% within two months of each other, and 100% within six months).

In addition, a research assistant who was blind to the manuscript or its findings replicated its findings for high-profile media outlets in five randomly selected states. He was instructed to randomly select a state, identify the largest newspaper in the state by circulation, and determine if full-text archives for that newspaper exist in LexisNexis Academic database for at least fifteen years during the 1977–2010 period. If not, he was instructed to identify another newspaper that is among the top 100 by circulation in the U.S. from that state or is based in the state capital city and meets the standard of fifteen or more years of full-text archives in LexisNexis Academic. He then replicated the search procedure used in the article for the media outlets identified by this procedure (the *New York Times*, *Austin American-Statesman*, *Daily Oklahoman*, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and *Bismarck Tribune*). His findings indicate that each of the scandals identified by the Associated Press during the period for which electronic archives are available from the identified outlets was also identified as such in the outlets themselves.

Finally, an additional validation check verified that the articles identified using this procedure were almost always written by AP reporters who focused on covering the state in question. In a random sample of identified articles, a search of other articles published by the same reporter within two weeks of the article in question found that 83% (43 of 52) of reporters had written exclusively about the same city or state in which the scandal occurred and 94% (49 of 52) had written more than 70% of their articles about that city or state.

## Media scandals identified in AP coverage (1977–2010)

| State | Scandal (charges/allegations) | Date first identified |
|---|---|---|
| WY | A.G. Frank Mendicino: Blocking embezzlement probe | 10/31/1977 |
| TN | Gov. Ray Blanton: Parole-selling | 12/8/1978 |
| NJ | Casino Control Commission: Abscam probe | 2/6/1980 |
| PA | Revenue Sec. Howard Cohen: Lottery scandal | 12/2/1980 |
| CA | Gov. Edmund Brown: Misuse of state-funded computers | 7/13/1981 |
| MA | Transportation Sec. Barry M. Locke: Bribery/conspiracy | 3/19/1982 |
| CA | Corrections Supt. Bertram S. Griggs: Laxity and special privileges | 4/28/1982 |
| CT | Transportation Comm. Arthur B. Powers: Corruption | 5/5/1983 |
| AK | Gov. Bill Sheffield: North Slope audit | 5/27/1985 |
| AK | Gov. Bill Sheffield: Steering lease to friend | 2/23/1986 |
| LA | Gov. Edwin Edwards: Pardon bribery | 10/24/1986 |
| TX | Gov. Bill Clements: SMU football recruiting | 3/7/1987 |
| AZ | Gov. Evan Mecham: Obstruction of justice/misuse of state funds | 4/3/1988 |
| FL | Dept. of Health and Rehabilitative Services: Overpayments | 3/29/1993 |
| FL | Gov. Lawton Chiles: "Phonegate" scandal | 12/4/1995 |
| AZ | Gov. Fife Symington III: Fraud, extortion, and perjury | 6/15/1996 |
| IL | Gov. Jim Edgar: Bribery charges | 7/28/1997 |
| UT | Gov. Mike Leavitt: Connections to Olympic bribery scandal | 2/13/1999 |
| IL | Gov. George Ryan: Selling trucking licenses | 2/26/1999 |
| MA | Massport Director Peter Blute: "Booze cruise" | 8/24/1999 |
| AL | State Troopers: Fixing traffic tickets | 10/2/1999 |
| MD | Juvenile Justice: Abuse by guards | 12/26/1999 |
| MA | Gov. Jane Swift: "Chopper Mom" scandal | 1/13/2000 |
| SC | Corrections Director Doug Catoe: Prison sex abuse | 1/11/2001 |
| AL | Department of Youth Services: State girls prison sex abuse | 6/17/2001 |
| KY | Gov. Paul Patton: Sexual harassment lawsuit | 9/27/2002 |
| CT | Gov. John G. Rowland: Summer home scandal | 12/12/2003 |
| NJ | Gov. James E. McGreevey: Sex scandal | 8/19/2004 |
| NY | Thruway Authority: Sweetheart building deal | 12/30/2004 |
| OH | Bureau of Workers Compensation: Rare coin investments | 6/1/2005 |
| OH | Gov. Bob Taft: Failure to report outings paid for by others | 8/17/2005 |
| KY | Gov. Ernie Fletcher: Hiring practices scandal | 9/14/2005 |
| IL | Teachers' Retirement System: Corruption | 9/16/2005 |
| IL | Gov. Rod Blagojevich: Hiring practices scandal | 7/2/2006 |
| TX | Youth Commission: Juvenile inmate sex abuse | 3/1/2007 |
| NY | Gov. Eliot Spitzer: Aides' plot to discredit rival | 7/23/2007 |
| NY | Gov. Eliot Spitzer: Prostitution scandal | 3/10/2008 |
| WV | W.V. University: MBA improperly awarded to governor's daughter | 5/6/2008 |
| AK | Sarah Palin: "Troopergate" scandal | 9/20/2008 |
| IL | Gov. Rod Blagojevich: Senate seat scandal | 12/10/2008 |
| NM | Gov. Bill Richardson: Corruption scandal | 1/6/2009 |
| SC | Gov. Mark Sanford: Infidelity | 6/26/2009 |
| NY | Gov. David Paterson: Aide domestic violence allegations | 2/26/2010 |
| NY | Gov. David Patterson: World Series ticket scandal | 3/3/2010 |
| IA | Film Office: Mismanagement/improper tax credits | 10/21/2010 |

