# Twitter Thread by Venkatesh Rao



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## social media use really calls for something closer to a driver's license than terms of service... most apparent bad behavior here is more incompetence than malice, like not knowing how to change lanes or take turns at a 4-way stop..

trump's history on twitter is something closer to a crazy car chase on LA streets than bad driving (with the cops MIA, but media helicopters in pursuit), but almost all unpleasantness around here is just poor driving skills

not that I'm advocating for a licensing regime... that would be a terrible thing. Do not need a social media DMV. But the underlying principles (as tested for eg. in the written and road tests) are pretty good.

Written test would test things like "safe following distance" (reply-guying = tailgating?)

Road test would actually expose you to routine provocations. Like, "make a left turn" = "deal with this concern troll"

As in the driving test, where an awkward, unnatural, and unintuitive bit, the parallel parking test, is the toughest bit, there would be some such awkward maneuver you'd have to learn (hmmm... what's the parallel parking equivalent on twitter?)

defensive driving = mutes and blocks

each medium would be a vehicle class... twitter is basic cars, FB is semi trucks, whatsapp is motorcycles in the 3rd world without helmets

Edgelords are like illegal street racers. There will be a Fast and Furious type franchise around edgelording in a few years.

Having an expensive luxury car and being a good driver are entirely different things.

Having a big following/reach and being a good social media driver are entirely different things.

But just like having a fancy sports car correlates with being a Hollywood type who drives dangerously, so does having certain kinds of social media following.

And just like cars, followings can be earned or unearned, bought, leased, borrowed, inherited,... even stolen.

Metaphor breaks down in some ways. Growing a big following by edgelording would be a bit like a Corolla transforming into a Maserati by being driven dangerously.