#### Romney will win – prediction of trend between now and election day – we can use silver too

Trende 9/20 (Sean, Senior Elections Analyst for RealClearPolitics, Part 2: Why Romney Wins, http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/09/20/state\_of\_the\_race\_part\_2\_why\_romney\_wins\_115513-2.html)

But if we look at the data a different way, we realize that Obama has to pull off some unprecedented feats of his own if he hopes to win. The September time frame is a bit tricky for comparison purposes, because the incumbent party convention occurred in mid-August until 2004. So a challenger who trailed his opponent in September was doing so after the convention bounces had pretty much settled.¶ So let’s instead use data that Nate Silver has helpfully compiled identifying where candidates stood a given number of weeks before and after a convention, regardless of when that convention occurred. Table 1 shows the incumbent party’s lead in the polls two weeks after its convention -- roughly where we are today -- and the ultimate result. Years with incumbents are in boldface:¶ As you can see, no incumbent party has ever held on to the White House while leading by fewer than four points two weeks after its convention; no incumbent president has ever won re-election while leading by fewer than five points (more on the 2004 comparisons later). In other words, winning under these circumstances would be unprecedented (note also that Ronald Reagan was actually tied with Jimmy Carter in a simple poll average at this point in 1980).¶ Perhaps an even better way to look at this is Table 2:¶ This lists the races where incumbent presidents sought re-election since 1968. It then shows how those races broke between two weeks after the incumbent president’s convention and Election Day. On average, they moved 3.7 points toward the challenger (positive numbers indicate movement in that direction; negative numbers show movement toward the incumbent). If you eliminate 1976, as Cohn suggests (since Jerry Ford was a pseudo-incumbent), the average movement is six points toward the challenger.¶ Indeed with the exception of 1992 -- a difficult race from which to draw conclusions given Ross Perot’s on-again/off-again participation in the race -- every contest with an incumbent has broken at least three points toward the challenging party from this point in the race through Election Day.¶ And given the frequent comparisons to 2004, it’s worth bearing in mind where that race stood at this point. George Bush led by 6.8 points as opposed to Barack Obama’s current 2.9 percent. His bounce peaked at 50.4 percent, as opposed to Obama’s 49 percent. If Obama continues to run behind Bush on either metric by similar margins through Election Day, he loses.

#### Romney will win – historical trends and any Obama polling lead is just the post convention bounce

Cost 9/21 (Jay, staff writer for The Weekly Standard, Weekly Standard: Obama Isn't in Strong Shapehttp://www.npr.org/2012/09/21/161536810/weekly-standard-obama-isnt-in-strong-shape)

Conservatives are growing worried, and Democrats gleeful, about Obama's lead in the polls, basically for the same reason: it is late in the season (or so it seems), and the incumbent president has a lead. That is a good thing for Obama.¶ Perhaps, but three fundamental points need to be kept in mind.¶ First, Obama is weaker than previous incumbents who went on to victory. When we are looking through history, the only poll we can really utilize is Gallup if we want an apples-to-apples comparison. For better or worse, Gallup is the only polling organization consistently doing polling of registered voters since 1952. Even media outlets that have been polling a long time have changed pollsters over the years, so Gallup is the only game in town when we are investigating history.¶ Here is where Gallup has found incumbent presidents at this point, i.e. roughly mid-September, since 1956.¶ Through 2004 every incumbent who was above 50 percent at this point won, and every incumbent who was under 50 percent at this point lost. As of today, Obama is under 50 percent.¶ Additionally, most incumbents end up winning by a smaller margin (or losing by a larger one) than they are sporting in the Gallup poll at this point. The exceptions are Dwight Eisenhower in 1956, Gerald Ford in 1976 (who closed his rather large gap with Carter down to virtually nothing by Election Day), and George H.W. Bush in 1992 (whose position at this point was skewed by the temporary exit of Perot from the campaign). On average, the margin moves by 3.7 percent in favor of the challenger between the mid-September Gallup registered voter poll and the Election Day results.¶ The second point to keep in mind is that, yes, we are late in the season, but so was the Democratic National Convention. This president still appears to be enjoying a post-convention bounce. If you look at many of the polls in most of the RCP averages – both national and state – their survey dates began within one week of Obama's speech. If we figure that a bounce period lasts for two weeks, then no polls have been conducted outside the bounce period.¶ To appreciate just how late the DNC was this year, consider it in relation to past incumbent conventions in the postwar era.¶ In fact, this year's DNC was the latest incumbent convention in American history! That absolutely has to be taken into account when examining the president's standing in the polls, and it means we would be wise to discount his margin by a little bit.¶ Third, Obama and Romney have basically been trading leads in the Gallup poll since May. The only postwar incumbent who did not pull away early in the registered voter poll and still won was George W. Bush, whose victory also happens to have been the narrowest margin for an incumbent since 1916. (Truman trailed in polls of national adults through the summer and fall of 1948.)

#### Rasmussen polls are the best

Chambers 7/8 (Dean Chambers Arlington Conservative Examiner 7-8-2012 “Romney continues to consolidate lead in state polls” http://www.examiner.com/article/romney-continues-to-consolidate-lead-state-polls?cid=db\_articles)

I choose to cite surveys by Rasmussen Reports quite simply because they are the most accurate polling firm in the business. They were the closest of any pollsters to predicting the popular vote for both the 2008 and 2004 presidential elections. They called more gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races in the last several elections than any other polling firm. One other examiner that I will not name, who is clearly a leftist by his biographical information, has repeated this inaccurate claim that Rasmussen is biased toward Republicans. This is simply not true, nor have I heard any claim of that from a credible source. While it is believed that Scott Rasmussen comes from a politically liberal family, I have never seen any hint of bias from Scott himself in his interviews, writings, or his polling work. The bottom line is, Rasmussen Report is the industry standard, the most accurate, few others come close.