## Coding of key independent variables

### Gubernatorial approval

The percentage of respondents who approved of the governor was collected from the U.S. Officials' Job Approval Ratings project, which aggregates public polls from numerous sources (Beyle, Niemi, and Sigelman 2010); Survey USA's online archive of 50 state polls for the 2005–2006 period (`http://www.surveyusa.com/50StateTracking.html`); and the 2006–2009 common content of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (`http://projects.iq.harvard.edu/cces/data`).[1] If more than one poll was conducted in a given year, the mean value was taken.

Due to the inconsistent availability of state-level polls, particularly in the early years of the sample, it was necessary to account for missing data. Approval ratings were available for 866 governor-years — approximately 50% of the 1729 observations in the data — and at least one approval poll is available for 78% of the governors in the data (231 of 296). The following procedures were used:

- When data were missing at the beginning of a governor's term, her initial vote share among the two major party candidates was recorded as her approval rating until the first poll was taken.

- The governor's overall vote share was used for independents or when the governor faced an independent in a runoff (Mills E. Godwin, Jr. of Virginia in 1977). The

[1] For the Cooperative Congressional Election Study data (CCES), only data from states with 500 or more respondents were used due to concerns about precision in small samples. The CCES studies use a five-point scale for approval. Respondents who strongly or somewhat approved of the governor were coded as approving; those who were unsure, neither approve nor disapprove, or somewhat or strongly disapprove were coded as not approving.

governor's primary vote share was used when the governor was unopposed in a runoff election (Edwin Edwards of Louisiana in 1975).

- Among unelected governors, the first available poll was used as their approval rating from the month they assumed office.
- Each poll was taken to be the governor's approval rating until the next available poll in the data.
- If polls were missing at the end of a governor's time in office, the last available poll was extended forward.

After these procedures, only 11 observations lack approval data (all are replacement governors for whom no election data or polls are available).[2]

**Natural disasters in neighboring states with media market spillovers**

To test H2, data were collected on whether a natural disaster took place in a neighboring state that has a media market which spills over into the state in question. Annual weather damage was calculated from the Spatial Hazards Events and Losses Database for the United States (also used in Healy and Malhotra 2009 and Gasper and Reeves 2011). These data provide a precise measure of weather damage costs (normalized as a percentage of state GDP) that can be compared between events and avoids confounding with political influences on disaster declarations and assistance (e.g., Reeves 2011; Husted and Nickerson 2014). We then identified those states with counties that are part of a media market that is dominated

[2]The presence of missing data at the start and/or end of some governors' terms preclude the use of moving averages, interpolation, or other related approaches for estimating approval between available public polls.

by another state.[3] Finally, we identified the most significant damage among neighboring states whose media markets spill over into the state in question. Given the non-linearity of damage from the most severe storms and the disproportionate attention they receive, I define a neighboring state disaster as a case in which the total damage from weather events exceeds the 95th percentile value in the worst-hit neighboring state whose media market spills over into the target state (1.91% of state GDP).[4] Finally, because these disasters could also affect the state in question, I construct an equivalent target-state disaster measure and control for it (damage exceeding 0.86% of GDP).[5]

