

Appendix 1: Supplementary data on rolloff and media coverage

In this supplementary appendix, I present additional data relating to state supreme court elections, participation, and media coverage. In Table A.1.1, I summarize each state supreme court's method of accountability, the number of contests studied, the average rolloff rate, and the average rate of media coverage.

Table A.1.1: Press coverage and participation in state supreme court elections (2002-2014)

State court	Election type	Number of races	Average rolloff	Months 0-3	Months 3-6	Months 6-12
Alabama	Partisan	13	5.19	9.38	8.23	17.23
Alaska	Retention	5	12.96	1.00	1.00	1.20
Arkansas	Nonpartisan	7	10.33	10.00	3.57	16.00
Arizona	Retention	10	34.85	1.80	1.60	2.80
California	Retention	11	30.65	3.18	1.55	3.64
Colorado	Retention	9	23.07	0.67	0.11	0.78
Florida	Retention	14	17.12	9.57	6.93	12.43
Georgia	Nonpartisan	4	9.00	5.25	0.50	2.75
Idaho	Nonpartisan	4	18.50	7.00	4.50	11.25
Illinois	Partisan	9	13.66	4.56	0.78	4.89
Indiana	Retention	7	30.82	3.00	2.29	2.86
Iowa	Retention	15	30.53	5.13	0.53	2.80
Kansas	Retention	13	18.97	2.46	0.92	3.68
Kentucky	Nonpartisan	7	22.47	4.43	2.57	9.57
Louisiana	Partisan	2	5.03	2.00	0.50	3.00
Michigan	Hybrid	3	24.99	8.00	2.67	7.00
Minnesota	Nonpartisan	11	26.15	4.55	2.73	4.82
Missouri	Retention	10	16.74	3.20	1.20	4.50
Mississippi	Nonpartisan	11	10.74	7.00	2.64	9.64
Montana	Nonpartisan	15	14.15	8.00	6.00	17.67
North Carolina	Nonpartisan*	15	18.02	7.13	3.20	7.47
Nebraska	Retention	4	24.54	1.75	1.75	6.25
New Mexico	Partisan	4	9.62	6.5	1.75	5.00
Nevada	Nonpartisan	8	26.60	9.13	6.13	7.38
Ohio	Hybrid	16	22.21	11.13	4.94	11.75
Oklahoma	Retention	23	14.64	0.61	0.61	1.13
Oregon	Nonpartisan	2	25.61	2.50	3.50	4.00
South Dakota	Retention	7	33.23	2.00	1.57	4.71
Tennessee	Retention	9	15.03	5.44	1.22	1.78
Texas	Partisan	24	9.08	3.54	1.13	6.42
Utah	Retention	8	19.39	0.63	0.38	1.88
Washington	Nonpartisan	9	21.60	12.00	4.89	10.44
West Virginia	Partisan	2	7.81	23.00	13.50	33.50
Wyoming	Retention	9	16.78	1.11	1.44	4.00

*North Carolina switched from partisan to nonpartisan elections in 2004.

Appendix 2: Codebook for content analysis of A.P. coverage

In this supplementary appendix, I outline the data collection process for the content analysis presented in Section 4.2.3. I gathered data by typing candidates' names and their states into a LexisNexis search of the A.P.'s State and Local Wire for the six months preceding an election. Duplicate results were partially removed by switching the "Duplicate Options" setting to "On." Other duplicates were removed manually. When searching, candidates' names were placed in quotation marks, and multiple versions of these names were used if needed. For example, the same search might find articles related to a candidate named John A. Smith using, "John Smith" and "John A. Smith." Finally, the Boolean operator, "OR" was put between each candidate's name, and the Boolean operator, "AND" was put before the state name. Below, I define each of the thirteen content areas under analysis and outline how each variable was coded.

- "Cases": Relates to legal cases. An article is included in this count if it discusses how candidates behaved in legal cases, including recusals. This count does not include cases to which a candidate was a party. But I do include cases to which a candidate played any official role such as attorney, judge, etc.
- "Party": Relates to candidates' party affiliations. An article is included in this count if it discusses the partisanship of any of the candidates for an individual office. It need not be the case that candidates vocally or officially affiliate with a party, though such is sufficient. I also include cases in which journalists infer a partisan affiliation. For example, I would include among our count the following hypothetical passage, "Candidate X, who is widely supported among Republican Party officials....Candidate Y, however, receives most of her backing from Democrats."
- "Announcements": Relates to an announcement relating to candidates' bids for office. An article is included in this count if it announces an upcoming election date and/or the candidates for office. Also included in this count are announcements that candidates have cleared a technical hurdle toward their candidacy—such as filings deadlines. These counts essentially relate to reminders to voters that individuals are candidates for a position on a state supreme court.

