

Democratic Debate Barometer



Twitter Winners & Losers

#DemDebate

#DemDebate5

HSG

Honan Strategy Group
Insights that Drive Results



November 20, 2019

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a dense urban skyline, likely New York City, rendered in a monochromatic blue color scheme. The image shows a vast array of skyscrapers and buildings of varying heights and architectural styles, packed closely together. The word "Background" is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Background

Background

Tonight, two polling and analytics firms, [WPA Intelligence](#) (**Republican**) and the [Honan Strategy Group](#) (**Democratic**) sought to answer the following key questions about the Democratic Presidential debate:

- Which candidate **Won** the evening as judged by Twitter impact?
- Which candidate(s) **Lost** and had the most disappointing performance as judged by Twitter impact?
- Which candidate(s) **Scored** by putting on a breakthrough performance as judged by Twitter impact?
- Who went **Viral** – and drove the most conversation on Twitter?
- Which **Debate Moments** stirred the most conversation on Twitter?

Research Methodology

- The results of our analysis were based upon 2,450,200 verifiable data points harvested this evening from Twitter and Google.
- This is down significantly from the previous debate on October 15 where we analyzed 3,869,400 verifiable data points.
- Some of the measures and metrics analyzed included:
 - How many times a candidate was mentioned on Twitter (Mentions)
 - Whether a candidate trended on Twitter
 - Retweets & likes on a candidate's Twitter profile (Engagement)
 - How many times a moment from the debate was mentioned on Twitter
 - Whether a moment from the debate was trending on Twitter
 - How many times an issue was mentioned on Twitter

Key Insights & Conclusions about the November 20th Debate

- There were 1.4 million less tweets than compared with the October debate – suggesting the debates are missing an opportunity to engage Democratic voters.
- Overall, **Joe Biden Won the Debate on Twitter** with the largest number of Twitter Mentions (151K).
 - But at the same time Biden was the Loser, as sentiment about him was uniformly negative to positive – 43% to 9% - the most negative of any candidate on stage.
- **Bernie Sanders, Kamala Harris, and Pete Buttigieg** were the only candidates who had a greater **Share of Voice** when compared to the prior debate.
 - All seven of the other candidates had fewer Twitter Mentions during this debate compared to the October debate.
 - **Bernie Sanders** had his best debate yet, growing from 48K Twitter Mentions to 71.3K. **Pete Buttigieg** doubled his Twitter Mentions while **Kamala Harris** rebounded with strong viral moments.

Key Insights & Conclusions about the November 20th Debate

Similar to the October debate, **Tulsi Gabbard** was the **Most Searched Candidate** on Google in 48 states, with Pete Buttigieg the most searched for in 2 states - Iowa, where he leads in early polling, and Nebraska.

In terms of who went **Most Viral**, **Kamala Harris** had 3 of the top 5 most retweeted tweets. **Bernie Sanders** had 2 of the top 5.

Tom Steyer **Lost the Debate on Twitter** with the lowest number of Twitter Mentions (14.7K) and shrinking his Mentions almost by half from the October debate (26.6K to 14.7K).

Mirroring her drop in polling in early states and nationally, **Elizabeth Warren** is cratering on Twitter. Her Mentions were down by more than two-thirds from the October debate (99.4K to 30.5K). **Andrew Yang** is beginning to fade as well, down from 81K in September, to 52.3K in October, and 31.2K in tonight's November debate – although he had the most positive mentions.

Key Insights & Conclusions about the November 20th Debate

- The top candidate Tweets most liked were the following:
 1. **Kamala Harris** – Retweeting Trump calling out Tulsi Gabbard for attacking the Democratic Party
 2. **Kamala Harris** – proud of being the second Black woman elected to the US Senate
 3. **Bernie Sanders** – calling out that Biden was for the Iraq War – and he was not.
 4. **Kamala Harris** – calling out that we have a criminal living in the White House.
 5. **Bernie Sanders** – tweeting that if you are 18, you should have the right to vote.

