Forecasting the 2016 Election

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Isn't forecasting elections fun?

AUG 11, 2015 AT 10:31 AM

Donald Trump Is Winning The Polls — And Losing The Nomination

By Nate Silver

Filed under 2016 Election

No, Donald Trump Won't Win

David Brooks   DEC. 4, 2015

The Fix

Why no one should take Donald Trump seriously, in one very simple chart

By Chris Cillizza June 17, 2015

Isn't forecasting elections fun?

Why does Trump remain atop the polls? You can still blame the media.

By **John Sides**   August 28, 2015

Look, all I'm saying is lots of people say "this time is different" every time an election rolls around. But the batting average of "this time is different" is pretty low. Of course, if Trump waltzes to the nomination, I'll admit I was wrong.

Isn't forecasting elections fun?

Daniel Gross ✔
@grossdm

want a laugh? Google the phrase "Trump will fade by the end of summer" and see how many articles/columns pop up.

RETWEETS LIKES
22   22

12:42 PM - 15 Oct 2015

↩   ⟲ 22   ♥ 22   •••

Isn't forecasting election fun?

Bill Mitchell ✓
@mitchellvii

⚙ 👤⁺ Follow

Imagine polls don't exist. Show me evidence
Hillary is winning?

RETWEETS   LIKES
662   969

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The 5 main methods of election forecasting

	Pros	Cons
1) Fundamentals	Lots of theory and evidence Good for benchmarking	Usually small N Danger of over-fitting Uncertainty Hard to capture regime shifts

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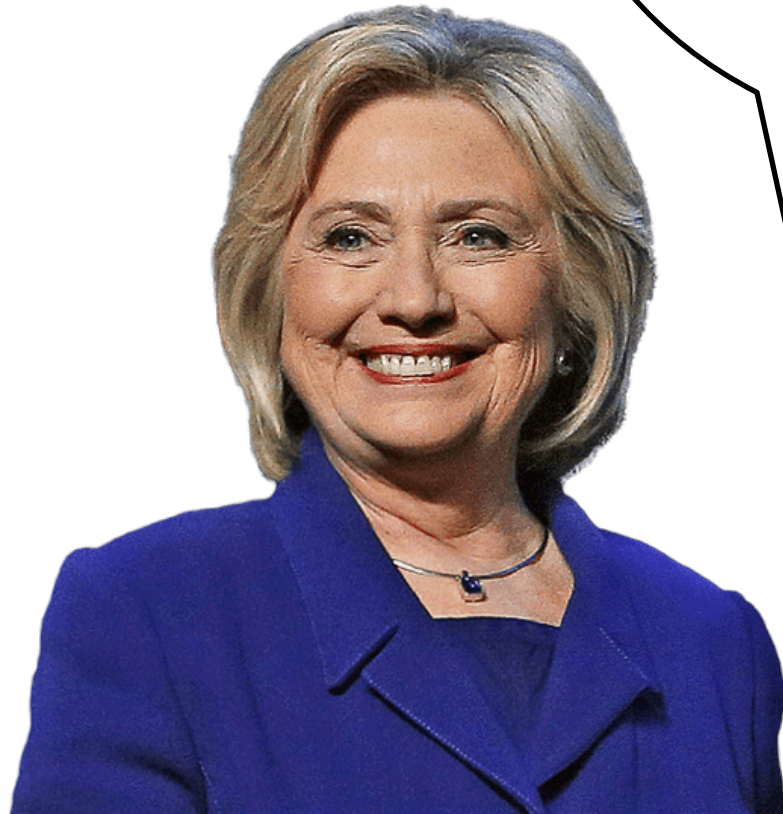|	Pros	Cons
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5) Expert forecasters	Similar incentives "Superforecasters"	Finding the good ones

The fundamentals predict a toss-up.