**Attorney general and state legislative data**

Testing H3 requires data on attorney general partisanship and vote shares and legislative seats held by the major parties. To identify the effect of having an opposition party attorney

[3]I map counties to Nielsen media markets (DMAs) using data provided by Gentzkow and Shapiro (2008a; see 2008b). The available data uses 2002/2003 DMA definitions, but the counties and their mappings to DMAs rarely change (Gentzkow and Shapiro 2008b, 287). Within each market, I define the dominant state as the one with the largest share of within-DMA population. (Ansolabehere, Snowberg, and Snyder 2006 use a different definition, but their approach requires dropping units that do not qualify, which creates potential selection bias concerns.)

[4]There are 73 disasters in the data. The full list is provided in the Online Appendix below along with the most significant weather events during the state-years in question. It is important to note that this disaster measure is missing for states that are not part of media markets dominated by other states (Alaska, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and Utah). However, my results are robust to treating these as 0s (available upon request).

[5]Only six of the 73 cases with neighboring state disasters also suffered from an in-state disaster.

general on media scandal, it was necessary to create a dataset of all attorneys general, their party affiliation, and their method of selection for the 1977–2010 period using historical editions of the *Book of the States*. Among these, we identified all attorneys general from the major parties who were independently elected in contested races to serve alongside major party governors. We also collected the vote shares they received in their campaigns. The resulting dataset consists of 185 attorneys general in 314 elections from 1977–2009. These attorneys general served alongside 193 governors in 43 states, only 57% of whom were members of their party. The corresponding analysis of the effect of opposition control of one or more chambers of the state legislature uses legislative seats data that was generously provided by Carl Klarner.[6]

[6]Nebraska is excluded from my analyses due to its unicameral non-partisan legislature.

## Weather events in neighboring states

| Year | State(s) | Neighbor | Losses (GDP) | Most significant weather event |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1978 | OK | AR | -2.2% | Severe flooding |
| 1978 | IL, KY, MI, OH | IN | -3.1% | Blizzard of 1978 followed by flood |
| 1978 | IA, KS | NE | -2.2% | Storms, ice jams, melting, and flooding |
| 1978 | MO | NE | -2.2% | Severe flooding |
| 1978 | MA | RI | -2.1% | Snow and ice |
| 1979 | FL, GA, MS, TN | AL | -8.1% | Hurricane Frederic |
| 1979 | AL, AR | MS | -14.4% | Hurricane Frederic |
| 1979 | MN, MT, SD | ND | -3.8% | Red River flooding |
| 1980 | OK | AR | -6.5% | Tornadoes |
| 1980 | ID, MT, OR | WA | -20.0% | Eruption of Mount St. Helens |
| 1983 | AL, AR | MS | -8.2% | Flooding of Mississippi River |
| 1983 | CO, ID, NV, WY | UT | -5.5% | Flooding and mudslides |
| 1984 | NH, NY | VT | -3.0% | Flash flooding |
| 1985 | AL, AR | MS | -4.6% | Hurricane Elena |
| 1985 | KY, OH, VA | WV | -4.4% | Flooding |
| 1988 | MO, NE, SD | IA | -10.1% | The Tornado of 1988 |
| 1989 | GA, NC | SC | -12.8% | Hurricane Hugo |
| 1992 | GA | FL | -9.6% | Hurricane Andrew |
| 1992 | OR, WY | ID | -2.9% | Tornadoes |
| 1992 | NH | ME | -3.1% | Flooding |
| 1993 | MO, NE, SD | IA | -12.6% | The Great Flood of 1993 |
| 1994 | AZ | CA | -3.1% | Northridge Earthquake |
| 1995 | AR, MS, OK, TX | LA | -2.9% | New Orleans flood |
| 1996 | SC, VA | NC | -2.7% | Hurricane Fran |
| 1997 | MN, MT, SD | ND | -27.7% | Red River Flood of 1997 |
| 1999 | SC, VA | NC | -2.1% | Hurricane Floyd |
| 2000 | AZ, CO | NM | -3.4% | Cerro Grande fire |
| 2001 | MT, SD | ND | -2.1% | Flooding |
| 2004 | GA | FL | -3.4% | Hurricane Ivan |
| 2005 | MS, OK, TX | LA | -26.8% | Hurricane Katrina |
| 2005 | AL, AR | MS | -32.4% | Hurricane Katrina |
| 2008 | MO, NE, ND | IA | -5.6% | Iowa flood of 2008 |

