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



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1. I am thankful that at 12pm 1/20 the powers of the prez will be removed from the most dangerous person who has ever held them. I am thankful for the many wonderful fellow Americans from across the spectrum that joined me to help get him out & save America from authoritarianism

2. I am thankful for each & every person that had to make a hard decision, stay silent & normalize this man & his party's actions- which mirror so closely actions taken by other leaders & parties as they moved to consolidate power at the expense of democracy (as documented so

3. clearly by @anneapplebaum's book Twilight of Democracy) bc their lock on power is threatened. Those of us that took a holistic look at events in the U.S., the scope of the Right's propaganda network, and the lengths to which GOP influencers (electeds & media) were willing to

4. go to manipulate public opinion and knew without a shadow of a doubt that we were facing a five alarm fire. Trump, as dumb & self-sabotaging as he is, does one thing perfectly well- manipulate public opinion. Trump fully understands that public opinion flows from the top-down,

5. and that when you control the information diet of a group of people, as the Right is controlled, that manipulation level reaches profound levels. By the time Trump came down the golden escalator in May of 2015- the Republican electorate was primed for someone like him to come

6. along. By 2015- natural skepticism in institutions, government, and the media on Fox News, talk radio, and the internet had made millionaires out of a class of Fear Capitalists who collectively, were reshaping the Republican electorate's political behavior. What's a Fear

7. Capitalists? My research argues they are individuals who enrich themselves by offering sensationalized political commentary or "analysis." Commentary that uses heightened or inflammatory rhetoric, especially about the opposition party, misrepresents information or data- even

8. outright lying to do so, in order to invoke emotions such as negative partisanship in their audiences because such content performs well in the political marketplace, providing incentives for these individuals to purposely create content that degrades US political culture,

9. civic cooperation & knowledge, and a healthy body politic. Rush Limbaugh is a Fear Capitalist on the Right. And yes, there ARE Fear Capitalists on the Left. This is because the financial incentives are very, very attractive. If your content is like mine, analytical, data-based

10. wonky and somber your audience size is in one category. If your content in like Cenk Ugar's- growth capability is much better. People are similar in their media content as they are with food. They like sugar highs. They like junk food. They prefer a diet high on junk food

11. and low on vegetables. They want to have their beliefs about the terribleness of the other side confirmed and in the most outlandish of ways. They want their own world view confirmed and opposing world views discounted and exposed in the most embarrassing ways possible- even

12. that means heavy editing, or taking things significantly out of context is needed to do so. Sit down and watch one of these Fear Capitalist on the Right walk through Trump's allegations of massive fraud in the election and imagine your a fan of the president, who trusts Fox

13. News as the ONLY reliable source of news, and you can easily see how 40% of voters become convinced the election was stolen from Trump. And all this time, what people don't really realize is the money that's being made. By the networks, by the Rush Limbaugh Show, by Hannity.

14. Fear is BIG business and its never been better than right now.

On here, people will often ask, "how can people support this man?!"

The Fear Capitalists now control the information diet of almost 1/2 the country.

Back when the impeachment hearings happened, I listened to

15. right-wing media every day. Now, its important to note that in many places, right-wing media is also known as local media. A listener might not know the difference if you're not politically sophisticated. When I 1st learned of Rush Limbaugh I was 16, 17 and I found him via

16. my radio's dial. I was a weird kid, so I was intrigued to find someone on the radio talking about news & current events. Keep in mind, this was 1990s Rush- so as bad as he was, he was 1000% less terrible than he is now. He did not overtly tell people back then that he was

17. a Right wing stooge. I had to put that together myself via listening to him. But I was not very political back then, today's Zoomers are much better informed than I was, maybe bc the internet makes it SO MUCH easier to find information. The day time coverage from Fox News is

18. much less explicitly Republican, as is the day time coverage on MSNBC much less explicitly Democratic. The evening programs are the "editorial" programming. That said, the ideological biases affect coverage at all times and for the impeachment hearings, coverage from right

19. right wing sources was night to day from coverage every where else. As I mentioned back then, 1 right wing radio host got an update as to the activity from the House hearing the day before from his guest. That day was the day that Ambassador Taylor recounted for the committee

20. and the world, witnessing a phone call between Trump & Ambassador Sondland (in the middle of a crowded restaurant, no less) in which Trump pressured Sondland to get Ukraine's president to cooperate on digging up dirt on Biden, and that THIS, not other matters, was the most

21. pressing Ukraine/US matter to Trump. That was kind of a bombshell. BUT, not on right wing media- where they simply failed to report it. Our guest's commentary was that the day before was a big let down for Democrats that if anything, it'd been a terrible day for Joe Biden bc

22. all of the evidence that Hunter Biden had been engaged in corruption (there was literally none of this other than in weird, disjointed statements by Rep members of the committee). This is a good way to explain how warped reality has become to your average Republican American.

23. This was one day, one show, one topic. But this is the modus operandi of how the entire right wing propaganda system is meant to operate, and Trump instinctively knew how to manipulate it for maximum benefit. BC of this network, reality is construed for about 60 million

24. Americans. They are shielded from the reality of what is actually happening among their own elected officials (so again, the reason they can stand what Trump is doing is they don't know about almost any of it and stuff that breaks through then gets refined by the machine into

25. a favorable story line. If you believed the same things Republicans believed about Trump, the Republican Party, status of issues/policy/etc in America, and the Democratic Party as your average Republican- then your vote is perfectly rational. Of course, few of what these

26. Americans know IS real reality (and Republicans, right-leaning Republicans reading this thread that doubt this- go read international news. There is, luckily, a way of determining which reality is the real one and its not yours! The GOP is deft at manipulating information &

27. argument to justify their positions and actions, so long as they are within certain controlled environments. But the @ossoff debate w Perdue is a great example of what happens when they are stripped of the protections afforded to them by controlled environs and come up

28. against competent opponents in a space like a debate where there is exposure. That is why Perdue won't expose himself a 2nd time. The information lock is the problem that underlies many of the other problems that we want to fix. For example, if Biden has any hope of a post-

29. partisan world (color me doubtful but I agree that with the whole of the Republican Party now willing to tell voters that our elections are fraudulent when they damn well know they aren't) we have no choice but to open this administration with an opening bid of ending the

30. current warfare, and as I pointed out yesterday, if McConnell chose to, he singularly would have significant influence in pushing the GOP back from the ledge. But I am doubtful he personally wants to do so, as sad as that is. Until and unless Republican voters are not having

31. their minds poisoned by the Right's propaganda machine, it is hard to imagine the mass public over there moderating. McConnell faces a reality where there are more Republican voters that are of the Trump type than there are that see the current track as dangerous and want

32. more sanity. That's because the information diet is heavily Fear Capitalist- the Tucker Carlson's, Sean Hannity's and Judge Jeanine's are making mad money spreading their poison and driving the Republican base nuts. Definitely interested in people's thoughts as to how you

33. break through a propaganda network problem in a country where the 1st Amend likely prevents any regulations on speech (other country's regulate speech & campaigns in ways that prevent something like Fox News from operating as it does in the U.S.)