

EMILY PEARS

## Visible States and Invisible Nation: Newspaper Coverage of Nineteenth- Century Lawmaking

**Abstract:** Researchers and the public alike have long recognized that in American politics visibility matters. To claim credit for policies, to recruit supporters, and to maintain democratic legitimacy, the lawmaking process must be visible to the American public. Yet little is known about how the public perceived the legislative process during the nineteenth century. This article uses systematic qualitative and quantitative analysis of newspapers in Baltimore, Maryland, Portland, Maine, and Charleston, South Carolina, to measure the comparative visibility of lawmaking at the state and federal levels between 1830 and 1880. The research demonstrates how analysis of newspaper coverage can be used to better understand public perceptions of state and federal lawmaking during time periods without polling data. The visibility of congressional lawmaking varied greatly from one state to the next, and competition for coverage between state legislatures and Congress remained strong across the country throughout the studied period.

**Keywords:** visibility, lawmaking, Congress, state legislature nineteenth-century newspapers

In American politics, visibility matters. In order for political leaders to claim credit for policies and positions, to recruit supporters, and to exercise power in a democratic system of checks and balances, the lawmaking process must be visible and salient to the American public. Citizens' ability to hold their representatives accountable, to engage in the democratic lawmaking process, and to develop a sense of attachment or civic nationalism is similarly predicated on their ability to observe and understand politics in action. Whether analyzing

the development of institutions over time or the relative power exercised by different branches of government, scholars have consistently pointed to public perceptions of the political process as instrumental variables, and public perceptions are crucially shaped by the visibility of the political process and the availability of information about government.

While the visibility of political activity has been relatively straightforward to study in modern American politics, understanding the historical development of political visibility has been much harder. Without survey data we are left with enduring questions about the relationships between institutions and their publics prior to the early twentieth century. This article seeks to answer the question of how visible the federal and state lawmaking processes were to average citizens in the mid-nineteenth century. Answering this question will in turn allow future research to better interpret citizen responses to issues of federalism and consolidation and the development of federal and state policymaking over this pivotal period in American history.

To understand why visibility matters in American political development, I begin with Alexander Hamilton's observation in *Federalist 27*: that "a government continually at a distance and out of sight can hardly be expected to interest the sensations of the people. The inference is that the authority of the Union and the affections of the citizens toward it will be strengthened, rather than weakened, by its extension to what are called matters of internal concern."<sup>1</sup> Scholars of American nationalism have shown how national political visibility influences citizens' attachments to federal institutions, and how the countervailing influence of state governments encouraged the development of "island communities" in place of broader national identities.<sup>2</sup> National patriotism constructed by leaders in Washington relied heavily on the visibility of national communities and the building blocks of patriotism that were too often seen only from afar. John Brooke's *Columbia Rising* provides evidence that local politics in the nineteenth century were marked by views of nation as "abstract and sentimental," while the state was alternatively viewed as "an arena that fundamentally shaped the political dialogue and contest of people's loyalties," exemplifying the Hamiltonian depiction of public perceptions.<sup>3</sup> These and many other studies suggest that political activity remained local, while national politics was largely invisible, but other empirical work argues that institutional and structural elements of the political system began to shift attention to general lawmaking in the nineteenth century.

Stephen Minicucci's "The Cement of Interest" concludes that "interest-based nation-building was far more important in the Early Republic than efforts

based on imagined communities or invented traditions.” Conservative elites were able to successfully operationalize the interest-based model of nationalism through a party system and the development of a nation economy to help citizens realize their “true hidden common interest.”<sup>4</sup> Purposively manipulating the visibility of the lawmaking process, leaders impacted citizens’ perspectives of their communities. Melinda Lawson’s study of nationalism in the Civil War North focuses on the efforts of self-conscious nation-builders, concluding that the war “fostered a metamorphosis in American National Identity” and that citizens who were previously fearful of centralized power “learned through the crucible of war the importance of organized, united action, a patriotism of sacrifice, and national as opposed to state loyalties.”<sup>5</sup> This process demonstrated the importance of political visibility in molding citizen identities.

Other scholars have highlighted the importance of visibility for the development of specific political institutions. Work on the shifting “center of gravity” of American politics from Congress to the presidency has frequently pointed to the president’s rapidly increasing public visibility at the beginning of the twentieth century as a primary explanatory variable.<sup>6</sup> Both Congress and the president’s ability to command public attention is expressly tied to their relative power in the policymaking process.<sup>7</sup> In David Mayhew’s seminal work, *The Electoral Connection*, all three aspects of his typology of electoral activities are dependent on some kind of public visibility: advertising, credit claiming, and position taking.<sup>8</sup> Suzanne Mettler’s work on federal state-building suggests that “policies of the submerged state remain largely invisible to ordinary Americans: indeed their hallmark is the way they obscure government’s role from the view of the general public, including those who number among their beneficiaries.”<sup>9</sup> Mettler points to the ability of lawmakers to influence policy visibility as a key driver of change. She concludes: “Through policy design and delivery, as well as political communication, policymakers can shift the balance between visible and hidden policies, foster basic awareness of government, and broaden participation in politics.”<sup>10</sup> Historical studies of the welfare state have highlighted visibility as a key element of that process.<sup>11</sup> In work focusing on the relationship between citizens and institutions in the twentieth century, visibility is a key feature in citizens’ trust in their federal government and individual-level political efficacy.<sup>12</sup> In their longitudinal study of “the federal government’s presence in individual lives over time,” Suzanne Mettler and Andrew Milstein examine how specific federal programs intervened in citizens lives and suggest, in turn, the future study of how changes in those programs might have affected citizenship and public perceptions of

those policies and institutions, further demonstrating the importance of understanding the visibility of state programs.<sup>13</sup>

Each of these studies demonstrates the importance of lawmaking and policy visibility in American political development. In some areas, the nineteenth-century General Government acted in highly visible ways. The national postal system dwarfed the information networks of every other country in the world and was openly and self-consciously governmental in nature.<sup>14</sup> Federal fights over funding projects of internal improvements garnered tremendous attention as exemplars of the federal government's changing role in local political life.<sup>15</sup> The Federal Marine Hospital system spread across the country providing highly visible services directly from the federal government to citizens of the nation.<sup>16</sup> And less frequent but still highly visible programs like the national Census and the Civil War relief projects focused local attention on the General Government in a way that ensured their legitimacy. Debates over nullification, secession, and Reconstruction took center stage and drew attention from citizens across the states and territories. There is much to be said for the strength of the federal government, particularly in the postwar era of Reconstruction, and for the high levels of visibility that accompanied its activities.

Other historians like Brian Balogh have highlighted that for nineteenth-century federal governance, "governing effectively often meant minimizing its visibility."<sup>17</sup> The federal government chose to focus on policy issues that allowed it to build American economic infrastructure without raising alarm among a public still wary of interventionist national power. Balogh points to moments when the general government "created and nourished a corporate-driven market, stimulated expansion by subsidizing exploration and removing Indians, and influenced trade patterns through communication and transportation policies."<sup>18</sup> The general government's willingness to act "out of sight" in turn reinforced the public's perceptions that their state governments mattered more. It was the state governments that acted in the way Hamilton had intended—they touched the lives of their citizens on a daily basis and interested them in the fate of the state. State and local programs were more important to American citizens and their lawmaking processes were more accessible.

