Nine months into Donald Trump’s Administration the President’s Tweets keep coming, creating drama that occupies the attention of the news media and thus the public. Important question: Where should the press draw the line between either ignoring President Trump’s Tweets (not allowing them to drive the daily news) or focusing on how dangerous and erroneous his statements are (on the assumption that these are the words of the President and therefore matter)?

As someone who studies communication, I believe there is no easy answer.

On the one hand is the discovery function of communication: By reporting on the Tweets the news media fulfills its function of covering and fact checking the President and exposing possible dangerous outcomes of what he says.

On the other hand is the inoculation effect of communication: The more coverage of Trump’s Tweets the more likely his abnormal behavior becomes normalized and the less attention gets paid to other potentially more consequential things the President may be doing.

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