## Further details on control variables in Table 1

First, I account for the potential institutional role of the opposition party in fomenting media scandals by including indicator variables for opposition party control of one or more chambers of the state legislature and whether an opposition party member served as state attorney general for one or more months in that year. As noted in the main text, opposition parties with majority control of one or more chambers of the state legislature or the state attorney general's office could investigate or publicize potential scandals in the governor's office or administration more effectively. Conversely, co-partisan control of the state legislature or the attorney general's office might help to prevent media scandals or reduce their severity. (I examine the effects of these variables more systematically in the tests of H3 in the main text.) I also account for possible effects of a state ethics commission[7] and for any contextual effects of a gubernatorial election year, which occurs on the federal election cycle in every state except Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Virginia, which hold state elections in odd-numbered years. Another concern is differences in gubernatorial coverage levels. While state fixed effects will account for any time-invariant differences in state political coverage, I control for the total number of AP stories concerning the state's governor during the previous year to account for any differential trends in coverage of state politics.[8] Finally, I include an indicator for whether the governor was *potentially* at risk of scandal for a full year, which accounts for the small number of observations (97 out of 1753)

[7]State ethics commissions data were obtained from the National Commission on State Legislatures (`http://www.ncsl.org/research/ethics/state-ethics-commissions.aspx`).

[8]Specifically, coverage frequencies are measured using the Nexis search described in the Online Appendix for the prior calendar year $t-1$ excluding the "scandal" keyword. (The lag is necessary to avoid endogeneity — coverage in year $t$ could increase as a result of additional coverage of a media scandal.)

in which a governor resigned or died before the year was complete for non-scandal-related reasons and was therefore at risk of scandal for a shorter period of time. The nine governors who left office mid-year amidst a scandal or ethics-related controversy were coded as being potentially at risk of serving for the full year to avoid post-treatment bias (King and Zeng 2006).[9]

[9]Unfortunately, it is not possible to account directly for state legislative polarization in these models. The best measures only go back to the 1990s (Shor and McCarty 2011; Bonica 2014). In addition, I do *not* control in this or other research designs for governors' use of damage control tactics (Basinger and Rottinghaus 2012a,b) or other outcomes or behaviors that could result from scandal or factors that precipitate it (e.g., primary challengers). Including such measures would create post-treatment bias (Rosenbaum 1984; King and Zeng 2006) if they are the result of the factors I identify as potential causes of media scandals in my hypotheses. For this reason, I also do *not* control for potentially endogenous measures of state-level corruption, which could bias my treatment effect estimate for approval ratings.

## Summary statistics

| | Mean | S.D. | n |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Variables in Tables 1 and 2* | | | |
| Scandal onset | 0.02 | 0.16 | 1729 |
| Scandal coverage | 0.25 | 2.24 | 1729 |
| Approval (lag) | 0.55 | 0.11 | 1718 |
| Divided government | 0.54 | 0.50 | 1695 |
| Opposition A.G. | 0.39 | 0.49 | 1729 |
| Ethics commission | 0.60 | 0.49 | 1729 |
| Election year | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1729 |
| Years in office | 4.18 | 2.7 | 1729 |
| Years in office$^2$ | 24.9 | 32.2 | 1729 |
| Coverage intensity (lag) | 3.94 | 0.95 | 1729 |
| Full year served | 0.95 | 0.23 | 1729 |
| Disaster (adjacent state) | 0.05 | 0.22 | 1488 |
| Disaster (within state) | 0.05 | 0.22 | 1720 |

## Regression discontinuity model specification details

In the models presented in Table 3(a) in the main text, the running variable is the two-party vote share of the gubernatorial candidate who is not from the party of the attorney general or winning attorney general candidate. This design follows Leigh (2008), Folke and Snyder (2012), and Erikson, Snyder, and Folke (N.d.) in using an RD approach to obtain exogenous variation in partisan control of the governor's office.