While these studies of government policies and institutions strengthen our understanding of the potential visibility of policymaking, to fully understand this visibility from the public's perspective we must take into account two separate but related features of visibility. Many of the seminal works on policymaking and state-building in the field of American Political Development

have focused on objective visibility, including both the process of lawmaking (debates, bills, etc.) and its outcomes (policies, programs, bureaucracies). For the public to take notice of and form opinions about policies and institutions, the lawmaking process and resulting programs have to act in visible ways. But given the submerged nature of the modern American state, we also have to ask how and whether information about government activity reaches the public. Even highly intrusive legislative processes matter little to a public that has no access to coverage of those programs, and even the largest federal programs cannot reach every citizen. Information about legislation, particularly in the nineteenth century, had to be disseminated by political elites, journalists, and the all-important newspaper editors, and the public had to pay attention to that information once it was broadcast.

In addition, in a sea of options for political insight, citizens had to balance attention to different lawmaking bodies. The public salience and media's coverage of the lawmaking process matters as much as the objective visibility of political activity in understanding how institutions develop over time and the relationship between political communities and the institutions they support. In the story of nineteenth-century American state-building, the *relative* visibility of lawmaking and policy implementation is crucial to understanding the development of the formal institutions of government. If we are to better understand the connection between institutional development and public perceptions or identities, looking solely at objective federal government visibility without accounting for the competing attentions of the state governments gives us an incomplete picture of the visibility landscape at this time.

Hamilton believed the national government would have to build connections with citizens by involving itself in internal concerns, and the vast expansion of the U.S. Postal Service and, along with it, the ability of newspapers to reach every citizen across the United States on a daily basis eventually provided an alternate pathway to develop those connections. By the early nineteenth century, government did not have to act directly on its citizens to be seen by them—newspaper coverage of debates and proceedings in Washington could “interest the sensations of the people” just as well as their local customs office or tax collector. Previously unobservable activities like the lawmaking process became a part of the public discussion. While the availability of newspapers altered the criteria for government visibility, it also allowed editors to serve as mediators between the government and the public. Congress no longer needed to act directly to draw public attention; editors controlled when and how the public learned of political activity in Washington. This “mediated visibility” began to interact with the objective visibility produced by certain policy

initiatives. In order to understand whether the lawmaking processes of either Congress or the state legislatures was visible to the American public, we must account for both the objective visibility of government and the mediated visibility of the lawmaking process in newspaper coverage. Studying how newspapers chose to cover state legislatures and Congress in different states and across a broad period of time facilitates this comparison.

Samuel Kernell's article "The Early Nationalization of Political News in America" takes a significant step in that direction. Kernell concludes that news coverage of politics in America nationalized far earlier than the social science literature would suggest. Using the *Annals of Cleveland* and his own analysis of the *Hartford Daily Courant*, Kernell assembles a data set of indexed newspapers for ten sampled years between 1818 and 1876 that assigns each article in the paper to its geographic sphere—local, state, or national. Rather than finding the expected results—that prior to 1876 newspapers focused on local rather than state or national coverage—Kernell finds that "as early as the 1830s . . . national politics occupied a sizeable share of political news reported in the leading local paper."<sup>19</sup> These findings suggest that even without a national political community, federal politics can be highly visible and salient. The findings are striking, but beg, as Kernell acknowledges, for a broader analysis that would allow for more generalizability across states and over time.

Many historians point to the nineteenth century as a crucial period in the development of national news and the president and Congress's ability to "go public." In his exhaustive study of the American postal system in this time, Richard John writes that "a large percentage of the total volume of the mail consisted of newspapers, magazines, and public documents that described the proceedings of Congress and the routine workings of the central government." Information about political institutions "in turn helped to introduce a widely scattered population to two key ideas: that the boundaries of the community in which they lived extended well beyond the confines of their individual locality, state or region, and coincided more or less with the territorial limits of the United States; and that the central government might come to shape the patterns of everyday life."<sup>20</sup> Further demonstrating newspapers' ability to shape public life, Jeffrey Pasley points out that "in nineteenth-century America, the newspaper press was the political system's central institution, not simply a forum or atmosphere in which politics took place . . . newspapers and their editors were purposeful actors in the political process, linking parties, voters, and the government together, and pursuing specific political goals."<sup>21</sup>

This article asks how visible the state and federal lawmaking processes were to nineteenth-century American citizens. Using comparative newspaper

coverage of state legislatures and the U.S. Congress across three states, I test whether the federal government's visibility was drowned out by state legislatures competing for limited public attention, and whether the nationalization of lawmaking visibility occurred equally across America's diverse regions. Using newspaper coverage of legislative proceedings and editorials, I am able to measure visibility as average citizens would have experienced it in reading a daily newspaper.

Kernell and Jacobson's work demonstrates that presidential coverage in the nineteenth century was largely limited to campaigns and elections, and that substantive coverage of issues and lawmaking focused on Congress. Therefore, we are left with two significant questions about the visibility of Congress in this period. First, given the tool of newspapers for the dissemination of information about lawmaking, did the visibility of Congress differ from state to state and from one region to the next? While we tend to assume that Congress's activity was universally "seen" by American citizens, coverage of congressional issues and the body itself almost certainly varied from place to place. Better understanding that variance would allow us to make more significant judgments about Congress's institutional development and leaders' ability to leverage their public connections. Second, while the Constitution prescribes power contests between the executive and legislative branches, Congress's main rival for the attention of the nineteenth-century public was almost certainly the state legislatures. Those were the historically grounded institutions to which Americans felt most attached and whose issue profiles most directly impacted citizens themselves. In order to understand how visible the congressional lawmaking process was, in a world of limited column inches and public attention, we need to understand the *relative* visibility of Congress and the state legislatures.

## METHODOLOGY

Using Kernell's data and findings as a rough model, I develop a measure of state and federal government visibility that focuses on the institutions of the state legislature and the U.S. Congress. Given the role that we know visibility plays in the lawmaking process in particular, focusing on comparative newspaper coverage of lawmaking bodies rather than general political news or executive characters should provide a more accurate depiction of relative visibility.

In order to trust newspaper coverage as a measure of federal and state-level political visibility in nineteenth-century American life, we have to know more about the newspapers that came to prominence between 1830 and 1880.

While newspapers prior to 1830 were largely party papers, that year marked the rise of the so-called “penny press,” which dramatically and permanently altered the world of news. In *Discovering the News*, Michael Schudson chronicles the rise of the penny press as an integral part of the democratizing affects of Jacksonianism and the development of a new market economy. Before 1830, newspapers relied on “sources of income that depended on social ties or political fellow feeling.”<sup>22</sup> With the advent of the penny press, however, those sources of income were largely replaced with “market-based income from advertising and sales.”<sup>23</sup> Rather than seeking to editorialize on behalf of partisans who funded their printing, these newspapers sought to decrease the prevalence of editorial coverage and claim a kind of broad political independence. As Schudson suggests, the paper “began to reflect the activities of an increasingly varied, urban, and middle-class society of trade, transportation, and manufacturing.”<sup>24</sup> The product was aimed at a general audience comprising the political and social elite, the emerging middle class, and the laboring classes who could suddenly afford the much-reduced one-cent prices of a single issue. Since we know that penny papers in the period between 1830 and 1880 largely ascribed to these tenants of broad appeal and a focus on reporting the events of the day, penny-press papers are a compelling means of gaging the visibility of government activity to “average” American.<sup>25</sup> These papers are the primary means by which most individuals would have learned about legislative activity at both the state and federal levels.

