

Which is More Unsettling?

The alternatives would appear to reduce to the following two: (1) Trump is an ignoramus and an obnoxious, repellent buffoon; and (2) he is not such a person but he plays one on TV — and on Twitter and in the presidency.

In view of Trump's power to do evil on an unthinkable vast scale (for example, by unleashing a nuclear attack on North Korea or Iran), which of the two options is the more unsettling?

Many people continue to insist that Trump's conduct is "just an act" somehow related to bargaining tactics or some other rational plan. I don't see any evidence in support of this view, but suppose it is true.

What does it say about him that his optimal method of gaining his objectives is to make himself appear unhinged, vicious, and repulsive, acting like a spoiled, petulant ten-year-old playground bully?