The models presented in Table 3(b) in the main text instead use the two-party vote share of the opposition party's attorney general candidate (i.e., the one not affiliated with the governor or the winning gubernatorial candidate). These models again estimate the opposition party attorney general effect using data on the frequency and intensity of gubernatorial scandals in states that had an attorney general candidate from the party opposing the governor either narrowly win or lose election (either simultaneously or during their term).[10]

Both designs exploit plausibly exogenous variation in partisan divergence between the attorney general and governor, though they estimate different local average treatment effects on overlapping but distinct samples.[11] In either case, an observation consists of the relevant

[10]By estimating the model both ways, I account for possible restrictions on the range of the estimated local treatment effect. The models in which attorney general vote share is the running variable exclude attorneys general who were elected in lopsided elections or unopposed, but these officials — who might the most willing or able to challenge a sitting governor — can be included in the sample in which gubernatorial vote is the running variable if that vote share is in the specified range.

[11]Of the 427 governor/attorney general dyads in the two datasets for which the opposition party candidate's vote share was between 30% and 70% of the two-party vote, 242 appear in both datasets (57%). An additional 146 appear only in the governor vote data, while 39 only appear in the attorney general vote data. (The differences are attributable to factors such as successions, the timing of elections for the different offices, and the incidence of lopsided or unopposed elections.)

two-party vote share total as well as measures of the prevalence of gubernatorial scandal onset and intensity in the post-election period, which consists of the time until a resignation, death, or party switch by either the governor or the attorney general or the next election.[12]

By contrast, the running variable in the RD models of opposition party control of one or more chambers of the state legislature presented in Table 4 in the main text is the margin of seats in the relevant chamber that would be required to switch the legislature from unified control by the governor's party to divided government (opposition control of one or more chambers) or vice versa. I then estimate the difference in the likelihood and intensity of scandal after elections where the governor's party narrowly retained control of the state legislature and those where it narrowly lost control of one or more chambers.[13] The validity of this design requires the assumption that variation in seat shares around the discontinuity in party control at 50% is as-if random, which I evaluate using balance tests in the main text.[14]

Finally, it is important to be clear that the RD models reported in the main text estimate the difference in expected scandal frequency and intensity at the discontinuity in question

[12]Conditioning on the outcome of such an election could induce post-treatment bias (King and Zeng 2006) so I instead truncate the sample at the next relevant election (either governor or attorney general). The lengths of these post-election periods vary, but in practice, most cases consist of two- or four-year periods between elections depending on term lengths in a state and whether attorneys general and governors are elected simultaneously or on a staggered schedule. I provide balance tests below to evaluate the distribution of this and several other relevant covariates around the 50% vote share discontinuity.

[13]I exclude cases in which a chamber is divided evenly due to the ambiguity of how power will be distributed between the parties in this scenario.

[14]See also Feigenbaum, Fouirnaies, and Hall (N.d.), who use a more complex multidimensional RD design that seeks to identify exogenous variation in majority status in state legislatures using district-level vote shares.

(see Imbens and Lemieux 2008 or Lee and Lemieux 2010); they do not simply compare the difference in outcomes on either side of the discontinuity within the window that the model considers.

## Balance tests

It is important to assess the extent to which the data satisfy the assumptions of a regression discontinuity model. The balance tests reported below indicate that cases in which the opposition attorney general candidate was narrowly elected were not significantly different from those in which the opposition candidate narrowly lost on several relevant covariates that could affect the likelihood of media scandal — the length of a governor's previous tenure, gubernatorial vote share, and state presidential vote share for the governor's party (10% vote share margin). I do observe that governor/attorney general dyads are observed for somewhat longer when they are from opposing parties (four months on average). This difference should *increase* the length of time in which the governor is vulnerable to media scandal from an opposition. However, the results below are again null even though this difference should bias them in *favor* of finding an effect. In addition, no significant differences were observed between cases in which gubernatorial candidates from the party opposing the attorney general were narrowly elected or defeated (10% vote share margin).