My focus on legislative coverage, rather than executive or judicial, is similarly justified by existing literature. Much of the newspaper-based research on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sought to understand the balance of public power between the president and Congress using the visibility of each institution in the American news media. Elmer Cornwell’s 1959 article evaluated the volume of presidential news covered by the *New York Times* and the *Providence Journal* as “a rough measure of the relative public preoccupation with the Presidential office.” Cornwell concludes that “presidential news, and by inference the public’s image of the presidency and its relative governmental importance, has increased markedly and more or less steadily in this century.”<sup>26</sup> That rapid increase in presidential coverage reveals how little coverage was devoted to the president in the nineteenth century. The early and mid-nineteenth centuries were characterized by congressional dominance within the system of separated powers, and that dominance, as well as the broad interest in senators as political leaders, was reflected in newspaper coverage.

Kernell and Jacobsen extend Cornwell’s logic to make use of the well-developed literature on the advantages of “going public” and utilizing public



attention to gain power within the checks and balances system of the federal government. They begin by recognizing that “the president’s ascendant role in contemporary American politics is reflected in, and magnified by, his dominance of political news. The expansion of executive authority in this century naturally made the presidency more newsworthy, and, at the same time, the president’s ability to attract attention from the news media has contributed to his primacy.”<sup>27</sup> While visibility is key to influence in Washington, Kernell and Jacobson find that newspaper coverage—mediated visibility—is essentially reflective of the development of the institution itself. As the committee system developed and Congress fell into “the grip of institutionalized particularism” it “receded from view.”<sup>28</sup> Visibility of political institutions and the lawmaking process is not merely interesting from the perspective of studying the development of political culture and public attention. It is also crucial to our understanding of how institutions develop over time and their changing relationship with public sources of power. While studying coverage of presidential politics may be key to understanding partisanship and the electoral process, congressional dominance in lawmaking demands focus on that institution, and its state-level counterparts, if we are to understand how process visibility impacts institutional development and legitimacy.

I begin by selecting three case-study newspapers—the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Portland Eastern Argus* and the *Charleston Courier*. I selected these papers on the basis of a number of important criteria. I specifically chose a northern paper, a southern paper, and a border-state paper in order to provide an initial sense of how the visibility of national institutions may have differed from one place to the next. Second, I limited my selections to cities that were not state capitals in order to avoid the added influence that state politics likely has in capital cities. Third, I was limited in my selection of newspapers to those that were available for the entirety of the period from 1830 to 1880. These three papers logistically represented the best available options for an initial case-study selection based on those criteria. In addition, all three papers express some affiliation with the Democratic Party, though their status as penny-press papers made their editorial coverage far less party-driven than in the past.<sup>29</sup> This commonality allows me to evaluate geographic differences across the three papers within the boundaries of generally similar attitudes toward national political issues.

For each paper, I began by limiting my research only to newspaper issues published on days when both the U.S. Congress and the state legislature of the given state were in session.<sup>30</sup> Studying comparative visibility requires that we look specifically at newspapers where editors had to make a choice—on that day they could have covered either the U.S. Congress or the state legislature.

Focusing on dates where both legislatures were generating news gives us a better sense of how each level of government is covered when they are directly competing for the public's attention.

These criteria dramatically limited the universe of possible dates to code to between ten and ninety dates per year for each paper. From the population of dates where Congress and the state legislature were simultaneously in session, I then further randomly sampled a smaller selection of dates to code for each paper.<sup>31</sup> Each paper is roughly the same size, and includes four pages. Although the amount and placement of advertising varies somewhat over time, the total quantity of news coverage does not differ dramatically from one year to the next. For example, the total number of lines devoted to nonadvertising news in the *Baltimore Sun* on January 19, 1830, was 3,417. The issue published on January 21, 1880, included 3,732 total lines of nonadvertising space. For each sampled date, I read the four pages of the newspaper and counted the total number of lines devoted to coverage of the state legislature and the U.S. Congress. I included both editorial coverage and coverage of proceedings or speeches on the floor. This coding process produced a ratio of lines of coverage of state legislatures and U.S. Congress for each sampled date.<sup>32</sup>

All three newspapers have similar layouts. Each normally devotes the first and third pages primarily to advertising. The second page tends to contain editorial coverage and local news items, while most coverage of state and national politics is found on the back page, especially in the 1860s and 1870s. In all, advertising tends to fill roughly 50 percent of the available printing space with regular information about shipping news and the market price of goods taking up another significant portion of the paper.

My first case-study paper, the *Baltimore Sun*, has run continuously since its founding in 1837. The *Sun* presents an interesting first case for the study of changing political news coverage in that it sought to connect with the "average" inhabitants of its city. In a history of the *Baltimore Sun* published in 1937, Johnson et al. writes that "It was frankly a commoners' sheet. It appealed to the non-intellectuals. It printed a great deal of "elegant" matter, including poems, moral essays and extracts from books, but its conspicuous difference from its rivals was its vigorous effort to inform Baltimoreans of what was going on in their own town."<sup>33</sup> The *Sun* also maintained a unique commitment to covering politics with dedicated reporters dispatched to Washington and Annapolis. While those reporters never signed articles with their own names, they did use consistent aliases that allowed their readers to track contributions. The *Sun* is also remarkable for its editorial consistency. Arunah Abell served as the paper's Editor in Chief from its founding in 1837 until his death in 1888.

As a second case study I selected the *Charleston Courier*, published in Charleston, South Carolina. Charleston, like Baltimore, was the largest city in the state by population throughout the 1800s, while also remaining a notable distance from the state capital at Columbia. As a major port city and in many ways the intellectual center of the South, Charleston presents an opportunity to study newspaper coverage in a southern city that paralleled Baltimore. Unlike the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Courier* did not maintain a single owner or unchecked publication history throughout the 1800s. The paper was founded and published by A. S. Willington for Loring Andrews from 1803 until 1852. The paper was renamed the *Charleston Daily Courier* in 1852 with little change in the editorial staff. The *Charleston Courier* merged with the *Charleston Daily News* to become the *Charleston News and Courier* in 1873.

Finally, the *Portland Eastern Argus* was founded in 1803 by Calvin Day and Nathaniel Willis to serve the interest of the Democratic Party. The paper originated on a weekly basis, moved to triweekly in 1832, and began printing daily in 1835.<sup>34</sup> The *Eastern Argus* published continuously in Portland until 1921. The circulation of the paper in 1860 was placed at 5,184 per day—the highest daily circulation of any newspaper in the region.<sup>35</sup>

## RESULTS: THE BALTIMORE SUN

The results from *The Baltimore Sun* case study are presented in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 shows the average number of lines devoted to coverage of the Maryland General Assembly, based in Annapolis, and the U.S. Congress, for each available year. Figure 2 shows the ratio of average coverage of Congress versus the General Assembly. Points above the line are reflective of greater focus on the U.S. Congress, and points below the line indicate more attention paid to the state legislature.

