Twitter Thread by Amanda Marcotte



Amanda Marcotte
@AmandaMarcotte

The argument against moving slightly slower on impeachment than it takes to send a tweet was something like, "It's the only way to get Republicans!"

Looks like that was ass-backwards, as anyone who understands basic psychology should have understood.

The notion that people change their minds immediately after an earth-shattering or traumatic situation that proves their priors wrong is not true. It often doesn't start to work until they've had some time to really sit with what happened to them. Which we're seeing here.

Indeed, if you interview anyone who works at a DV shelter, you'll find that one of the biggest advantages of getting a woman away from an abuser is so she can have a moment to herself to think and to realize she needs to leave him for good.

There were factors working against this tendency. For instance, widespread support for the coup from GOP voters may make some Republican politicians shaky. But on the psychological front, the notion that a trauma immediately changes opinions is more Hollywood logic than reality.

The larger point here is anyone who is absolutely certain they have the right answer, especially something like the exact timeline for impeachment, is talking out of their ass. The reality is this situation is chaotic, with lots of moving pieces. So really anything could happen.

I wanted Democrats to move more quickly, but I recognize that's about my own gratification. So I tempered that urge to say "because I feel this way, it must be true." Maybe it is. Maybe it isn't. But it's not good reasoning to prioritize rationalizing feelings.

Pulling away from that human tendency to say, "This is what I want, and so I must be right and people who disagree must have stupid or sinister motives," it was easy to see that Democrats had solid reasons for taking a week. They may be wrong or right, but they were rational.

Ultimately, we will never know if it was smarter to give it a week or if doing it in 48 hours was the better call. No magic ball here! But arguments for taking more time weren't irrational, and so far are paying off. (More evidence came out, GOP

members started to get on board.)

Sometimes people disagree with you because they are stupid or evil. But in cases where the "correct" answer is not actually clear, intellectual humility is a gift. Check out this video, a helpful and short explainer on how to know that. =https://t.co/DeBELw5MY4

Ultimately, despite all the heat of the 48 hours vs. a week debate, no one really knew what the best "play" here was. Which is why I suspect considerations like getting their ducks in a row and whipping the caucus were the guiding factors.

It's very easy on Twitter to imagine every breath that a politician takes is a chess move, but a lot of the time, it's actually boring shit like caucus management or bureaucratic issues.

This is also a valid concern. And that's what I mean about "it's complicated." On one hand, giving Republicans time to absorb the situation is a rational argument. But fearing that they'll use that time to regress to the mean is also rational. https://t.co/fIL0iYpuve

> That's the difference this time, isn't it? Every previous awful thing from Trump regressed to the mean after a week or two. This time it was a direct physical trauma to the legislators.
>
> I guess it should have been obvious, since that's always how they work.
>
> — keV (@krBoyce) January 13, 2021

And that's my larger point. Team Do It Now and Team It's Okay To Wait A Couple Days had good points. And no one can honestly say they knew for sure what the right answer was. So dial down the heat a little.