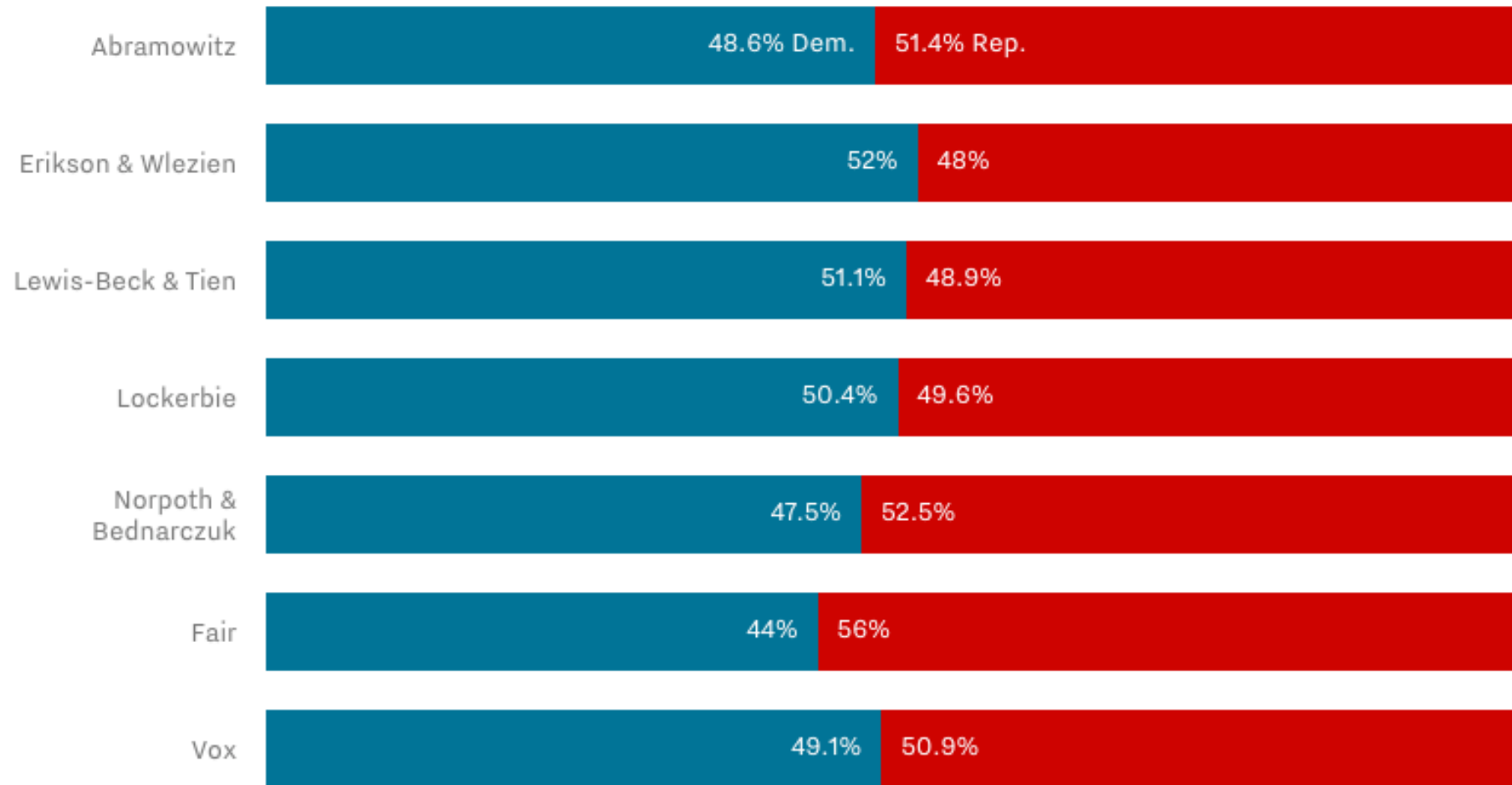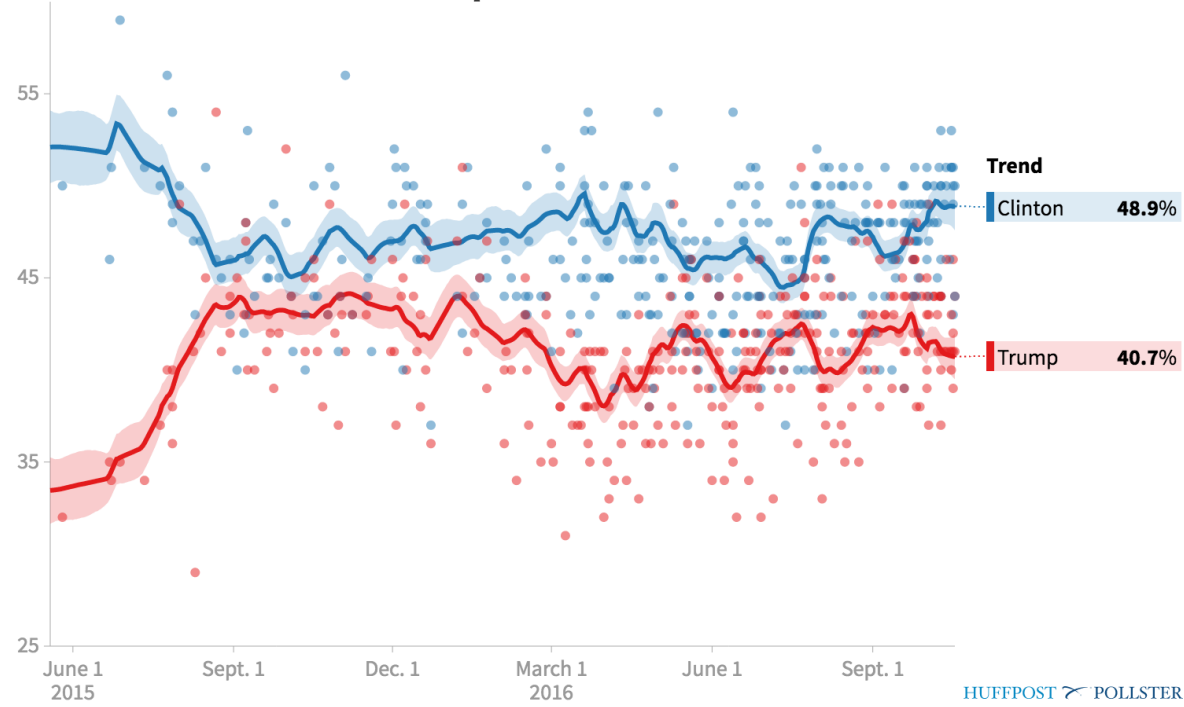| What if the election were decided only by…	Democratic candidate's chance of winning
Presidential approval and economic growth	
Presidential approval and economic growth (but no incumbent running)	
Presidential approval, economic growth, and the "third term curse"	