In the prewar period (1837–46), the state legislature and U.S. Congress are granted similar amounts of coverage by *The Baltimore Sun* on average, though the annual averages differ widely. While coverage amounts were higher for the U.S. Congress during all but three years, the differences in length averaged twenty lines, or about a paragraph. This pattern differs from what previous literature suggests we might expect. Previous research, including Kernell's newspaper study, have found a strong focus on state and local issues dominating the first half of the nineteenth century. Between 1846 and 1859 a consistent pattern emerges in the *Sun's* coverage, whereby greater attention is paid to the Congress. In a set of data marked by volatility in coverage patterns, the consistency of devotion to national coverage in this period is striking. Where we

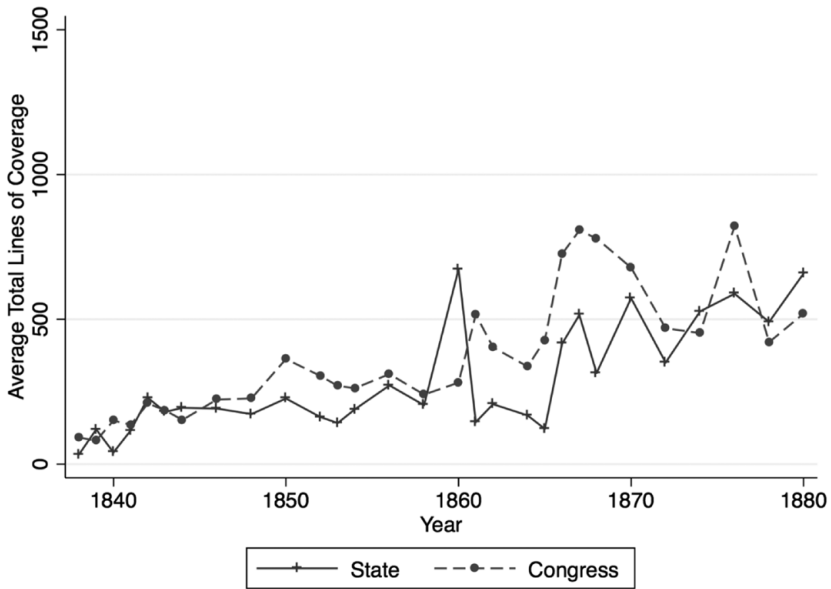


Fig. 1. Comparison of Average State and Congressional Coverage, *Baltimore Sun*.

do see the expected pattern of increasing congressional coverage is between the years of 1856 and 1864. Historical expectations would dictate a massive Civil War effect on political coverage. The pattern we see in Figure 2 is one in which coverage of state legislature soars between 1856 and 1860 and then plummets as war is declared in favor of increased coverage of U.S. Congress between 1860 and 1864. The most interesting contrast, however, is in the post-war Reconstruction period. In the period when the historical consensus would dictate a lasting increase in congressional coverage vis-à-vis the state legislature, we see an eventual decline in comparative congressional attention from 1868 to 1880. While historians of federalism and nationalism might have expected a clear, linear increase in national government coverage, this chart shows a much more complicated relationship with far less national dominance over time.<sup>36</sup> In the next section I identify three key moments of change from the figure above and interrogate what kinds of issues, stories, and historical events drive the changes in coverage at those times.

#### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1837–1840

In the early years of *The Baltimore Sun*, not only was more coverage devoted to the U.S. Congress than the state legislature, but the quality of that coverage



Fig. 2. Relationship Between Congressional and State Coverage, *Baltimore Sun*.

was very different. While state legislative coverage was confined to an unsigned printing of the day's proceedings, the *Sun* prided itself on having correspondents stationed in Washington to cover Congress, and that posting is reflected in the paper's coverage. The "Correspondence from Washington" columns, while focused on proceedings, also included introductory sections and analysis of the relevance of bills to the Baltimore community. The correspondent also reported behind-the-scenes information about bills being considered or the floor practices of particular members. This meant that the Washington reports were highlighted as full articles, while state legislative coverage was relegated to the status of news reporting.

Another significant difference between the coverage of the state legislature and the Congress in this time period was the frequency with which full lists of bills being considered and full text of bills passed was printed. While this practice was common at the state level, the Washington correspondent rarely submitted full bill text or even full text of speeches read on the house floor. Instead, Washington correspondence was more editorialized and contained more information about the context and consequences of bills without printing their text in full.

This period is an interesting one for our analysis of the changing visibility of the federal government's law and policymaking over time. What is most

striking about the *Baltimore Sun's* early commitment to congressional coverage is the extent to which it invested in ensuring that daily reports would be received from a competent and trustworthy news reporting professional. While this may indicate an effort by the *Sun's* editors to provide unique information, it is also reflective of Abell's interest in utilizing the *Sun's* geographic advantages to provide readers with the national news they were interested in. This insight demonstrates the important role of mediated visibility in the public opinion landscape. The *Sun* brought to the public's attention legislation they wouldn't have seen otherwise, and thereby intervened in the relationship between legislators and their constituents, impacting the legislator's ability to shape public perceptions and claim credit. The same interventions in turn shaped the public's ability to hold legislators accountable and influence participation in the political process by altering readers' access to information about each legislative body.

#### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1858–1862

The three years surrounding the declaration of civil war in America in many ways reflect what the historical consensus suggests about politics in a border state. In the lead up to the election of 1860 and secession, we see a dramatic increase in coverage of the state legislature as Maryland grapples with its border-state status. Beginning in 1861, however, the ratio of coverage reverses, dramatically favoring coverage of the Congress. The spike in state coverage in 1858 is driven less by editorial writing than by what appears to be a conscious change in the way the paper covers proceedings from Annapolis. State legislative proceedings were covered in full—including lists of bills proposed and full text of speeches made in individual sessions. By contrast, noneditorial congressional reporting in this period is limited to a few short paragraphs that summarize the general proceedings of the day. While these summaries were supplemented by editorials and lengthier stories when warranted, the effect in the years before the election of 1860 was to increase the number of column inches devoted to state legislature without a corresponding increase in federal coverage.

The second spike in coverage of Congress for 1861–62 reflects increased attention to and interest in congressional activities following the declaration of war. During this period news was often printed on the front page titled "From the South" with information about political activity among the southern states along with battle news. The spike in congressional coverage can also be attributed to an increase in editorial coverage of Congress. The speeches, negotiations, and other activities of congressmen outside of formal sessions

were reported, and the paper devoted more column inches to editorial speculation about votes and the movements of officials.

