

## Land of the Free, Home of the Tweet?

Agenda Setting Theory was put forth by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. This theory suggests that the media sets the public agenda. It is not a matter of what is being said in the media, but what topics or stories should be talked about. With social media on the rise, it seems there may be a shift from power of the media to power of the people, so what does this mean for politicians?

I would first advise politicians to utilize social media carefully. It may sound silly, but as a public figure you are already under a microscope and an individual's credibility can easily be damaged if used frivolously. Your mother wasn't kidding when she said, "don't post it on social media unless you want it on the front page of the newspaper."

Today, politics in general have taken over social media allowing social media users to join the open-ended conversation. Another piece of advice I would offer to politicians is to utilize social media but to do so strategically and keep their personal life out of the conversation. Social media is so instantaneous that one post can hinder credibility and opinions and personal life can quickly get tied into the media agenda or what is being talked about.

Crooked Hillary Clinton is the worst (and biggest) loser of all time. She just can't stop, which is so good for the Republican Party. Hillary, get on with your life and give it another try in three years!

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [November 18, 2017](#)

Why would Kim Jong-un insult me by calling me "old," when I would NEVER call him "short and fat?" Oh well, I try so hard to be his friend - and maybe someday that will happen!

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [November 12, 2017](#)

Neither tweet is becoming for a man who is known as the leader of our country, yet these outrageous statements are constantly discussed in our daily media agenda: "[Donald Trump's 10 Most Offensive Tweets.](#)"

With agenda setting power shifting toward consumers, politicians certainly should check themselves before they wreck themselves.

## References

McCombs, M. (2003). The agenda-setting role of the mass media in the shaping of public opinion. *University of Texas at Austin*. Retrieved from [http://www.infoamerica.org/documentos\\_pdf/mccombs01.pdf](http://www.infoamerica.org/documentos_pdf/mccombs01.pdf)