

Social science takes spotlight bow in election

November 26, 2012

USA Today:

Polls, and pollsters, took a star turn on this year's election night, calling the presidential election days ahead of the outcome.

Pundits and politicians look a little less bright, on the other hand, after a presidential race that many of them saw as too close to call turned out to be effectively over before midnight on Tuesday. Everyone from conservative nabob George Will to liberal gadfly Dana Milbank criticized prominent poll aggregator Nate Silver of *The New York Times*, for example, in the run-up to the election. Silver proved more prescient than they predicted, however.

President Obama's re-election came with 61 million votes, over-matching Mitt Romney's 58 million nationwide. Overall, 28 pre-election polls in the days before the election had Obama winning by an average of 1.07%. Turns out it was 2.2%.

Polling expert Jon Krosnick of Stanford University called it, "a victory for survey research. The surveys accurately anticipated the election outcomes, just as they routinely have in recent decades."

Read the whole story: [USA Today](#)