The *Sun* also revealed some of its southern sympathies, opposing the war and reporting a significant amount on political activities in southern states even after the war had begun. Beginning in May 1861, Baltimore was placed under federal occupation and martial law in order to prevent southern sympathizers from aiding the war effort. Despite the *Sun*'s stated promise of impartiality, Abell's political preferences played a role in the paper's reporting as the Civil War approached. As Harold Williams writes in his history of the *Sun*, Abell "identified himself with the Southern tradition, and from the start his paper reflected that viewpoint. It consistently maintained that Maryland's interests lay entirely with the South."<sup>37</sup> While this editorial sympathy does not seem to have affected the printing of formal proceedings, it did impact the paper's wartime reporting. The *Sun* expressed anti-Republican leanings that come across in its near-complete lack of reporting on Lincoln's campaign or election. As these sentiments were revealed in the paper's columns leading up to the declaration of war, Abell was warned against printing anything that revealed troop movements, expressed southern sympathies or otherwise undermined the Union cause. Beginning in the summer of 1861, federal marshals exercised significant control over the reporting of each of the remaining Baltimore newspapers. The censorship of the *Sun* continued through the end of 1866, when the marshal's office was abolished. During that time Abell was threatened with arrest, prohibited from printing any news that could be construed as sympathizing with the southern cause, and was muzzled from printing editorials.<sup>38</sup> It is important to take with a grain of salt the results of any newspaper analysis conducted during this wartime period. While there were significant practical limitations on the accessibility of information, what news the paper did possess was often deemed inappropriate for print.

Abell maintained significant partisan leanings, but there is little reason to believe that either his newspaper or his political predispositions strayed far from the norms of his particular city. The process by which editors mediated the visibility of the lawmaking process left significant room for political manipulation. While Abell's perspective sought to minimize that effect, we cannot forget the importance of studying legislative visibility from the public's perspective.

### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1872–1880

The final period of interest highlighted in Figure 1 is the shift in 1882 to increasing coverage of the state legislature and decreasing coverage of the

U.S. Congress, which continues through the remainder of the sample. In many ways this finding contradicts what we might expect given historical literature about the development of the federal administrative system during this time period. The change in pattern is also noteworthy given that the *Sun's* prior coverage of the state legislature in Annapolis rarely outweighed its coverage of Congress. The data suggest, then, that a conscious policy change was made to devote more space to state-level reporting at the expense of national coverage.

This time period is also marked by increased frequency of two-page afternoon supplements to the paper. These supplements reflected the content in the newspaper itself rather than breaking events and expanded the size of the paper and the space available to print political news. No single state-level event during this period could account for the increased coverage of state legislature. Instead, the paper continued to print full proceedings of the state legislature along with a "Letter from Annapolis" column that covered activities in the state capitol. Congressional coverage during these years consists of shorter reports received by wire or by mail that cover proceedings of the day. While supplemental articles discussing issues of broad national importance are included elsewhere in the paper, the inconsistencies in federal coverage result in annual average length of coverage being far higher for the state.

The fact that the *Sun* chose to consistently print more state legislative news and information during this period shows that state government activity remained more visible than federal government action, despite Kernell's conclusions about the nationalization of the political community. This change in ratio of coverage both defies expectations based on previous literature and suggests that the federal government struggled to outshine the actions of state governments in the eyes of Baltimore's citizens well into Reconstruction.

#### RESULTS: *THE CHARLESTON COURIER*

Figures 3 and 4 below show results from *The Charleston Courier* case study. Figure 3 shows the average number of lines devoted to coverage of the South Carolina State Legislature and the U.S. Congress for each available year of study. Figure 4 shows the ratio of coverage of the Congress to coverage of the state legislature for the same years.

Both figures provide a striking contrast to the results from *The Baltimore Sun*. The antebellum period is marked by static coverage rates, although with more coverage granted to the state legislature than to the Congress. While the *Sun's* coverage shifted attention from the state to the federal government many times over the years, the *Courier* printed more lines about Congress



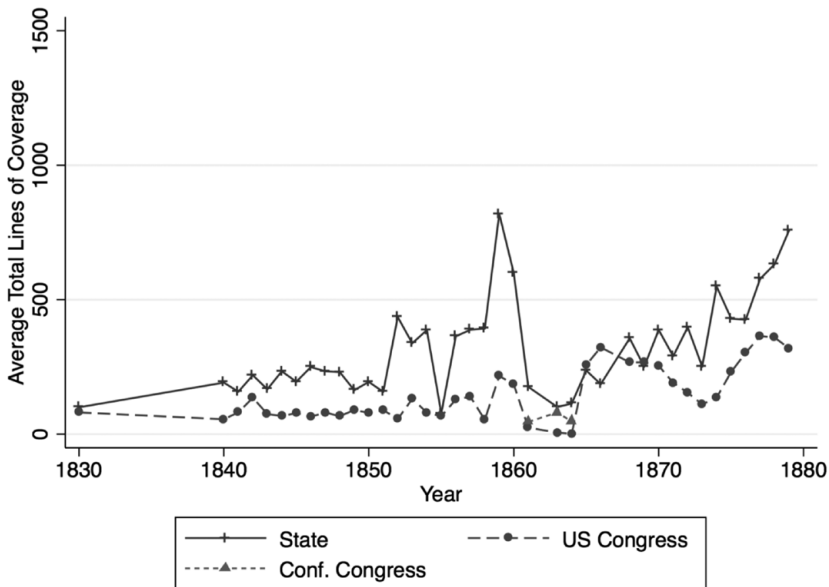


Fig. 3. Comparison of Average State and Congressional Coverage, *Charleston Courier*.

than about the State Legislature in Columbia just once, in 1865. Before and during the Civil War, coverage shifted to the state legislature in the lead-up to secession and during the war itself. As with the *Sun*, the *Courier* contains significant and lasting gaps in coverage of the two levels of government. We again find that rather than a clear and permanent shift to favoring national over state news, the newspaper reverts to devoting more column inches to the state legislature than to Congress. The data again suggest that a basic historic narrative of the Civil War as a moment of change followed by new and lasting visibility of the federal government should be interrogated further.

Further qualitative analysis allows us to account for circumstantial constraints beyond the editor's control. The Civil War period presents a number of interesting problems for the staff and editors of the *Courier*. While coverage of Congress declined during the war years themselves, the *Courier* never managed to establish its reporting from Richmond, where the Confederate Congress was based. While coverage of the state legislature and Confederate Congress was nearly equal, the coverage for each <au/each?> was vastly outweighed by other types of coverage, including crucial information about ships breaking through the union blockade, and troop movement in and around South Carolina. In addition, the *Courier* moved

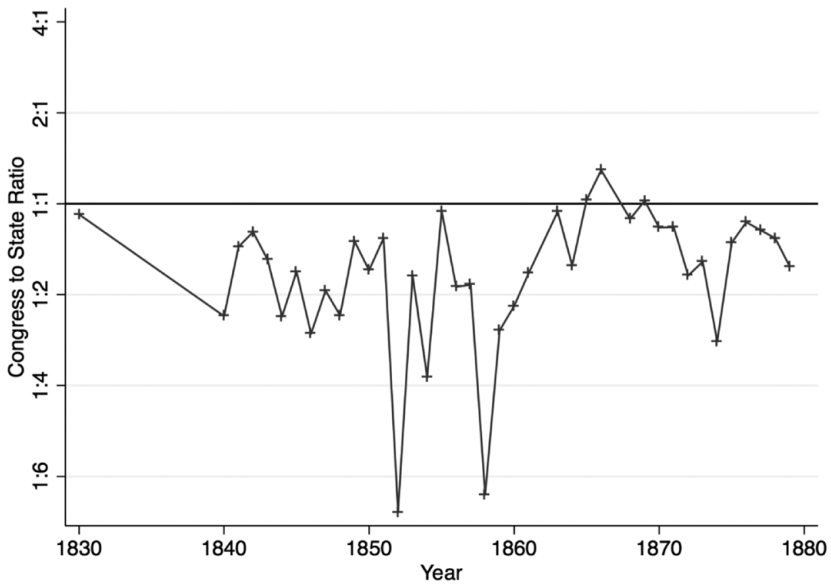


Fig. 4. Relationship Between Congressional and State Coverage, *Charleston Courier*.

to a two-page format for a period of time as advertising funds and the supply of ink and paper became limited.

#### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1852–1854

Figure 2 indicates a significant moment of change between 1852 and 1854, when the *Courier* has a spike in coverage between the state legislature and Congress. Two significant events drove state coverage in these years: a charter extension for the state bank and construction of the Blue Ridge Railroad. The last of these accounts for the vast majority of the lengthy feature articles that drive increases in state legislative coverage. This coverage marks a moment when objective and mediated visibility coalesce, and newspaper coverage reinforced the high visibility of a project that sought to touch everyday lives.

State-funded construction of the Blue Ridge Railroad began in 1852 with the goal of connecting Charleston to Cincinnati and thereby opening the southern economy to the west. Coverage of debates over funding the railroad project reflects an intense antifederal sentiment throughout the state. Having rejected federal funding for internal improvement projects in the state on ideological grounds, discussion turned to how much the state itself should be

investing. An editorial in the paper on December 8, 1854, exemplifies the paper's opinions during this period of increased coverage: "It may or may not be sound policy in a state to engage in public improvements; that question we need not now argue in its general aspect. It cannot be sound policy in a state to lock fast a door nearly opened to her own expanded and expanding enterprise, and to throw the key away forever—and such we shall do if we now lose the present opportunity."<sup>39</sup> This is an example of a time period in which increased coverage of state legislative issues is reflective of a general public preference for state government action over federal. Though an analysis of each editor's political and personal motivations is outside the scope of this article, it is reasonable to assume that in seeking to please their readership, editors made decisions about how best to allocate space according to the public's general opinion of and interest in each body. The availability of ongoing information about the policymaking process at each level in turn reinforces the public's perceptions, creating a cycle of visibility mediated by editors' decisions.

#### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1859

In 1859, secession dominated South Carolina's legislative debate and the paper printed the full text of those debates, leading to a spike in state legislative coverage. While South Carolina did not secede until December 1860, debates over southern culture, slavery, and the impacts of the presidential election dominated the *Courier's* pages. While the paper maintained significant coverage of Congress, the data are misleading. During the year 1859 the bulk of coverage of Congress discussed the activities of the Southern Caucus and the prominent members of the southern opposition.

Also in 1859, the paper started a regular editorial column titled "North and South" that discussed issues driving the sectional debates. The paper devoted a significant number of column inches to covering John Brown and Harpers Ferry as issues of great importance for all southern sympathizers. An example of the editorial material covered in the "North and South" column appeared on December 17, 1859: "One people we are not in some respects; so far from it are we, that bound hand and foot by our conscience we listen with one ear heedfully to the dictates of that constitution that we obey, while with the other we catch the sound of advancing war-whoop of the foes whom we call friends and fellow citizens."<sup>40</sup> This editorial offers a serious discussion of the different loyalties pulling southern citizens in opposing directions. Institutional visibility is mediated by editorial choices

that are themselves shaped by the perspectives and opinions of the public that editors hope to appeal to.

### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1866

In 1866, congressional coverage outweighs coverage of the state legislature in the *Charleston Courier* for the only time in the data set. In this year, South Carolina was still two years away from being fully readmitted to the Union, and was under military district rule that was highly visible to citizens in cities like Charleston. As a result, South Carolina citizens were forced to pay attention to the activities of the federal government as decisions made at the congressional level impacted their local lives to a far greater extent than ever before.

A long editorial printed in the paper on December 7, 1866, shows the extent to which congressional coverage took on a distinctly statist hue. The following quote appears in an editorial titled “The Welcome to the Republican Members of Congress” and describes a parade that took place for the opening of the congressional session:

Believing that our readers would like to be informed in reference to the tendencies of the party which now has the sway in the Congress, as at present constituted, we devote considerable space this morning to the proceeding which took place in Washington on Monday, the 3rd instant, on the re-assembly of the Representatives of 26 only of the states. It is stated that in the procession there were representatives from every state except South Carolina. No stronger expression of praise could be uttered on behalf of our beloved old state. She has given her adhesion to the constitution, and will have neither part or parcel in any attempts to substitute therefore the platforms of a party, and which cannot but tend to the subversion of liberty and of Republican institutions.”<sup>41</sup>

While not comprising the bulk of coded coverage during 1866, editorials like this one demonstrate the extent to which discussions of national politics during the reconstruction period still focused on South Carolina’s unique role in the federal system. While the covered event is in Washington and deals with Congressional debates, the editorial tone is focused on a distinct state-based perspective. This type of argument appears again and again in the editorials of the *Courier* during the Reconstruction period and account for much of the increased focus on congressional coverage.

RESULTS: *PORTLAND EASTERN ARGUS*

Figures 5 and 6 below report results for the *Portland Eastern Argus*. Figure 5 shows the average annual lines of coverage devoted to the Maine State Legislature and the U.S. Congress. Figure 6 shows the ratio of average lines of coverage of the U.S. Congress to those of the legislature for the same period.

The first thing we see in Figure 5 is that coverage of the state legislature and the U.S. Congress is similar throughout the time period. While the previous two papers showed far more divergent tendencies in the average coverage across the two categories, the *Argus* devoted similar column inches to the two topics. The *Argus* also adheres most closely to Kernell's findings of a shift to sustained visibility of the federal government in the postwar period, though the linear increase he finds is not reflected in these data. Overall, we do not see the strong shift in coverage after the Civil War that previous research might have predicted. For a staunchly Union state like Maine, we might expect to see greater focus on the Congress during Reconstruction than we see here. While there are clearly more lines being devoted to national than state coverage in the postwar era, this Maine paper shows a resurgence

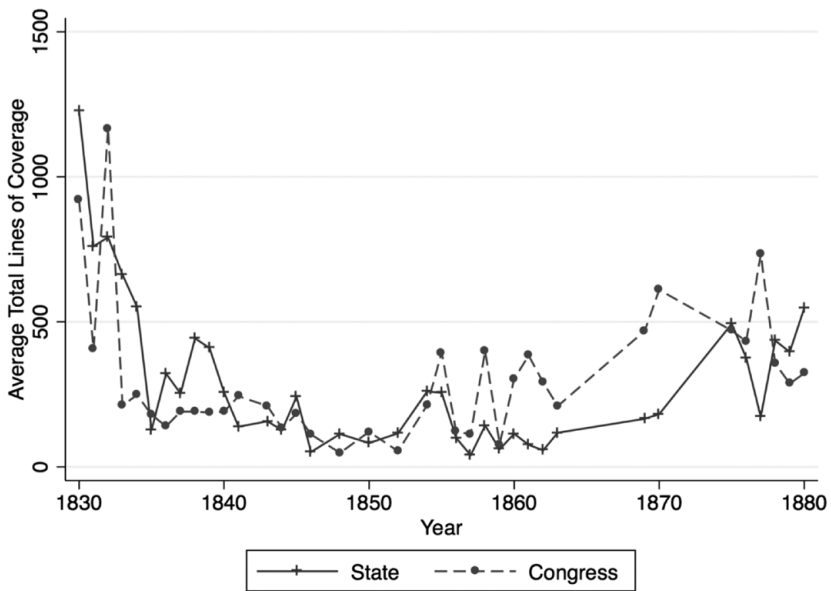


Fig. 5. Comparison of Average State and Congressional Coverage, *Portland Eastern Argus*.

