



**Molly McKew** @MollyMcKew

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I'm normally not in the country during the extended pre-primary presidential electioneering mayhem. Getting to watch a bit this yr is interesting.

Credit to CNN: 5 hrs of townhalls def more informative than 5 hrs of pundits talking about POTUS. Some reflections on today's: /1

(Caveat, no endorsements here, these are observations offered as a sometimes-political consultant. I don't know what the magic formula for voters is this cycle anymore than anyone else.) /2

1- Senator [@amyklobuchar](#) has this way of talking about policy as personal storytelling that is incredibly sincere & what we tend to categorize as "Midwestern". She comes across as practical, no-BS, un-radical, and un-"elite" (each of those may or may not be good this cycle!) /3

2- when I hear Senator [@ewarren](#), I realize how absolutely misrepresented she has been by prior media coverage (being "hillaryed" as one student said). She has some of the best personal storytelling of cycle so far, representing life experience that an American leader can use.../4

...Whether you agree with her policy proposals or not, she does her homework, understands how those ideas impact households/ pocketbooks, explains it. It's unfair/annoying for media to pin her to Bernie as an either/or. Not the same. For one, she is clear on Russia issues. /5

3- Sen Sanders hour made it clear that he can literally say anything & millennials/gen Z will cheer. I fail to understand how the most innovative, inclusive generations ever can think the oldest president ever would represent them. It's more anti-system fervor, & very Trumpian /6

4- Senator [@KamalaHarris](#) has a zillion-dollar smile, but often deflects on personal storytelling. I wish she wouldn't, b/c she has actually done a hell of a lot in her career, & when she talks about it, it's powerful. She answers questions in a structured/analytical way... /7

...but she scored a lot of applause on points she made to young people, which was interesting. It was clear this audience was glad to ask questions to a person of color. She answered these in a largely unifying way. /8

5- roar from crowd for Mayor [@PeteButtigieg](#), followed by hilarious exchange where

Anderson Cooper asks about his website & answer is essentially "yeah young people don't look at websites?" (100%. in his defense, he has been more straightforward in policy positions than many).../9

... Also, can I either get his skincare regimen or makeup person? His youthful glow is envy-inducing. Yeah I know we aren't supposed to comment on that stuff. But you already know I think he understands more about tech/data/future of work than any other candidate& we need that/10

Mayor Pete is also the only candidate who can articulate the battle between ideological systems in a way that is real, modern, and intensely personal. This is soooo important -- his discussion of American values and leadership -- also applauded by the crowd. /11

Lots of big issues discussed tonight. The safe dodging of questions was not applauded. Taking a swing at the fence was. The generational chasm that is coming is going to be fun to navigate.

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