- “PACs”: Relates to the campaign activity of political action committees or special interest groups. An article is included in this count if it mentions PAC spending, advertising, or any other type of support or opposition relating to any candidate for a position on a state supreme court.
- “Qualifications”: Relates to the qualifications of any of the candidates for a position on a state supreme court. An article is included in this count if it discusses a candidate’s occupational experience for the office to which they aspire. This can include experience as a judge or attorney, for example, though it can also include education, bar licenses, other government work, etc. Not included in this category are titles. It is insufficient to count someone’s title such as “District Judge Smith” as an indication of their fitness for office. Rather, a lengthier discussion pertaining to their years of experience or professional conduct is required before an article is included in this count.
- “Campaign”: Relates to the campaign activity of candidates. An article is included in this count if it mentions the amount—though it need not be a specific dollar figure—of money that candidates have raised or spent for the office they are pursuing. Also included in this category are the television advertisements attributable to candidates. Finally, I also include discussions pertaining to any other campaign activity such as debates, bus tours, etc.
- “Administration”: Relates to the administrative duties of state supreme court justices. An article is included in this count if it mentions the administrative functions of supreme court justices such as administering oaths of office or managing personnel or other institutional resources.
- “Issues”: Relates to specific issue areas. An article is included in this count if it discusses candidates’ specific stances on issues such as abortion, gun rights, taxation, etc. It is insufficient for an article to discuss that candidates were asked about their positions on, say, the Second Amendment, to which she responded that she would not take a position. This variable is essentially a measure of a candidate’s propensity to position-take. I do not include votes cast in previous cases in this count. They are reserved to the variable, “Cases.”

- “Horse-Race”: Relates to horse-race coverage. An article is included in this count if it discusses where the candidates are with respect to one another in a given race. This generally relates to polling data, though other insights relating to, for example, previous election results, that lead journalists to speculate over how candidates will perform against one another, are also included. Not included in this category is the amount of money or television advertisements candidates have raised or aired, which are coded in “Campaign.”
- “Ideology”: Relates to ideology. An article is included in this count if it mentions the ideological predispositions of a candidate. This can include whether a candidate is liberal/conservative, left/right, or even their judicial philosophy such as whether they believe in a living Constitution versus “strict construction.” This count is distinct from “Issues” and “Party” in that it need not cover candidates’ party orientations or their specific stances on issues such as abortion or gun rights.
- “Endorsements”: Relates to a candidate's political endorsements. An article is included in this count if it discusses the endorsements a candidate has garnered. Not included in this count are discussions relating to campaign donations. Also not included are incidents in which entities decline to endorse any candidate. An article must directly tie a candidate to a specific endorsement for the present office to which she aspires.
- “Mud-Slinging”: Relates to mud-slinging. An article is included in this count if it discusses any candidate behavior that could be described as “mud-slinging.” For an article to be included in this count, a candidate must specifically attack his or her opponents. This could include criticism of their (or their surrogates’) advertising, campaign literature, etc. Not included among these articles are references to a candidate as the subject of such mud-slinging attacks. A candidate must actively engage in such mud-slinging to be counted.
- “Scandals”: Relates to scandals. An article is included in this count if it discusses a scandal relating to a candidate for a position on a state supreme court. A scandal might relate to a potential crime,

misuse of government resources, sexual impropriety, or some other story that would bring the moral or ethical character of a candidate into question. Scandals are not considered to be retroactive. That is, an issue may not begin as a scandal but can evolve as more information is made known. For example, a candidate might have an ethics complaint pending against them, but this is not considered a scandal until some official recognition that one has behaved improperly. In determining what does and does not constitute a scandal, the coder is to determine whether the preponderance of evidence, at the time the article is written, brings the moral or ethical character of a candidate into question.

Appendix 3: Descriptive statistics

In this supplementary appendix, I provide additional information relating to the variables in the statistical models above. In Table A.3.1, I provide descriptive statistics, coding schemes, means, and standard deviations for these data. For descriptions of the variables used in the content analyses, see Section 4.2.3 along with Appendix 2.

Table A.3.1: Descriptive statistics for variables in quantitative analyses

Variable	Description	Mean (Std. Dev.)
Rolloff	Percent of abstentions in a supreme court race	18.7 (9.4)
A.P. 3 months	Total number of A.P. stories written within 3 months of an election, logged	0.4 (2.4)
A.P. 6 months	Total number of A.P. stories written within 6 months of an election, logged	1.0 (2.2)
A.P. 12 months	Total number of A.P. stories written within 12 months of an election, logged	1.9 (1.8)
Campaign money	Millions of (2016) dollars raised in an election, per capita, logged	-3.5 (1.5)
Attack ads	Total number of attack ads aired on television in an election, logged	-5.4 (4.2)
Promote ads	Total number of promotional ads aired on television in an election, logged	-2.1 (6.5)
Contrast ads	Total number of contrasting ads aired on television in an election, logged	-5.5 (4.0)
Professionalism	Squire's (2008) measure of court professionalism (0-1)	0.6 (0.1)

District	"1" if race occurred in a district, "0" else	0.2 (0.4)
Open	"1" if no incumbent ran, "0" else	0.2 (0.4)
Interim	"1" if interim-appointed incumbent ran, "0" else	0.3 (0.5)
Midterm	"1" if election was during a midterm, "0" else	0.6 (0.5)
Primary	"1" if election was held during a primary, "0" else	0.1 (0.2)
Female	"1" if election had at least 1 female candidate, "0" else	0.3 (0.4)
Minority	"1" if election had at least 1 minority candidate, "0" else	0.1 (0.3)
Opposed	"1" if retention had some organized opposition, "0" else	0.2 (0.4)
JPE	Lowest JPE score a justice earned (1-5)	3.7 (0.6)
Partisan	"1" if election was partisan, "0" otherwise	0.2 (0.4)
Nonpartisan	"1" if election was nonpartisan, "0" otherwise	0.3 (0.4)
Hybrid	"1" if election was hybrid, "0" otherwise	0.1 (0.2)
Retention	"1" if election was retention, "0" otherwise	0.5 (0.5)