#### Silver is not a political scientist – even if his models are accurate at some times, you should not default to him.

Dickinson ‘10 – Professor of Political Science

Matthew, professor of political science at Middlebury College and taught previously at Harvard University where he worked under the supervision of presidential scholar Richard Neustadt. “Nate Silver Is Not A Political Scientist”. November 1, 2010

I’ve made this point before, most recently during the 2008 presidential campaign when Silver’s forecast model, with its rapidly changing “win” probabilities, made it appear as if voters were altering their preferences on a weekly basis. This was nonsense, of course, which is why the political science forecast models issued around Labor Day proved generally accurate. But in light of Silver’s column yesterday, it bears repeating: he’s not a political scientist. He’s an economist by training, but he’s really a weathercaster when it comes to predicting political outcomes. That is, he’s very adept at doing the equivalent of climbing to the top of Mt. Worth (a local skiing area for those not familiar with God’s Green Mountains), looking west toward Lake Champlain to see what the prevailing winds are carrying toward us, and issuing a weather bulletin for tomorrow. Mind you, this isn’t necessarily a knock on Silver’s work – he’s a damn good weathercaster. In 2008, his day—before election estimate came pretty close to nailing the Electoral College vote. More generally, at his best, he digs up intriguing data or uncovers interesting political patterns. At the same time, however, when it comes to his forecast models, he’s susceptible to the “Look Ma! No Hands!” approach in which he suggests the more numerous the variables in his model, the more effective it must be. In truth, as Sam Wang demonstrated in 2008, when his much simpler forecast model proved more accurate than Silver’s, parsimony can be a virtue when it comes to predictions. Why do I bring this up now? Because, in the face of conflicting data, weathercasters can become unstrung if they are used to simply reporting the weather without possessing much of a grasp of basic meteorology. In yesterday’s column which the more cynical among us (who, moi?) might interpret as a classic CYA move, Silver raises a number of reasons why current forecasts (read: his!) might prove hopelessly wrong. Now, I applaud all efforts to specify the confidence interval surrounding a forecast. But the lack of logic underling Silver’s presentation reveals just how little theory goes into his predictions. For instance, he suggests the incumbent rule – which he has spent two years debunking – might actually come into play tomorrow. (The incumbent rule says, in effect, that in close races, almost all undecideds break for the challenger). Silver has provided data suggesting this rule didn’t apply in 2006 or 2008. You would think, therefore, that he doesn’t believe in the incumbent rule. Not so! He writes, “So, to cite the incumbent rule as a point of fact as wrong. As a theory, however — particularly one that applies to this election and not necessarily to others — perhaps it will turn out to have some legs.” Excuse me? Why, if there’s no factual basis for the incumbent rule, will it turn out to apply in this election? The rest of the column rests on equally sketchy reasoning. Silver concludes by writing, “What we know, however, is that polls can sometimes miss pretty badly in either direction. Often, this is attributed to voters having made up (or changed) their minds at the last minute — but it’s more likely that the polls were wrong all along. These are some reasons they could be wrong in a way that underestimates how well Republicans will do. There are also, of course, a lot of reasons they could be underestimating Democrats; we’ll cover these in a separate piece.” Let me get this straight: it’s possible the polls are underestimating the Republican support. Or, they might be underestimating Democrats’ support. I think this means if his forecast model proves incorrect, it’s because the polls “were wrong all along”. Really? Might it instead have something to do with his model? Come on Silver – man up! As it is, you already take the easy way out by issuing a forecast a day before the election, in contrast to the political scientists who put their reputations on the line by Labor Day. Do you believe in your model or not? The bottom line: if you want to know tomorrow’s weather, a weathercaster is good enough. If you want to know what causes the weather, you might want to look elsewhere.

#### Florida is key to the election – other swing states aren’t actually as close and the Republican convention in Tampa proves

Turner 12 (Jim, political journalist for the Sunshine State News, August 28th, “Nikki Haley: The White House Contest Comes Down to Florida, http://www.sunshinestatenews.com/story/nikki-haley-white-house-contest-comes-down-florida)

PALM HARBOR | The Republican Party's decision to gather in Tampa to officially nominate former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney for president underlines what is quickly becoming an imperative for Romney: Carrying the Sunshine State.¶ Before the gavel banged to open the convention Monday, that message was clear, in part from the decision to have former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, one of the state's most popular political figures, and U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, one of the party's rising stars, assume prime-time speaking roles during this week's get-together, which culminates Thursday with Romney's speech.¶ But party figures now are beginning to actually voice the necessity of the state instead of just suggesting it.¶ "Florida, we need you," South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley told the Florida delegation during a breakfast. "We can't win this without Florida; we can't."¶ While Haley's remarks could be written off as a friendly gesture toward a swing state with which South Carolina shares a resort at the convention, they struck on a key truth: It would be incredibly difficult for Romney to win in November without carrying Florida.¶ In fact, if Obama were to carry Florida, and even if Romney were to win North Carolina, Romney would need to win a majority of the votes in the remaining swing states to win the Electoral College. But Obama has performed well in polls in many of the remaining states, especially large prizes like Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan.¶ Lenny Curry, chairman of the Republican Party of Florida, put it more bluntly when asked if Romney could lose the state and win the White House.¶ "No," Curry said. "Mitt Romney cannot win the presidency without Florida."