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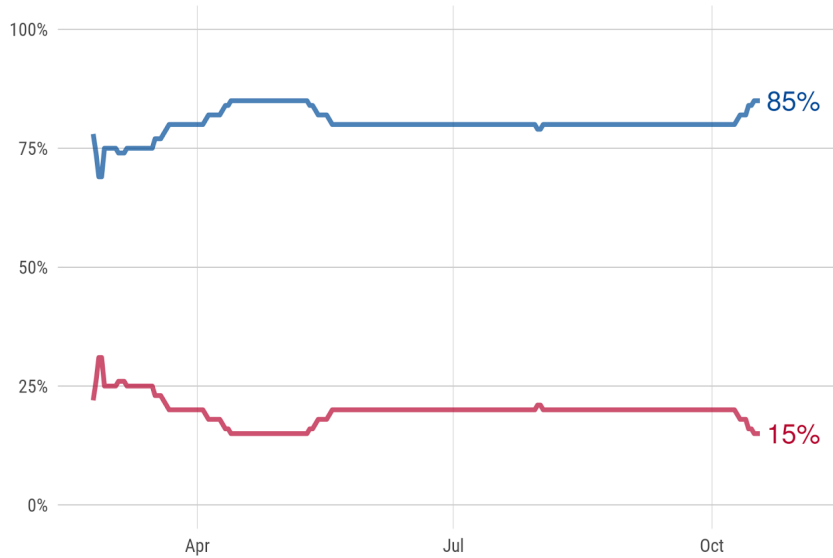| What if the election were decided only by…	Democratic candidate's chance of winning
Presidential approval and economic growth	61%
Presidential approval and economic growth (but no incumbent running)	
Presidential approval, economic growth, and the "third term curse"	

