Twitter Thread by David Roberts

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This is the raw truth of the conservative psyche, right here. The core of it all.

> Laura Ingraham: "What if we just cut off the unemployment? Hunger is a pretty powerful thing."
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> Bar Rescue guy: "They only feed a military dog at night, because a hungry dog is an obedient dog. Well, if we are not causing people to be hungry to work..." pic.twitter.com/Pw5C6n6l02
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> — Justin Baragona (@justinbaragona) August 13, 2021

One core conviction of reactionaries is that everyone is selfish, everyone is out for themselves, their family, their tribe, that *no one* acts in a pro-social or moral or responsible manner except under threat.

That's what God & religion are to them -- permanent threat of punishment, the only thing that could possibly induce large numbers of people to behave. Without that threat, everyone will just revert to brutal, callous selfishness, right?

Important to note that this is pure projection. Empirical research is clear that when it comes to training -- training pets, training kids, training employees -- *positive reinforcement* is overwhelmingly more effective than punishment or threat of punishment.

People behave well & perform well when they are empowered, when they feel valued, when they have a sense of agency & efficacy, NOT when they are cowed & beaten like starved dogs. Reactionaries can't accept this -- they quite literally can't imagine or envision it.

In reactionary world, there are only hierarchies, only dominance & submission, & the only way to get what you want is to be dominant, which means imposing pain & humiliation on those below you until they comply.

This is why the world is full of shitty bosses - people are socialized into this twisted worldview & come to think only "being feared" can make them effective. But talk to anyone who's worked for a successful org & you'll hear about bosses who listen to, see, & empower employees.

To get back to a thread I wrote the other day, it's not "realism" to say "people will be lazy unless they are forced to work by the threat of starvation." It's pure projection from emotionally stunted people who themselves wouldn't raise a finger for anyone else unless forced.