Similarly, balance tests for divided control of the state legislature find no significant difference in prior months in office, total months in session, governor vote share, or the share of the state presidential vote received by the governor's party in the most recent presidential election (20% seat share margin). Cases of divided government in these data did have higher levels of legislative professionalism than those with unified government (Squire 2007), but this difference should again bias the test in *favor* of finding an effect if opposition parties in more professionalized legislatures are more likely to have the resources and expertise to use control of a chamber to investigate the governor and foment scandal.

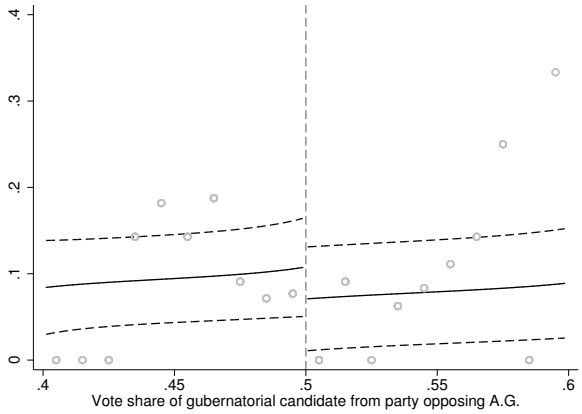
| IV: Attorney general vote | Opposition A.G. | Co-partisan A.G. | $p$-value |
|---|---|---|---|
| Prior months in office (gov.) | 25.9 | 23.4 | 0.58 |
| Total months observed (gov.) | 42.9 | 38.9 | 0.03 |
| Governor vote share | 56.7 | 57.5 | 0.38 |
| Presidential vote (gov. party) | 53.0 | 54.0 | 0.38 |
| IV: Governor vote | Opposition A.G. | Co-partisan A.G. | $p$-value |
| Prior months in office (gov.) | 17.8 | 15.5 | 0.50 |
| Total months observed (gov.) | 41.1 | 40.4 | 0.61 |
| Attorney General vote share | 80.2 | 84. | 0.42 |
| Presidential vote (gov. party) | 53.0 | 54.6 | 0.11 |
| IV: Legislative seat share | Divided government | Unified government | $p$-value |
| Prior months in office (gov.) | 37.4 | 31.6 | 0.13 |
| Total months in session | 22.4 | 22.3 | 0.84 |
| Governor vote share | 58.3 | 57.4 | 0.25 |
| Presidential vote (gov. party) | 53.4 | 54.0 | 0.44 |
| Legislative professionalism | 0.25 | 0.19 | 0.0001 |

Attorney general and governor data represent major-party officials elected with 60% of the two-party vote or less ($n$ = 171 for attorneys general and $n$ = 260 for governors). Legislature data represents chambers under major-party governors with a margin of 20% of seats or fewer dividing unified from divided control. Cases in which one chamber was evenly divided were excluded ($n$ = 314). Legislative professionalism data were compiled from Squire (2007) by Lindquist (2007); values are carried forward during intervals in which new ratings are not available. Governor and attorney general vote share are calculated as a percentage of the two-party vote. $p$-values are from two-sample $t$-tests with unequal variances.