The fundamentals predict a toss-up.

What if the election were decided only by…	Democratic candidate's chance of winning
Presidential approval and economic growth	61%
Presidential approval and economic growth (but no incumbent running)	40%
Presidential approval, economic growth, and the "third term curse"	

The fundamentals predict a toss-up.

What if the election were decided only by…	Democratic candidate's chance of winning
Presidential approval and economic growth	61%
Presidential approval and economic growth (but no incumbent running)	40%
Presidential approval, economic growth, and the "third term curse"	35%

The fundamentals predict a toss-up.

Abramowitz	48.6% Dem.	51.4% Rep.
Erikson & Wlezien	52%	48%
Lewis-Beck & Tien	51.1%	48.9%
Lockerbie	50.4%	49.6%
Norpoth & Bednarczuk	47.5%	52.5%
Fair	44%	56%
Vox	49.1%	50.9%

But everything else predicts a Clinton win.

2016 General Election: Trump vs. Clinton

Trend
- Clinton: 48.9%
- Trump: 40.7%

HUFFPOST ⌁ POLLSTER

If Donald Trump wins the Republican nomination,
which party will win the U.S. presidential election?

85%

15%

Source: Good Judgment® Open. Probabilities as of October 19, 2016

Make a forecast at gjopen.com/questions/147

	NYT	538	HuffPost	PW	PEC	DK
Win presidency	92% Dem.	87% Dem.	95% Dem.	90% Dem.	98% Dem.	95% Dem.

SO ARE REPUBLICANS DOOMED?

Trump declares war on GOP, says 'the shackles have been taken off'

