

Kamala Harris: Trump, But with Darker Skin and Better Hair

In the wake of her supposed “victory” in the first round of Democratic presidential debates, US Senator Kamala Harris rose from fifth place to a tie for third place (with fellow US Senator Elizabeth Warren) in a Morning Consult poll of her party’s primary voters. Her gain came mainly at the expense of the front-runner, former vice president Joe Biden. More interesting than Harris’s sudden ascent is how she managed it: By ripping a page out of Donald Trump’s 2016 campaign playbook.

John McCain, said Trump in 2015, is “not a war hero. He was a war hero because he was captured. I like people who weren’t captured.”

That’s exactly what Harris did to Joe Biden in Miami. She picked an opponent to take down and attacked that opponent on a signature bit of his personal history (support for the civil rights movement), confident that the facts would get less attention than the chutzpah of the attack itself.

Unlike Trump, she at least picked an opponent who’s actually in the race. Also unlike Trump, she was generally lauded, rather than savaged, for taking the low road.

If the similarities between Harris and Trump ended there, Miami might seem like coincidence. But they don’t. Different as the two are — he was a businessman and “reality TV” star before running for president, she’s a Democratic Party apparatchik who’s spent decades clawing her way up the political ladder; he’s white and male; she’s black and female — they’re a lot more alike than different.

Like Trump, Harris has difficulty holding a policy position for more than a few minutes under pressure. He favors non-interventionism, except when he’s “the most militaristic candidate” of the bunch, unless he changes his mind tonight and again next week. She favors banning private insurance as part of a single-payer health program, except no, she doesn’t, except she kind of does, except maybe she misheard the question.

Like Trump, Harris is contemptuous of a free press. He wants to “open up” libel laws to go after political opponents who write “hit pieces.” She wants to suppress publications which accept ads for “adult services,” so much so that as attorney general of California she filed charges against Backpage.com that were dismissed because there was no applicable law involved, then in the US Senate successfully pushed through a bill to outlaw such ads.

Like Trump, Harris is a big fan of unilateral executive power whether the Constitution authorizes it or not. He declared a fake “emergency” to misappropriate money for his

border wall in illegal defiance of Congress's "no." In Miami, she bragged that as president she would give Congress 100 days to pass a gun control bill she liked, after which she would just rule by decree if they didn't.

The math says that Trump's path to re-election is exceedingly narrow. In order to lose in 2020, the Democrats would probably have to nominate a candidate even more openly narcissistic and authoritarian than Trump (or Clinton). In Harris, they may have found their next loser.