

## When Experts Are Wrong

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Standard theory has it that “mid-term elections” serve as a “referendum on the President.”

In a typical article this weekend, a political scientist trotted out that common wisdom and then went on to say that “control of the referendum has shifted. It is now a referendum on leadership, on character . . . and that’s not good news for Donald Trump.”

My crystal ball is in the repair shop, but I have my doubts. The “experts” got the 2016 election

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so wrong in no small part because they were leveraging their expertise to *influence* the outcome more than *understand* the contest.

Academics, journalists and other Democrats *want* today’s votes to serve as a “referendum on leadership” because they yearn for *their* leaders



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and not Trump.

In a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed and a Slate follow-up interview, Yale computer scientist David Gelernter explored the lack of “rapport between the left and what I consider the average American.” He also dismissed as absurd the idea that Donald Trump is racist — a mainstay of the Democratic critique of the president. What Trump is, instead, is “the average American in exaggerated form — blunt, simple, willing to fight, mistrustful of intellectuals” but completely without “constraints to cramp his style except the ones he himself invents.”

The Democrats, meanwhile, “have no issues” — except their hatred of Trump, argues Gelernter.

Thankfully, the mid-terms often serve as a check on the power of sitting presidents. But if “average Americans” hear the reasons to vote for the opposition party as all about how racist and xenophobic Trump is, it may work no better than in the last election.

Prophecy’s a tricky business.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.