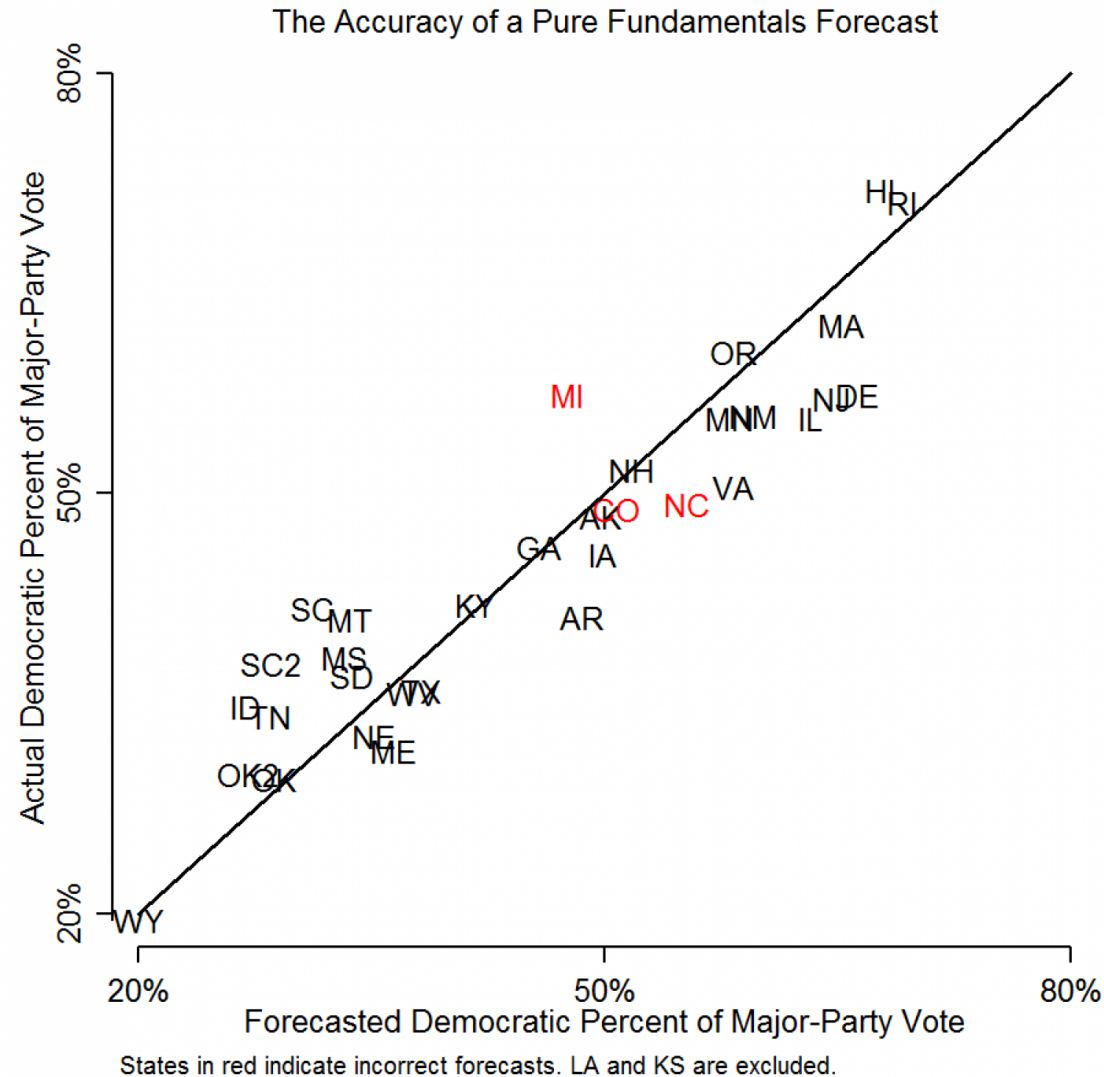*Split Over Donald Trump Threatens to Tilt Republican States*