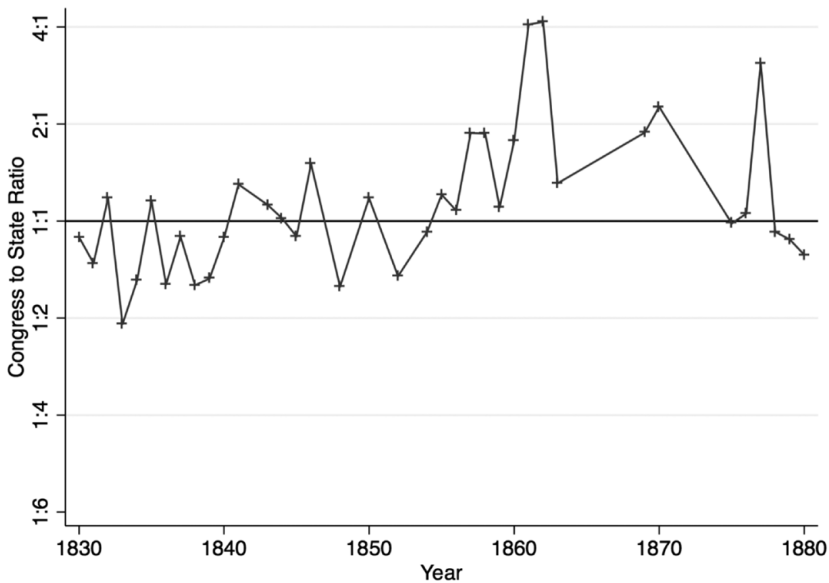


Fig. 6. Relationship Between Congressional and State Coverage, *Portland Eastern Argus*.

in attention paid to the state legislature at the end of the sampled period, much like the *Sun* and the *Courier*.

### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1836–1839

As the data show, the period between 1836 and 1839 is the first when a significant and sustained gap opens between the coverage of the state legislature and Congress. For these four years, more lines were devoted to the legislature in Augusta than to the Congress in Washington. Much of this increase can be attributed to an extended boundary dispute between Maine and Canada. The “Aroostok War” took place between 1838 and 1842, when Canadian loggers from New Brunswick entered Maine territory and began cutting timber. Maine militiamen were sent to stop the illegal logging, and a full-blown boundary dispute commenced. In total, the United States sent ten thousand troops to the border alongside General Winfield to negotiate a treaty. While the border dispute was technically a national issue with a national boundary at its center, most of the newspaper coverage of the issue centered around speeches and disputes taking place in the state legislature over how to handle the requests for federal intervention. Boundary disputes and national security

are the kinds of benefits that the national government was supposed to provide for citizens of the states. And yet, in this time of need, citizens of Maine turned instead to their state government. This example highlights the importance of understanding government programs as they are perceived by the average public rather than from the perspective of their abstract visibility or utility.

### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1861–1870

Both of the previous two papers have shown similar patterns of coverage before and during the Civil War—a spike in focus on state legislative issues immediately before the war, and a switch to increased national coverage during the war. The Portland paper is not reflective of this pattern. Instead, we see an increase in coverage during and immediately after the war, without any spike in state legislative coverage. Unlike Maryland and South Carolina, Maine never considered seceding from the Union. At the state level, there was little discussion of how to deal with the lead-up to the war. While the *Eastern Argus* supported the Democratic party throughout its lifespan, it was also antiwar, and condemned both Republicans and reactionary Democrats. As a result, its pages during this period were filled with editorials about national political issues, alongside the normal war reporting. The paper was anti-abolitionist, anti-Republican, and pro-Union all at once. Above all else, the *Eastern Argus* condemned extremism and favored policies of moderation and compromise. One editorial, signed only “J.A.B.” and published in February 1860, is indicative of coverage during this time. He writes, “I have always been a Union man, and never believed that there was great danger of a dissolution of the Union until within the last few months,” and later, “I cannot believe that the people of the Northern States have lost sight entirely of the advice the immortal Washington gave us in his farewell address; when he warned us of the ‘baneful effects of sectional parties.’”<sup>42</sup> This general sentiment—unionist, and anti-abolitionist—occupies the bulk of the pages of the *Argus* in the Civil War years.

In much the same way that the *Courier* announced its Confederate allegiance in its colophon during the war, the *Argus* printed the same message on its front page each day outlining its positions for all to see. In large letters, the section stated that “in politics the *Argus* has always supported democratic principles” and that “the great Democratic doctrines, the brotherhood of American citizenship; the sacred observance of the Constitution and the unhesitating support of the Union as the palladium of our liberties, need now

to be cherished and impressed upon the people more than ever before.” The section continues that the *Argus* will make “vigorous and unceasing war upon the twin fomenters of the rebellion, Abolitionists and Sectionalists, and it will continue the fight and earnestly and cordially support the administration in all efforts to deliver the country from the treason of both, to overwhelm rebellion in arms and restore the authority and the fraternity of the Union with all the countless blessings it has secured.”<sup>43</sup> This motto drove the allocation of coverage in the *Argus* throughout the war years as it remained focused on national issues from a particular political perspective.

### PERIOD OF CHANGE: 1877

The *Eastern Argus*'s opposition to Reconstruction was responsible for <au/ok so not to repeat “drove” in sentence above, or reword here?> the increase in congressional coverage in 1877. Editorials complained of carpetbaggers in southern capitals, of the unfair treatment of southerners, and of electoral and abolitionist reforms forced upon citizens. Having supported the Union, these northern Democrats now felt that their fellow countrymen—other Democrats—were being repressed by the national government. A January 11, 1877, editorial sheds light on the relationship between *Argus* readers and the federal government. The unsigned editorial quotes from a speech given by Mr. Richard T. Merrick at Ford's Theatre in Washington on the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans:

The people of this country are attached to its institutions, and love the organized freedom and system of self-government established by the Federal Constitution. It is the senseless delusion of a disordered brain and the foolish expectation of a corrupt heart for any official, entrusted with any portion of the power of the Government to hope that he can betray that freedom or commit violence on that system and escape the wrath and vengeance of the people he has outraged. They have derived this Government from their Fathers, who purchased it with their blood. They cherish it as a sacred inheritance, to be transmitted to their children.<sup>44</sup>

The same pro-union but anti-administration sentiment that characterized the prewar coverage carries through the period of reconstruction. While not subject to federal intervention themselves, Mainers felt that their participation in the war afforded them the opportunity to express views about the way southern cities and states were treated.