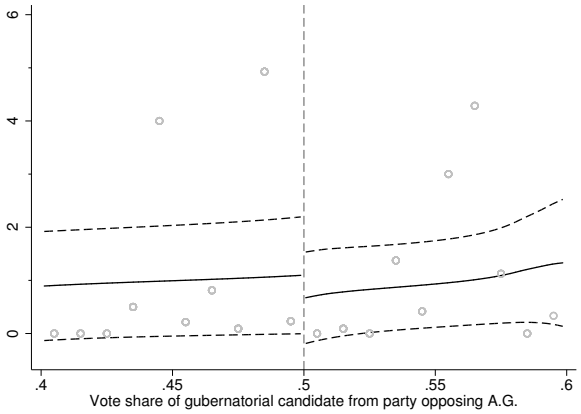
## Additional figures

Figure A1: Opposition party control of the attorney general's office

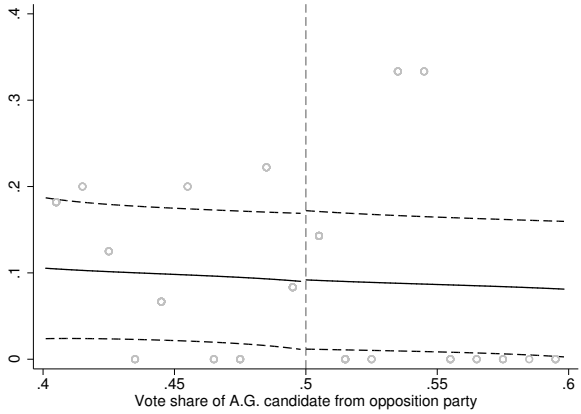
(a) *Governor vote: Scandal onset*



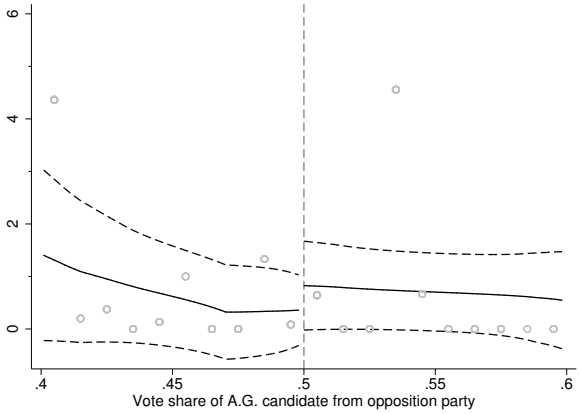

(b) *Governor vote: Scandal coverage*




(c) *Attorney general vote: Scandal onset*



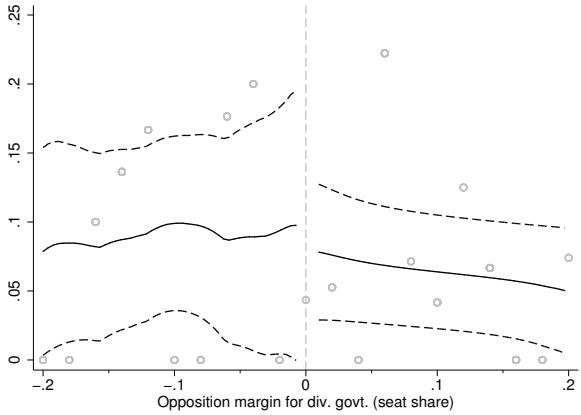

(d) *Attorney general vote: Scandal coverage*



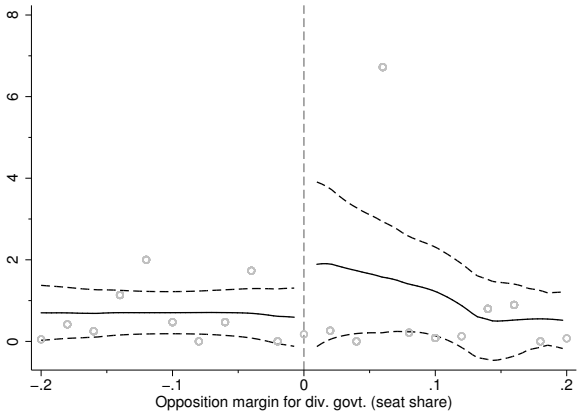

Local polynomial smoothing calculated using `lpoly` in Stata 13 (Epanechnikov kernel; rule-of-thumb bandwidth estimator). Points in the scatterplot represent binned average outcomes. Sample consists of contested gubernatorial and attorney general elections with a two-party vote share margin of less than 20% between major-party candidates in U.S. states from 1976–2009; media scandal data from Associated Press stories for the 1977–2010 period. Attorney general sample restricted to states with independently elected attorneys general. See text and Online Appendix for further details.

Figure A2: Opposition party control of the state legislature

(a) *Scandal onset*




(b) *Scandal coverage*




Local polynomial smoothing calculated using `lpoly` in Stata 13 (Epanechnikov kernel; rule-of-thumb bandwidth estimator). Points in the scatterplot represent binned average outcomes. Sample consists of contested gubernatorial and attorney general elections with a two-party vote share margin of less than 20% between major-party candidates in U.S. states from 1976–2009; media scandal data from Associated Press stories for the 1977–2010 period. Attorney general sample restricted to states with independently elected attorneys general. See text and Online Appendix for further details.

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