House Democrats believe Trump troubles give them real shot at retaking majority
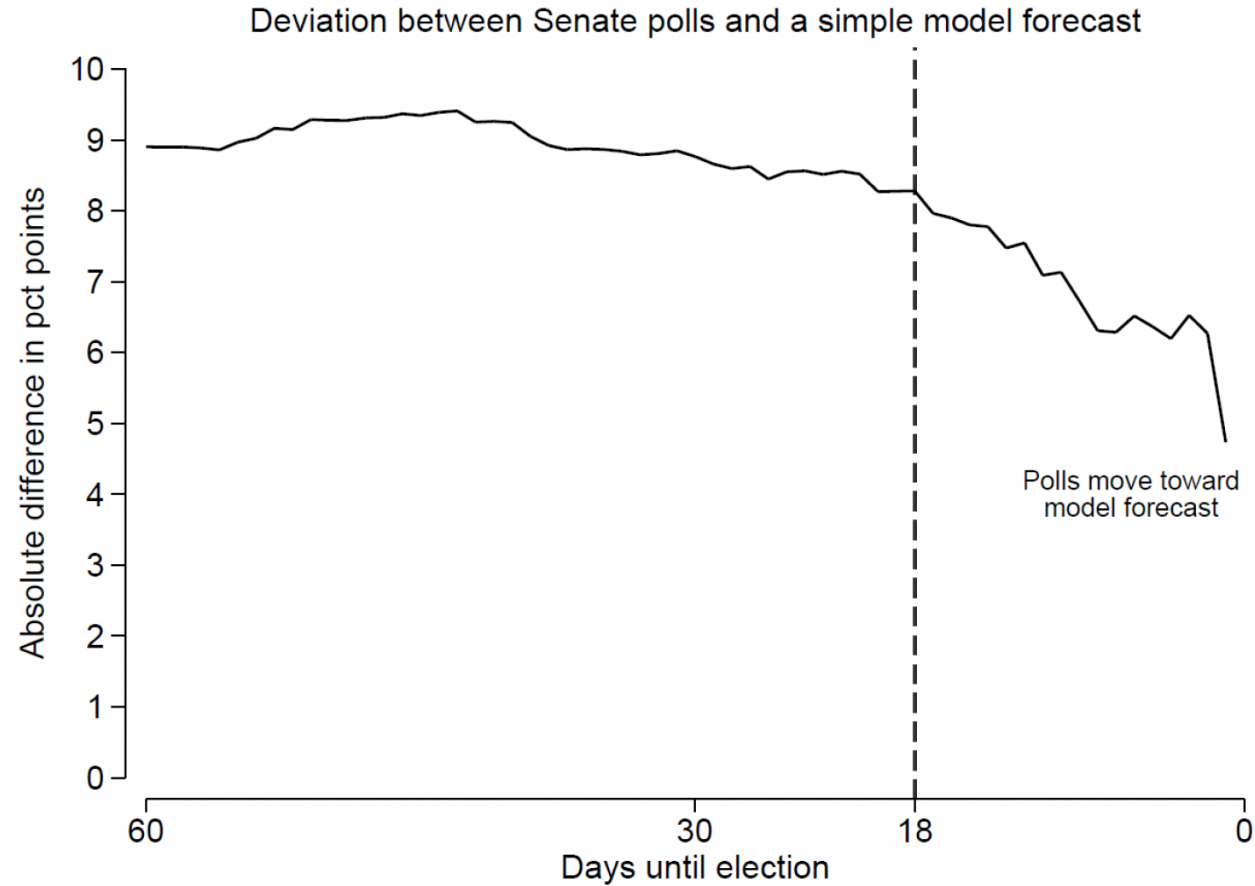
What about the Senate?

A purely "fundamentals" forecast:

Economic growth
Presidential approval in June
Midterm or presidential year
Whether incumbent is running
Presidential vote in state
Outcome of previous Senate race
Candidate political experience
Balance of spending

