

# Forecasting Presidential Elections

- How can we best model presidential elections?
- Fun models
- Serious models

# Forecasting Presidential elections

- Can citizens forecast the winner?
  - National Election Study question, 1956-84, about 69 pct of respondents correctly forecast the winner (median survey date: Oct. 7 of election year)
  - model of these predictions: respondents tend to predict that their candidate will win; strength of party ID, attention to news coverage not significantly related to forecasting success

# Fun models

- Red Sox Model: Red Sox success/failure in the World Series in presidential election year exactly predicts Democratic success/failure in the election
  - 1904: Boston Pilgrims won AL pennant, but no World Series was held when NL champs (NY Giants) refused to play the AL champs. The Pilgrims had won the first “official” World Series in 1903. Teddy Roosevelt wins the presidency
  - 1912: the Red Sox (renamed in 1907) beat the Giants; Woodrow Wilson wins presidency
  - 1916: Red Sox beat the Brooklyn Robins; Wilson reelected
  - low-powered test. Not enough obs.