

# POLLS:

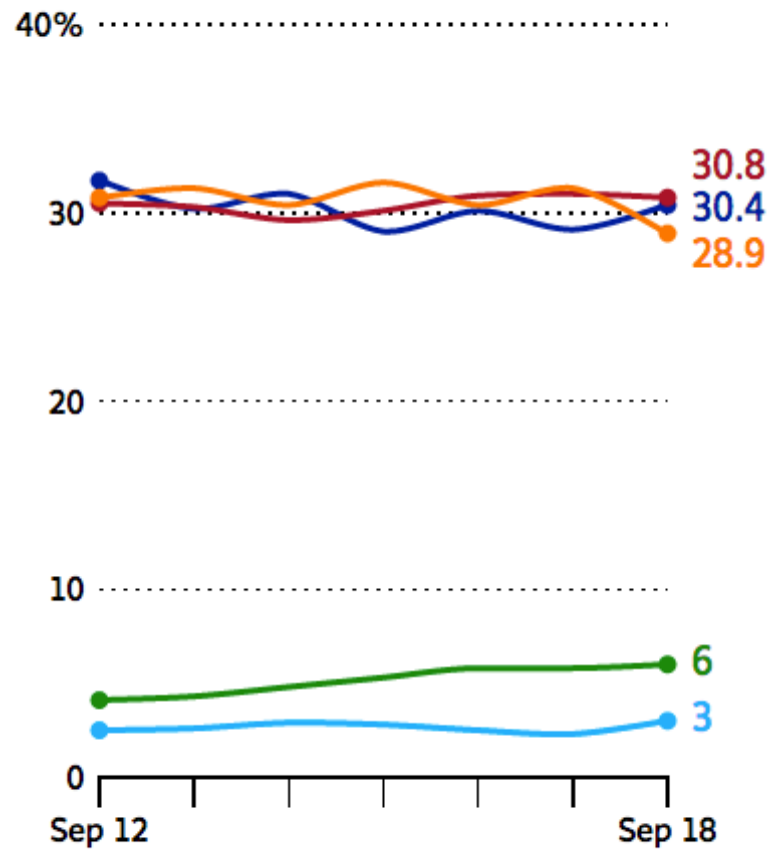
Math or magic?

# Today!

- What are the polls saying right now?
- What do we get right when talking about polls? What do we get wrong?
- What do national polls mean for your own home riding?

# What are the polls saying right now?

Nanos: Where the parties stand



SOURCE: Globe-CTV-Nanos

# The polls are close

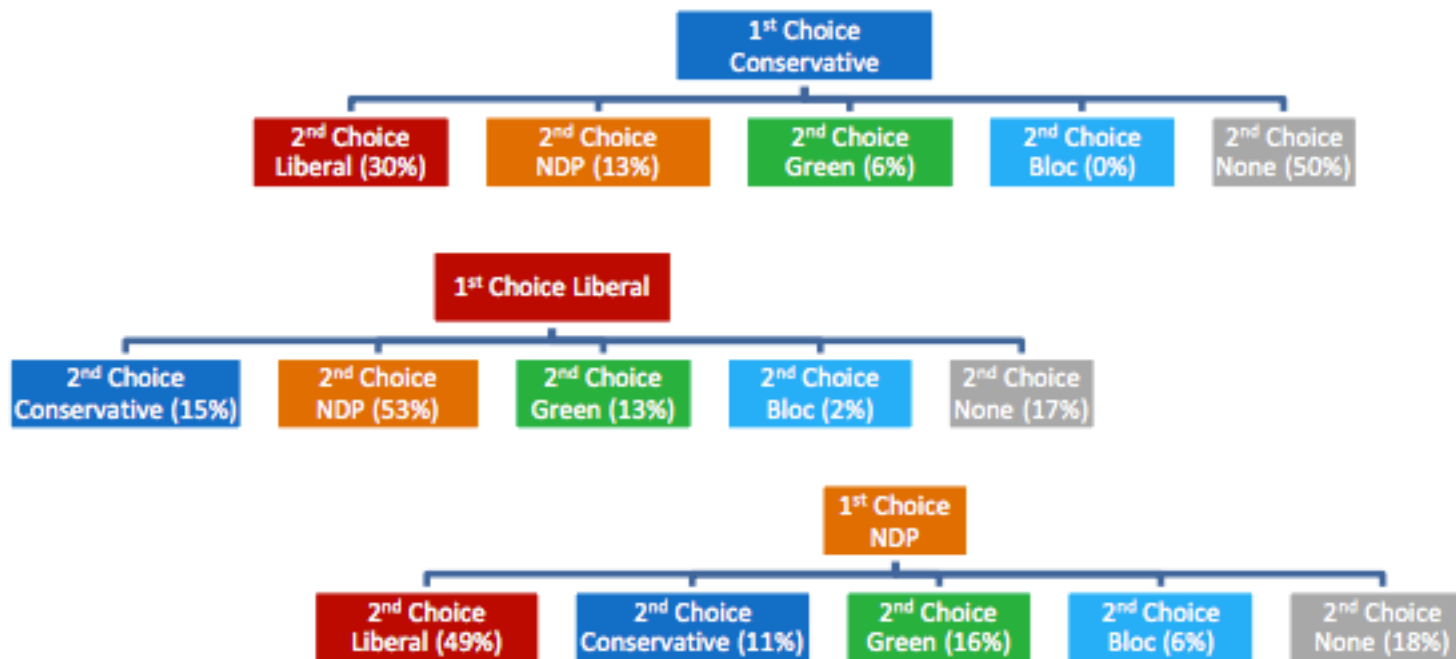
- The polls are close
  - If the election was today, anybody could win
  - The election still isn't for another 4 weeks
    - [http://itsalmo.st/#over\\_nf46u](http://itsalmo.st/#over_nf46u)
  - It doesn't mean that it's close everywhere

