



WI Senator '12

	+9.9	BALDWIN (D)	51.4%		THOMPSON (R)	41.5%
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Obama Job Approval (Foreign Policy)

	+9.5	APPROVE	50.8%	DISAPPROVE	41.3%
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Dylanology & the Birther Conspiracy



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2012 Presidential Dashboard

US President '12

	+4.9	OBAMA (D)	49.1%		ROMNEY (R)	44.2%
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Swing States	Obama	Romney	Margin
Ohio	49.8%	43.8%	+ 6.0
Va.	49.1%	45.2%	+ 3.9
Fla.	49.8%	45.5%	+ 4.3
N.C.	47.0%	46.7%	+ 0.3
Colo.	49.1%	45.7%	+ 3.4
Pa.	50.0%	42.1%	+ 7.9
Iowa	49.1%	43.1%	+ 6.0

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JOSH MARSHALL - SEPTEMBER 21, 2012, 8:47 PM | 45077

We're all individuals, with our own uniquenesses, contradictions and oddities. Yet if you tell a demographer a few key pieces of information about yourself they can give pretty good odds on the range of viewpoints you're likely to have, life patterns you follow and choices you've made.

Some people though somehow break the mold.

Today we reported on one of the new strains of 'birtherism' — one that says, yes, Barack Obama was born in the United States but was also born to a secret father (not the guy from Kenya) who was an active member of the Communist party and therefore ... well, you can probably imagine the 'therefore'.

Anyway, this has all been chronicled together in a new documentary that is hot on the 'birther' circuit called 'Dreams From My Real Father.'

You might have your own idea about the kind of dude who would come up with something like this. But how about this? The guy who made the documentary is named Joel Gilbert and aside from a couple other whacky rightwing docs what he mainly does is churn out an endless series of documentaries about Bob Dylan. And hagiographic would be something of an understatement.

In fact, he has his own Dylan tribute band and seems to model his hair-care to emulate mid-1970s Dylan.

Now, I'd like to say that I found out this information through high-powered journalistic sleuthing but well ... not exactly.

As some of you know, I'm something of a Dylan fanatic myself. And I've actually bought a few of Gilbert's docs on iTunes. The production qualities aren't the highest. They're a little hokey in places. And he doesn't manage to land the interviews with the really critical people in Dylan's life. But he gets people that if you're really into Dylan are kind of interesting to hear from. So

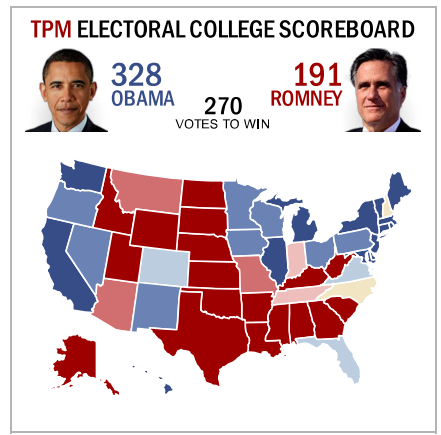
maybe they ain't classics but I confess that they interested me enough that I bought more than one of them. And Gilbert himself is the in-person narrator on all these films. So you see a lot of him.

Now fast forward to earlier this year. We did a write up when the 'Dreams From My Real Father' was released. And afterwards some legal letters were exchanged over a short excerpt of the movie we published with the story. So one night I'm sitting here at my desk at home reviewing where we are in the dispute and deciding what we're going to do when I think ... *Joel Gilbert*. I know that name. And then, 'Holy Crap, this is the guy who does those weird Dylan docs!!!' It can't be the same guy. But it is the same guy!

It took me a second to sort out the worlds collide moment. Because if you're a big fan of an artist at some level you imagine (baselessly) that you're a kindred spirit somehow with everyone else who is. And yet here I am (or there I was) realizing that I'm on the verge of a lawsuit with this dude over his completely loopy documentary about how Obama is some sort of Afro-Marxist Manchurian candidate.

Now, how these two things fit together I really have no idea. Dylan's politics are largely inscrutable. As a devotee of Dylan's lyrics I would suggest there's an undernoted strain of cultural conservatism lurking in some of their recesses. And yet, well, *c'mon*, I got no idea.

But there you go, that's the Dylan chapter of the Birther Conspiracy World.



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