It's perhaps unsurprising that some of the same people that deny the overwhelming data on climate change also happened to deny the overwhelming data presented by Nate Silver of the New York Times about the likely outcome of the election yesterday. Silver, the sports-statistician-turned-poll-analyzer, used aggregate poll data and analysis to show that Obama had consistent leads both electorally and in the popular vote. Many Romney supporters derided Silver and his forecast model, citing outlier pro-Romney polls from Gallup and Rasmussen and using their megaphones on Fox News and the Drudge Report to make it seem like the country was poised to vote for Romney.

Nate Silver: the Hurricane Sandy of election forecasting?

Sound familiar? The same process of "Nate Silver Denialism" seems to be at work with climate change denialists on the right. As with the focus on right-leaning polls, climate denialists cherry-pick outlier weather events, such as cold snaps in the spring or summer, to obfuscate global trends. They ignore the overwhelming evidence on global warming the same way pundits disregarded aggregate polling data. And they use media machines to create an alternate reality, whether it's about an impending Romney victory or doubt that the planet is warming. In both cases, their zeal to find data that confirm their biases hijacks a rational assessment of the evidence.

The ultimate poster child for this dynamic is George Will. The same pundit who derides climate change scientists as "alarmists" also predicted a Romney landslide, complete with a Romney win in the Democratic stronghold of Minnesota. In both cases, he ignored all the contrary data to justify the outcome he wanted. Others on the right fit the same pattern of Nate Silver and climate change denialism, including Michael Barone, Laura Ingraham, and Newt Gingrich (to be fair, a few conservative pundits who failed miserably at electoral prognostication do in fact admit climate change is real and caused by humans).

Last night, Silver's forecasts were confirmed, and reality caught up with the denialists. So will the magnitude of their erroneous predictions cause them to rethink how they analyze other data-driven issues like climate change? I'm not getting my hopes up. But events like Hurricane Sandy show that there are other ways that reality can start to pierce the denialist bubble. And as Democrats develop a new agenda for 2016, my guess is that climate change — or at least a

national renewable energy and energy efficiency policy — will rise to the top. At some point, reality prevails. At least I hope it will.