# Polling averages

	Con	NDP	Lib	BQ	Grn	Oth
AT	21%	30%	44%	0%	5%	1%
QC	16%	42%	22%	16%	3%	1%
ON	32%	27%	34%	0%	5%	1%
SM	41%	26%	27%	0%	5%	1%
AB	51%	24%	19%	0%	4%	2%
BC	29%	35%	26%	0%	9%	1%

# Why just first choices?

- Looking at second choice polling figures can help us figure out where the election might go



# Decisions...decisions...

- What about undecided voters?

<b>Ballot</b>	<b>Sept 18</b>
Conservative	30.4%
NDP	28.9%
Liberal	30.8%
Green	6.0%
Bloc	3.0%
<i>Undecided</i>	<i>10.4%</i>

# What do polls get wrong?

- Alberta, 2012

Polling Firm	Date of Polling	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP
<i>Election 2012</i>	<i>April 23, 2012</i>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>9.8</b>
Forum Research	April 22, 2012 	36	<b>38</b>	10	12
Forum Research	April 21, 2012 	32	<b>41</b>	10	13
Angus Reid	April 20–21, 2012 	32	<b>41</b>	13	11
Campaign Research	April 19, 2012 	34	<b>41</b>	11	11
Abacus Data	April 18–19, 2012 	31	<b>41</b>	12	13
ThinkHQ Public Affairs	April 17–18, 2012 	33	<b>41</b>	11	11
Forum Research	April 16, 2012 	33	<b>40</b>	10	12
Leger Marketing	April 13–16, 2012 	36	<b>42</b>	9	10
Return on Insight	April 13–14, 2012 	36	<b>43</b>	11	9



# What do polls get wrong?

- Read the fine print!

The Forum Poll™ was conducted by Forum Research with the results based on an interactive voice response telephone survey of 1949 randomly selected residents of Alberta aged 18 or older. The poll was conducted on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012.

Results based on the total sample are considered accurate +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. Subsample results will be less accurate. Margins of error for subsample (such as age, gender) results are available at [www.forumresearch.com/samplestim.asp](http://www.forumresearch.com/samplestim.asp).

Where appropriate, the data has been statistically weighted to ensure that the sample reflects the actual population according to the latest Census data.

# What do polls get wrong?

- Check:
  - Undecided voters
  - The sample size & margin of error
  - The date the poll was taken
  - The method used to take the poll

## What do polls say about your local riding?

- Not a lot– directly.
- Some local riding polls
  - Be careful of sponsored polls

# What do polls say about your local riding?

- The Globe's Election Forecast
  - <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/globe-election-forecast-2015/article25377958/>

# What do polls say about your local riding?

- The Globe's Election Forecast
  - Uniform swing
  - Polls
- Error
  - Polling error
  - Voters who change their minds
  - Time left in the election
  - Swing error
  - Unusual local riding effects

# What do polls say about your local riding?

- Vote national? Vote local?
  - Lots of research shows that only a small % of the vote is influenced by the local candidate
  - Nonetheless, in a parliamentary system one is voting for a local candidate

## Polls: Math or magic?

- Mostly math!
- Some magic
  - Interpret them carefully and they can tell you things
- Local ridings
  - There are ways to make them help you with your decision... but... be cautious.