Fundamentals forecasts were ~accurate in 2014

The Accuracy of a Pure Fundamentals Forecast
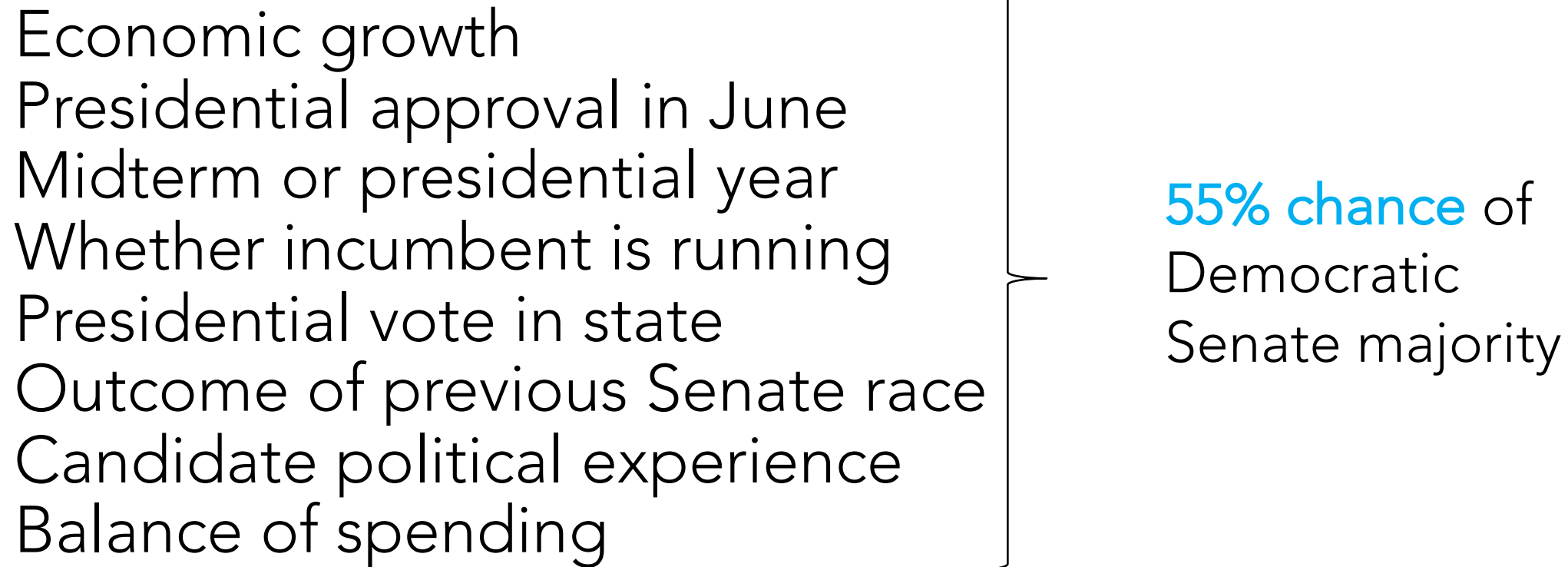
States in red indicate incorrect forecasts. LA and KS are excluded.

Senate polls move toward the fundamentals

Deviation between Senate polls and a simple model forecast

Polls move toward
model forecast

What about the Senate in 2016?

A purely "fundamentals" forecast:

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55% chance of Democratic Senate majority

What about Senate in 2016?

Other forecasts:

	NYT	538	HuffPost	PW	PEC	DK
Win Senate	61% Dem.	75% Dem.	61% Rep.	73% Dem.	70% Dem.	57% Dem.

What about Senate in 2016?

Other forecasts:

The Monkey Cage asks

Which party will control the US Senate after the November 2016 election?

Make Forecast

707 Forecasters • 2091 Forecasts

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Show All Possible Answers

65.0%

Democrats

+

What about the House in 2016?

Purely fundamentals forecast:

Economic growth
Presidential approval in June
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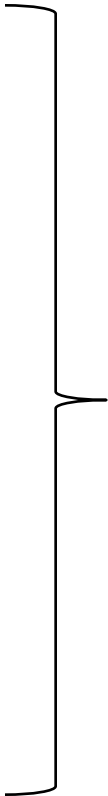Presidential vote in district
Candidate political experience
Balance of spending