5th Debate Contestants



Joe Biden
@JoeBiden



Cory Booker
@CoryBooker



Pete Buttigieg
@PeteButtigieg



Tulsi Gabbard
@TulsiGabbard



Kamala Harris
@KamalaHarris



Amy Klobuchar
@AmyKlobuchar



Bernie Sanders
@BernieSanders



Tom Steyer
@TomSteyer



Elizabeth Warren
@ewarren



Andrew Yang
@AndrewYang

November 20th Debate Recap

- As in September and October, **Joe Biden** generated more Twitter conversations than any other candidate on stage.

#1



Dead
Last



- By contrast, **Tom Steyer** generated the least amount of Twitter conversations of any of the 10 candidates on stage.

WINNERS

Twitter Mentions

LOSERS



Joe Biden

151K



Tom Steyer

14K



Bernie Sanders

71K



Amy Klobuchar

15K



Kamala Harris

65K



Cory Booker

19K

Aggregate Twitter Mentions

		Oct.	Nov.			Oct.	Nov.		
▼		Joe Biden	172.4K	151K	▼		Andrew Yang	52.3K	31K
▲		Bernie Sanders	48K	71K	▼		Elizabeth Warren	99.4K	30K
▲		Kamala Harris	55.8K	65K	▼		Cory Booker	25.7K	19K
▲		Pete Buttigieg	22.9K	42K	▼		Amy Klobuchar	19.5K	15K
▼		Tulsi Gabbard	77.9K	42K	▼		Tom Steyer	26.6K	14K

MOST RETWEETED

Which candidate's tweets had the most retweets?



1
WINNER

Kamala Harris @KamalaHarris · 49m
I rest my case.

Trump War Room (Text TRUMP to 88022) @TrumpWarRoom
¹⁰⁰"Our Democratic Party, unfortunately, is not the party that is of, by and for the people." #DemDebate



3.3K Retweets 14.4K Likes

2

Kamala Harris @KamalaHarris · 1h
Proud to be the second Black woman elected to the U.S. Senate. #DemDebate

2.7K Retweets 21.6K Likes

3

Bernie Sanders @BernieSanders · 1h
I led opposition to the War in Iraq.
Joe Biden voted for it.
We need to end our endless wars. #DemDebate

2.6K Retweets 18.7K Likes

MOST RETWEETED

Which candidate's tweets had the most retweets?



4



Kamala Harris  @KamalaHarris · 2h

We have a criminal living in the White House. We don't just need to impeach this president, we need to bring justice back to America for all people—not just for the powerful.

Justice is on the ballot in 2020. [#DemDebate](#)

24K Retweets **10.8K Likes**

5



Bernie Sanders  @BernieSanders · 1h

If you're 18, you should have the right to vote. End of discussion. [#DemDebate](#)

1.8K Retweets **15.3K Likes**

Sentiment Analysis

- Twitter is generally a negative political platform.
- That said, sentiment on Gabbard, Biden are particularly negative.
- The #YangGang is the most positive and engaged on Twitter during this debate.
- Overall, Political Twitter is dissatisfied with what the candidates said and did tonight.

	Positive Sentiment	Negative Sentiment	Neutral
Yang	17%	38%	45%
Booker	12%	30%	58%
Harris	10%	37%	53%
Warren	9%	35%	56%
Biden	9%	43%	48%
Sanders	8%	13%	79%
Klobuchar	8%	17%	75%
Steyer	6%	37%	57%
Buttigieg	4%	32%	64%
Gabbard	4%	48%	48%

Aggregate mentions are down



Aggregate Conversation

3,869,400



October Debate

2,450,200



November Debate

Mentions of Specific Candidates

595,000



October Debate

486,600



November Debate

An aerial, high-angle view of a dense urban skyline, likely New York City, rendered in a monochromatic blue color scheme. The image shows a vast number of skyscrapers and buildings of varying heights and architectural styles, creating a complex, textured landscape. The text "About Our Firms" is centered over the middle of the image in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

About Our Firms

About Our Team

Honan Strategy Group



Honan Strategy Group is a full service Democratic strategic communications, research, and political consulting firm.