## DISCUSSION

The three case studies presented here, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Portland Eastern Argus*, and the *Charleston Courier*, demonstrate how systematic analysis of newspaper coverage can and should be used to better understand the relative, mediated visibility of state and federal government in time for which there is no polling data. This mediated visibility should be recognized as a crucial variable shaping public perceptions of political institutions and legislators. An underused tool, newspapers are unique in their ability to provide both quantifiable information about public interest and descriptive material about the content and character of those interests. These case studies demonstrate that comparative analysis of newspaper coverage across cities and states can be used to better articulate existing arguments about sectionalism and regional differentiation in public opinion during the nineteenth century.

These specific data support a number of substantive conclusions that challenge our existing narrative of political visibility in the nineteenth century. For the average American citizen in the nineteenth century, what the government did mattered little if those actions were largely invisible. With the rise of the penny press, delivery of political news became much more formulaic and the actions of the state and federal government, along with the previously invisible lawmaking process, became more easily seen by average citizens. In order to understand how people perceived government action, we need to study the method through which they viewed it—the penny press. What this analysis tells us is that even in a time when previous work suggests the development of a national political community, newspapers still focused much of their political attention on state government activity, and the extent of this attention varied over time and across states. Given limited column inches and a choice of reporting on state legislative or congressional activity, editors shaped the visibility and availability of information about the lawmaking process. Regardless of the objective visibility of programs being enacted at the state and federal level, the mediated coverage of lawmaking processes and programs constrained the field of information available to citizens as they formed opinions about legislators and institutions. Editorial choices, in shaping how much the public knows about each legislative body, impact the public's opinions, sense of community, sources of political accountability, and landscape for participation.

In order to understand the full picture of comparative visibility and its effects on state-building at the state and federal levels, future research needs to cover a broader range of states and allow for comparisons of different

newspapers within a given area. We also need a better understanding of the gap between what government does and how individuals perceive that action in a time when political culture differed significantly from our modern outlook. These results suggest that newspapers provide a significant and useful tool for better understanding nineteenth-century public opinion, and that in the ongoing discussion about federal policy, comparative perspectives across regions and between the state and federal level are crucial.

*Claremont McKenna College*

## NOTES

1. Alexander Hamilton, "Federalist No. 27," 25 December 1787.
2. See, for example, Edmund S. Morgan, *Inventing the People* (New York, 1988); John M. Murrin, "A Roof Without Walls," in *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, ed. Richard Beeman and Edward C. Carter (Williamsburg, and Chapel Hill, 1987), 333; Douglas Bradburn, *The Citizenship Revolution* (Charlottesville, 2009), 9.
3. John L. Brooke, *Columbia Rising* (Williamsburg and Chapel Hill, 2010), 4.
4. Stephen Minicucci, "The 'Cement of Interest': Interest-Based Models of Nation-Building in the Early Republic," *Social Science History* 25, no. 2 (2001): 254.
5. Melinda Lawson, *Patriot Fires* (Lawrence, Kans., 2005), 3.
6. See, for instance, Elmer E. Cornwell Jr., "Presidential News: The Expanding Public Image," *Journalism Quarterly* (Summer 1959): 275–83.
7. Samuel Kernell and Gary Jacobson, "Congress and the Presidency as News in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Politics* 49, no. 4 (1987): 1016–35.
8. David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (New Haven, 2004).
9. Suzanne Mettler, *The Submerged State* (Chicago, 2011), 5.
10. Mettler, *Submerged State*, 7.
11. See, for example, Jacob S. Hacker, *The Divided Welfare State: The Battle over Public and Private Social Benefits in the United States* (New York, 2002); Christopher Howard, *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States* (Princeton, 2001); Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992).
12. Joe Soss, "Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action," in *American Political Science Review* 93, no. 2): <au: month/year?>363; J. R. Hibbing and E. Theiss-Morse, *What Is It About Government That Americans Dislike?* (New York, 2001).
13. Suzanne Mettler and Andrew Milstein, "American Political Development from Citizens' Perspective: Tracking Federal Government's Presence in Individual Lives over Time," in *Studies in American Political Development* 21 (2007): <au/month/year?>110–30.

14. See Richard R. John, *Spreading the News* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998).
15. See John Lauritz Larson, *Internal Improvement* (Chapel Hill, 2001).
16. Larson, *Internal Improvement*, 4.
17. Brian Balogh, *A Government Out of Sight* (Cambridge, 2009), 42.
18. *Ibid.*, 4.
19. Samuel Kernell, "The Early Nationalization of Political News in America," *Studies in American Political Development* 1 (1986): 255–78, at 261.
20. Richard John, *Spreading the News*, 7.
21. Jeffrey Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers* (Charlottesville, 2001), 3.
22. Michael Shudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York, 1978), 18.
23. Shudson, *Discovering the News*, 18.
24. *Ibid.*, 22.
25. See, for example, E. Emery, *The Press and America*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972); D. T. Z. Mindich, *Just the Facts: How "Objectivity" Came to Define American Journalism* (New York, 1998); P. Starr, *The Creation of the Media: Political Origins of Modern Communications* (New York, 2004); M. Stephens, *A History of News: From the Dum to the Satellite* (New York, 1988).
26. Elmer E. Cornwell Jr., "Presidential News: The Expanding Public Image," *Journalism Quarterly* (Summer 1959): 275–83.
27. Kernell and Jacobson, "Congress and the Presidency as News in the Nineteenth Century."
28. *Ibid.*, 1016.
29. One could ask whether focusing on Democratic-leaning papers biases these results in favor of a focus on state rather than federal politics—and it may. For the purposes of comparison across the three states this bias shouldn't matter, but future work should seek to compare papers from multiple political background within the same city or state to better understand how political leanings within the penny press impacted choices about coverage of political events.
30. This restriction also means that there are no dates for which all three newspapers were available and sampled.
31. Appendix 2 lists the number of issues sampled from each paper for the years studied.
32. Appendix 1 includes the complete coding strategy and rules for assigning articles to the state and federal level.
33. Gerald W. Johnson, F. R. Kent, H. L. Mencken, and H. Owens, *The Sunpapers of Baltimore* (New York, 1937), 6.
34. Joseph Griffin, *History of the Press in Maine* (Brunswick: The Press, 1872), 51–52.
35. William Willis, *The History of Portland, From 1632 to 1864*, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. (Portland, Maine, 1865).
36. Kernell's findings vary greatly from these. While his data codes articles on the basis of their geographic location, his findings show a dramatic and early increase in national news, a decline in state news, and fairly static coverage of local news events.
37. Harold A. Williams, *The Baltimore Sun, 1837–1987* (Baltimore, 1987), 43.
38. *Ibid.*, 52.

39. "Unsigned Editorial," *Charleston Courier*, 8 December 1854 (accessed through Library of Congress Microfilm).
40. "North and South," *Charleston Courier*, 17 December 1859 (accessed through Library of Congress Microfilm).
41. "The Welcome to the Republican Members of Congress," *Charleston Courier*, 7 December 1866 (accessed through Library of Congress Microfilm).
42. J.A.B., "For the Argus," *Portland Eastern Argus*, 9 February 1860 (accessed through Library of Congress Microfilm).
43. "Prospectus," *Portland Eastern Argus*, 3 February 3, 1863 (accessed through Library of Congress Microfilm).
44. "Unsigned editorial," *Portland Eastern Argus*, 11 January 1877 (accessed through Library of Congress Microfilm).