204 Democratic seats (± 8), or <1% chance of a House majority
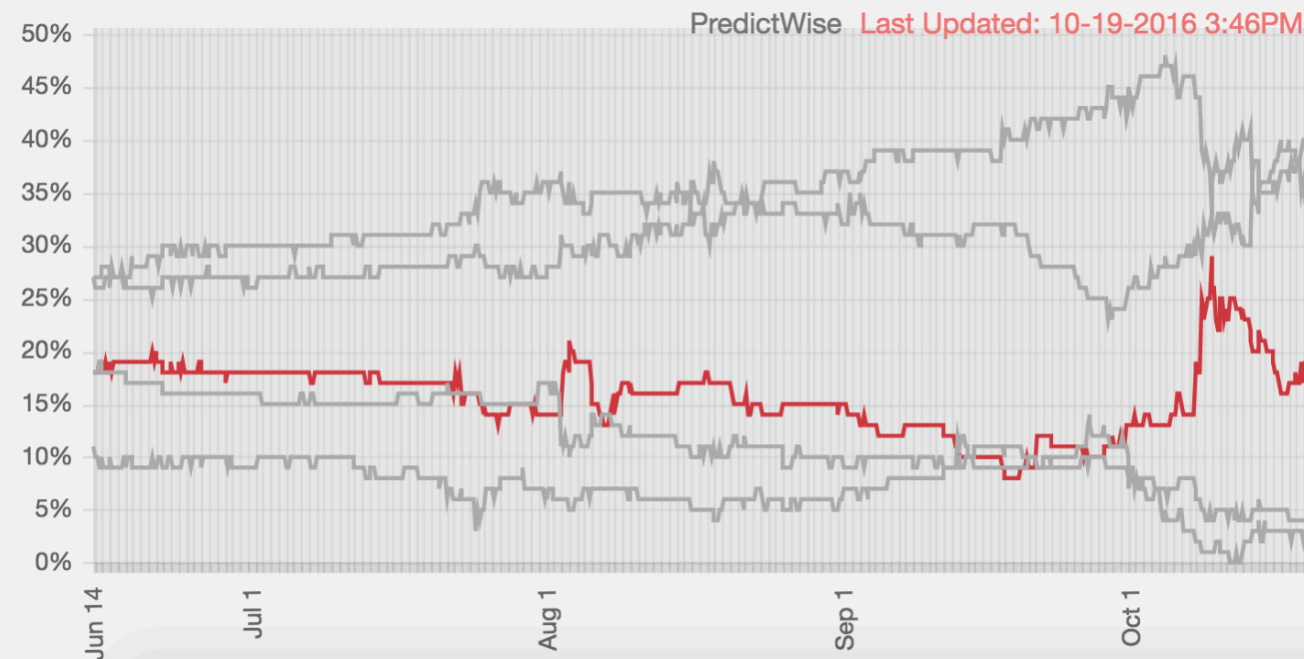
What about the House in 2016?

If Clinton wins by 8 points and has strong coattails:

212 Democratic seats and only a 25% chance of a Democratic House majority.

What about the House in 2016?

Overall House Control After 2016 Election

GOP 218-230 Seats	40 %
GOP 231-240 Seats	34 %
DEM >= 218 Seats	19 %
GOP 241-250 Seats	4 %
GOP >=251 Seats	3 %

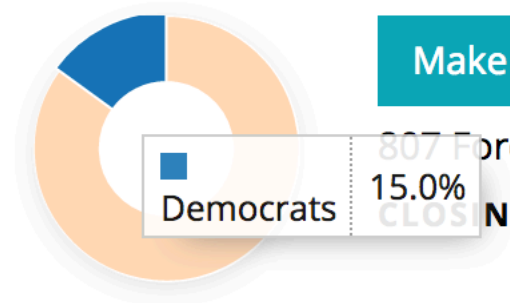PredictWise   Last Updated: 10-19-2016 3:46PM

What about the House in 2016?

The Monkey Cage asks

Which party will control the US House of Representatives after the November 2016 election?

Make Forecast

807 Forecasters • 2130 Forecasts

Democrats 15.0%

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Show All Possible Answers +

What about the House in 2016?

Cook Political Report: "Republicans are now well within reach of holding their November losses under the 13 seats they gained in 2014. In fact, if the 16 Toss Ups were to split down the middle on Election Night, Democrats would gain 10 seats. "

Sabato's Crystal Ball: "Current outlook: Democratic gain of 10-15 seats, short of the 30 net seats they need to gain to win the House."

The future of election forecasting: ensembles?

POLLYVOTE POPULAR VOTE FORECAST (TWO-PARTY)