We use public opinion research data, deep analysis of the voter file, and sophisticated social and digital analytics to develop impactful campaign strategies and clear roadmaps for our clients to help them win on Election Day. Our firm is passionate about helping get more Democrats elected to positions up and down the ballot, in all 50 states. We have nearly two decades of experience helping Democrats win races in tough states and districts, as well as in very competitive primary campaigns.

Our executives have helped candidates like Bill and Hillary Clinton, Mike Bloomberg, Jon Corzine, Tom DiNapoli, Tony Blair, and various Members of Congress win tough races.

We have worked in Blue States, Red States, and Purple States across the country and have worked on campaigns and elections around the world including in; Belgium, Bermuda, Columbia, Great Britain, Italy, Israel, Macedonia, South Africa, Ukraine, and Venezuela.

Our research has been reported on by outlets including; CNN, FOX News, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and the Wall Street Journal, among others.

WPA Intelligence



Since 1998, WPA Intelligence has been a leading provider of survey research, predictive analytics and technology for corporations, educational institutions, public affairs programs, non-profits and campaigns from President to Governor, U.S. Senate, and local elections in all 50 states and multiple foreign countries. In the 2017-2018 cycle, WPAi's polling and data plotted the course for multiple winning Senate, Governor's races and House campaigns.

WPAi's data and analytics continue to lead the industry. In the 2016 Republican primary for president, arguably the most unprecedented presidential contest by way of turnout and political environment volatility, WPAi accurately projected turnout and the ballot score in 42 states through the use of advanced, predictive analytics. In 2018 our predictive analytics tools were a key element of the RNC Voter Scores program and predicted the margins in numerous races with unmatched accuracy.

WPAi has been recognized as the industry leader for providing cutting edge intelligence to help our clients win. The American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC) awarded WPAi "Pollies" for our Predictive Analytics and Adaptive Sampling techniques, our groundbreaking data-focused social media application, and for best use of analytics. In addition, WPAi has received four "Reed Awards" for most expansive optimized field Program in GOP politics, best use of data analytics/machine learning, best data analytics solution, and best use of online targeting.

An aerial photograph of a dense urban skyline, likely New York City, with a blue color overlay. The image shows numerous skyscrapers and buildings. A prominent building in the upper left has the 'MetLife' logo on its top. The text 'Executive Bios & Contact Information' is centered in white, bold font.

Executive Bios & Contact Information

Bradley Honan, Chief Executive Officer & President

Bradley Honan is the Chief Executive Officer & President of the Honan Strategy Group a strategic communications and research, and data analytics firm. Bradley's work in politics spans over 20 years and has taken him all around the country and the world, including to the White House. He is an expert in developing winning strategies necessary to be successful in tough races and primaries.

Bradley began his career at the world-renowned political consulting firm of Penn, Schoen, and Berland, where he focused on developing the most effective messaging and targeting strategies in order to win tough races and persuade hard to reach swing voters.

He has worked on a wide range of Democratic political campaigns, overseeing the strategy and tactical developments of winning campaigns including for the likes of; Hillary Clinton for Senate, Mayor Mike Bloomberg, Senators Jon Corzine and Mark Dayton, Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, Congressmen Ed Towns and Elliot Engel, New York City Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum, Brooklyn District Attorney Joe Hynes, The Democratic National Committee, among many others. He has helped advise candidates and political parties in countries such as; Belgium, Bermuda, Columbia, Great Britain, Italy, Israel, Macedonia, South Africa, Ukraine, and Venezuela and authored and conducted the single most accurate election day Exit Poll in Ukraine during the Orange Revolution.

