

Trump's Twitter Might Cost Him His Chance At Reelection

Politics cannot be divorced from culture. Many people are wedded to the [misperception](#) that, in a democratic society, we elect leaders who are somehow better than the ordinary voter. In fact, democratic societies [tend](#) to elect leaders who are, in most ways, a reflection of the voters themselves. Since political leadership in a republic is only as strong as its weakest voter, its elected leaders are very often *not* among the country's best-and-brightest.

In this way, elected officials and the common culture form a feedback loop, each reinforcing the other. Since the early 2000s, "reality" television has been the preferred form of entertainment on television for most Americans. Since that time, social media has become ubiquitous as a form of mass communication. This is to say nothing of the fact that, while most Americans cannot name their senator or, in some cases, the president, most Americans *do* know their celebrities.

Donald J. Trump is all of these things: a reality television celebrity and a social media icon. That he would go on to become America's 45th president should have been a surprise to no one. Trump tweets, like all of us do, about things ranging from the profound to the banal – and he usually does it in real time, all of the time. Since 2009, the president has [sent out](#) 4,178 tweets per year, averaging about 12 tweets per day.

Trump Drives American Politics Atwitter

Trump's name-calling is legendary. Most often, Trump spends his time on Twitter airing what most people would consider petty grievances. He also gives little thought about offering snap judgments regarding economic or foreign policies to the public via Twitter.

The president's tweets have contributed to overall volatility in the stock market, prompting J.P. Morgan Chase to create a new version of the current Volatility Index (VIX), which they refer to as the ["Volfefe Index."](#) The Volfefe Index specifically measures how much of an impact a presidential tweet will have on the market per day so that investors can make more informed decisions.

Everyone knew who and what Trump was when he ran for president. It's why many people – not just on the Left, but sniveling elites on the Right as well – opposed Trump's candidacy. In the words of F.H. Buckley, Trump simply doesn't "do sunny" a lá Ronald Reagan. Yet Buckley, who was an early supporter and adviser to Trump's 2016 campaign, is among the true believers [beginning to question](#) the efficacy of the president's Twitter habit. "Trump's nastiness is making him look weak," Buckley says. Similarly, Michael Walsh [warns](#) his readers that Trump effectively could tweet himself out of reelection through a phenomenon he calls "Trump Trauma."

Buckley and Walsh are right to sound the alarm. Trump risks appearing as both weak and mean to the average voter. In the beginning, Trump's tweeting protected him from the media's attempt to ignore his campaign. Now, however, Trump is drowning out other voices in the political system – to his own detriment.

Consider: last week, the Democratic Party's presidential candidates publicly endorsed a series of programs that, to an ordinary American, would be considered insane. Schemes ranging from [confiscating](#) all personal firearms from law-abiding Americans to touting policies that effectively would [ban personal automobiles](#), while massively [increasing taxes](#). Pete Buttigieg even seriously argued that [the Bible condones abortion](#)!

Ordinarily, not even the mainstream media could ignore so many prominent Democratic Party voices sounding so nutty. But

Trump's Twitter obsession lets the press ignore almost every crazy thing that the Democrats have been saying in favor of highlighting the president's latest attack.

Of Sharpies and Hurricanes

For example, the president clearly misspoke when he said Alabama was under threat from Hurricane Dorian. Yet, rather than simply tell the press that he misspoke and move on, the president insisted that Alabama had been under threat.

To prove his point, Trump apparently [drew](#) a circle around Alabama with a black sharpie marker on the map of the hurricane provided by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). When that did not work, Trump spent the next few days [tweeting](#) about the incident and posting links to various sources, all in an effort to dig himself out of the media pickle he had placed himself in – to no avail. Trump could have gotten out of this mess, had he not made it an issue on Twitter.

This is just a snapshot of the double-edged sword that is social media use.

At this point, the only person who can defeat Trump is himself. Each one of Trump's Democratic rivals are publicly hurting themselves. Until the Democratic presidential field is winnowed down, Trump should embrace a media policy akin to the Hippocratic Oath: first, do no harm.

Perhaps, Trump could dial back his social media activities *for now*. After all, when one's foes are intent on destroying themselves (and each other), the best course of action would be step aside, stay silent, and let them.

The “Always Trump” Movement

Despite some of his idiosyncrasies, however, Trump has been a good president. He presides over a healthy economy and he has

managed to bring balance to America's otherwise feckless foreign policy. Just like David P. Goldman, I consider myself to be part of the ["Always Trump" movement](#). Despite this, though, I cannot ignore that RealClearPolitics has Trump's most recent [unfavorable rating](#) at an unsettling 53.8 percent.

This should concern every "Always Trump" voter. Trump can ameliorate this by toning down his tweet storms from Category 5 to a mere Category 3, at least until we are closer to the election.

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