



# FeatureSection

## POLITICS

### Political Predictions for New Year



By **RICHARD BRODSKY**

I always thought it remarkable that journalists got to rip apart events after the fact. That's too easy. The trick is to figure things out before they occur. New Year political predictions are a perfect place to begin.

Two caveats: First, events and therefore predictions will be dominated by Andrew Cuomo. Second, 50 percent accuracy counts as a home run. I hope this is worth reading a year from now.

**CUOMO-KLEIN:** The key dynamic in Albany will be how long the Cuomo-Jeff Klein relationship lasts. It's served both men well. But Cuomo, who is tacking to the right on economic issues to forestall the Republican candidate, is under state and national pressure to create a Democratic majority in the Senate. He'll work with the Republicans and the Klein-led Independent Democratic Caucus through the budget. He needs them to push his tax cuts, something regular Dems don't like. He'll then pivot and

try to broker a Democratic reconciliation, or push for the regular Dems in primary elections.

**CUOMO-SILVER:** Shelly Silver, the great survivor, is recovering his strength. He shines in the kind of budget negotiations that are about to begin. His members and interest groups will see him as the best chance to stop or mitigate Cuomo's estate and business tax cuts that are so unpopular with most Dems. Cuomo will see the same thing. Both men need each other, so an accommodation is likely. Shelly gets re-elected speaker, with Cuomo's grudging OK.

**CUOMO-RODHAM CLINTON:** Cuomo has read the handwriting on the wall, and has correctly figured out that he doesn't win against Hillary, electorally or even PR-wise. An uneasy peace reigns. Neither one will do much to affect Cuomo's very likely re-election or her probable ascension to the presidency. But if you hear teeth grinding in both camps, don't be surprised.

**CUOMO-DeBLASIO:** The most intriguing relationship of all. They need each other, and get along personally. But they're

polar opposites on economic policy and in their needs in 2014. DeBlasio needs cash for the city; Cuomo wants tax cuts. They will both try to negotiate a deal. Watch Howard Glaser for Cuomo and Dean Fuleihan for DeBlasio, both skilled deal-makers. But if it falls apart, it will not be pretty.

**CUOMO-EVERYONE ELSE:** Schneiderman, DiNapoli, the unions, the business community, interest groups and eventually voters will knuckle under to New York's most effective political operation since Nelson Rockefeller. Cuomo is a strong governor and no one — no one — wants to get in his way. His vulnerability is on policy and fiscal matters, but his \$30 million war chest, take-no-prisoners style and the collapse of the Republican Party is powerful stuff.

**SURPRISES:** Watch the Conservative and Working Families parties. Both are likely to follow the lead of the Republican and Democratic big boys.

But both will try to exact some kind of ideological victory. WFP will be pushing against the tax cuts and for campaign finance

reform. Will Cuomo stiff them, or will a deal be reached?

Watch for Syracuse Mayor Stephanie Miner to continue as the Democrats' alternative to Cuomo. She's carved out sensible positions on the fiscal mess in local government, and has a winning way with the public. Cuomo will try to make her life miserable, but she's positioned as a leading, next-wave statewide candidate.

Cuomo, Schniederman and DiNapoli all win big in November. Unless the municipal fiscal crisis comes as hard to New York as it has in Michigan. Then it gets interesting.

Bloomberg buys a big NYC newspaper and returns to the scene. There's no predicting what happens when a politician becomes a journalist.

Happy New Year.

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