Bradley's work has been recognized and reported on by outlets such as the NY Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, NBC, CBS, the BBC, Forbes, Fox Business, CNBC, and USA Today.

Bradley holds both a Master's Degree in Survey Research and Analysis and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Connecticut. In addition, Bradley has studied at the London School of Economics.



Twitter: @BradleyHonan

Chris Wilson, Partner & Chief Executive Officer

In 2016, as the Director of Research, Analytics and Digital Strategy for the Cruz for President campaign, Chris is widely credited for playing a key role in Cruz's triumph in Iowa and helping the Texas Senator finish with the most delegates earned by a 2nd place finisher since Ronald Reagan in 1976. Using a meticulous, technologically advanced, and highly individual approach, Chris led the campaign to reach voters by predicting voter behavior based on ideological segments, personality modeling targeting each voter based on the issue most important to them. You can read more about Chris' Iowa work in Sasha Issenberg's seminal Bloomberg piece, "How Ted Cruz Engineered His Iowa Triumph."

During the 2018 cycle, WPAi provided analytics and polling for key races at the state and federal level around the country. WPA data propelled winning campaigns such as Ted Cruz and Greg Abbott in Texas, Governor Brian Kemp in Georgia, Governor Ron Desantis in Florida, Governor Kevin Stitt in Oklahoma, Senator Kevin Cramer in North Dakota as well as dozens of Members of Congress and down ballot races. WPA is also proud to have assisted campaigns that came up short such as Martha McSally in Arizona, Adam Laxalt and Dean Heller in Nevada, and Matt Rosendale for Senate in Montana. Following the election cycle, Chris was named Technology Leader of the Year by Campaigns & Elections at the 2019 CampaignTech Awards.

WPAi also works with organizations like the Club for Growth, the Republican National Committee, the National Republican Senatorial Committee and the National Republican Congressional Committee providing data and polling. For the fifth consecutive cycle, WPAi clients outperformed the partisan average in both their primary and general election contests by double digits.

An Oklahoma native, Chris is a graduate of University of Oklahoma and Georgetown and remains an avid Sooner fan. In the rare instances that Chris isn't working, he enjoys watching OU football and Thunder basketball, spending time with his sons, Denver and Carson, reading, and racking up impressive amounts of frequent flyer miles. He is a regular political analyst on both Fox News and MSNBC.



Twitter: @WilsonWPA

Dr. Michael Cohen, Chief Strategy Officer

Michael D. Cohen, Ph.D. is the Chief Strategy Officer for WPA Intelligence a leading polling, analytics, and digital firm based in Washington, DC. After founding his own firm, he published the first-to-market award-winning Congress in Your Pocket suite of mobile apps for Capitol Hill, as well as the UK and EU Parliaments. Dr. Cohen previously served as the in-house Principal Strategist and Polling Team Lead for Microsoft, Vice President of Public Affairs at Fabrizio, McLaughlin & Associates, and Senior Research Director for The Gallup Organization.

In addition to his professional experience, Dr. Cohen teaches digital political strategy at Johns Hopkins University and modern political campaigns at the University of California in Washington, DC. He served as the interim program director of the political management master's program at The George Washington University, where his research focused on political campaigns, public policy issues, and social media. While at GSPM, he co-authored a book chapter about social media and the 2016 presidential campaign and published an innovative weekly tip sheet on Twitter and politics.

Dr. Cohen has published several articles in Campaigns & Elections Magazine, where he was highlighted as a "Mover & Shaker." He has been interviewed by various media including The New York Times, Washington Post, CBS News, CNN, Fox News, and VICE News. He earned his undergraduate, master's and doctorate at the University of Florida, where he was inducted into its leadership Hall of Fame.



Twitter: @MichaelCohen

Contact Us

The logo for Honan Strategy Group (HSG) features the letters 'HSG' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are centered between two horizontal lines of the same color.

Honan Strategy Group
Insights that Drive Results

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