Twitter Thread by Rachel "The Doc" Bitecofer ■■■



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1. From convo on @Morning_Joe today about @DrIbram's new article which asks that progressive policy not be blamed for D losses/underperformance.

One of my main concerns is intraparty factionalism/fighting. Everything a "moderate" & "progressive"

2. D fights- a R gets a vote. Certainly radical (and yes, defunding police departments IS radical) policy proposals that fall on the outside bands of the distribution are less attractive to this idealized "swing" voter who is, in our minds eye" always a high info, high reasoning.

3. I guess you'd call them a "fine dining" type voter. But we KNOW that actually, most swing voters are NOT like this. Don't believe me- check out @axios Swing Voter Project, which ran focus groups with Obama to Trump voters through the whole cycle. https://t.co/B3WEyCLZF9

4. Indeed, what @richthau learned about America's "deciders" is likely to haunt his sleep for ever as it personified a sticker I keep in my office which is a quote from George Carlin: "Never underestimate the power of stupid people in large groups." (K.I.M. when we talk "stupid"

5. on my threads about people, we're not talking IQ, or overall stupid. We're talking civics. We're talking about political literacy. Very smart, successful people can't name their senators or their governor & are thus, civically stupid. And I'm sorry, not sorry for labeling them

6. as such. As a country, as a political culture, we're big on rights, but not on responsibilities that come with them. In other words, we're shirkers. Now, to be fair, its not really our fault. Once it became clear that grifting was a lot easier with a dumb public, the dumbing

7. of the public became a feature, not a bug. We basically have no political culture, certainly not one that tells citizens "you must tend to the gardens of your democracy to ensure it grows strong & stays healthy" and that is something we need to start fixing NOW so that in

8. 30 years, we can start to yield some benefits. But I digress. The political commentary/analysis has one frame, one paradigm to discuss political phenomena under, and like many things in the polarized era, it is no longer applicable- but the analysis forges on anyway. Here's a

9. a counterfactual that will demonstrate how little issues matter to election outcomes. The entire GOP has shifted far to the Right & is running on defund the police. I mean think about the GOP platform this fall. That platform, which they didn't bother to pen, was "whatever our

10. aspiring dictator says. And what WAS the aspiring dictator saying? He was saying he planned to restart the family separation program on the border and orphan MORE children heartlessly to join the 600+ already in the fed gov's permanent custody. If you are raped or dying of

11. cancer MAYBE we'll let you get an abortion to save your own life. Maybe. Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act- all gutted. I could keep going. Did I mention that the modal position of your average congressional/Senate Republican on the question of "what

12. should the federal gov do to help Americans survive economic disruption from COVID?" is NOTHING. The modal position of Senate Rs- 30+ of them is NO AID. That's bc the entire Republican Party is a party of extremists. All of its positions are now extreme. Its radical wing

13. started to take control of the party in 2010, exerted real influence- I mean enough where the party was radicalized & holding the control hostage- shutting it down over symbolic debt ceiling raises & forces fed workers to go w/o pay, closing down DC, for what amounts to a

14. policy temper-tantrum over Obamacare (they were so upset that 23 million people GOT insurance for the 1st time AND that 100 million of us, for the 1st time got GOOD insurance, insurance that actually paid for everything, that covered preventative shit instead of telling you,

15. if you want mammograms or colonoscopies- pay for it out of pocket. THIS is what had the GOP all a twitter, the biggest irony, of course, being that it was THEIR DAMN PLAN!!! But so extremist & radical was the Republican Party becoming that they shut down the entire country

16. trying to force Obama to veto his own healthcare law. BC THAT's normal behavior from a serious, governing party that appeals to the median voter.

And yet, do you know what happened? In those 2014 Midterms- they GAINED SEATS!!

They completely abandoned the middle of the

17. electorate, they didn't just touch a third rail of American Politics- they RODE that rail like a wave at Mavericks and yet they wiped out the entire Blue Dog Caucus of the Democrats (but only gained a couple more House seats bc @MichaelSteele only left a few behind in his net

18. 63 seat route in the 2010 Midterms, when again, right after destroying the American middle class, as the American economy was still sliding down from their previous management, their superior electioneering led to their 2010 pounding of the Ds by turning centrist policy

19. Obamacare/ACA) into RADICAL policy.

Which brings me to my point. The GOP has been able to fall into total control of extremists (the metamorphosis completed when Trump became the nominee & then cemented the GOP --> MAGA version of the GOP with his "thread the needle" 2016

20. which was accomplished in no small part by the Rep Party's strategic efforts to get Dems to beat themselves (a strategy they are keen to deploy on Dems again for the 2022 Midterms) and PAY NO PENALTY WITH THE MIDDLE OF THE ELECTORATE. Yet, at the same time, the Democrats have

21. taken great pains to be as appealing to moderates/the middle as possible & have made, arguably no gains. They won the presidency, yes, but not just bc of "moderates." They won bc of massive participation surges of Dem coalition voters- in order of surge size-college ed whites

22. Latinos, and Black voters. And its easy to point at the surge size adv of college ed whites & say "see, its not worth investing in voters of color its too hard to turn them out" but what you're doing there (@davidshor) is voters of color are by & large (outside of GA & THANK

23. GOD, the state party chairs in MI, WI, PA, & AZ which themselves ran field on low propensity voters of color) ignored by campaigns- not invested in, or dramatically underinvested in, and then their low turnout is pointed at for justification of low investment. Meanwhile, the

24. 1 group, college ed voters most likely to surge on their own, get the most heavy investment. I mean ludicrous investment. So it should be no surprise that they bury everyone else (it wasn't to me- I predicted it, as well as yuge GOP turnout). Again, to win, you have to match

25. the GOP's ballot %. You can win the "ideas" war, but if the GOP outvotes you, you're losing the race. THIS is one reason why they pay no price for their extremism.

The other is that Dems have never bothered to tie the GOP to their extremism.

Again, we'll be changing that.

26. I want to add- if you enjoy these threads, soon they'll be moving to The Cycle, which will be hosted on @SubstackInc. After a few years of doing everything for free (I could afford to, I had W-2 jobs to support my family!) I am now transitioning to trying my hand at

27. media/writing/podcasting/lectures/etc as a career (as well as Super Pac work) in a weird fusion that I believe no one has ever really done at the same time before. I'm excited about it, bc my vision is that my work the Super Pac (I can't wait to reveal the name- its so hard

28. to keep it a secret from y'all!) will inform my writing/reporting/podcast over on The Cycle, and that I can use The Cycle to bring YOU into the Super Pac, and esp into the creative process of the ad creation room and stuff like that. Why? BC that's what I would want if I was

29. you and not me. When I was a prof- I always tried to make my classes my dream class. Something that would have knocked my socks off when I was an undergrad. I will bring the same mentality to The Cycle. Given this is something I am hoping you will be monetarily invested in

30. I very much want it to deliver for you and give you "value added." So, my goal will be to create a substack that gives as much as it takes and makes you feel like you are learning. Believe it or not, I'm actually very risk adverse. I rem how surprised @OldBullTV was to find

31. that out when he 1st reached out about doing a show. Yes, the lady who twice now has proclaimed w no equivocation that Ds would win the House & then then the presidency months ahead of both contests HATES taking risks. And yet here I am, now shoulders deep into launching not

32. one, but TWO W-9 style gigs that will compromise the whole of her financial future: its terrifying! I know I'm the one that's supposed to be uber confident & bad ass-so I'll def not going to admit that I'm terrified. Like getting a root canal- I just want to get it over with!