Donald Trump is the biggest popular-vote loser in history ever to call himself president-elect. In spite of the fact that he has no mandate, he will attempt to use his congressional majority to fuck up America in the name of unfuckupping America. If we want to block any of his public-policy Saw sequels from getting greenlit, we must stand indvertibly opposed to any media that would neglect substantive policy stories while abetting him with diversionary, vital-seeming political slapfights over bullshit. Together we have the power to resist vital-seeming political slapfights over bullshit.

The authors of this guide are the creators of The Fucking News—former news writer/producers who witnessed the craptacular rise of Fox News. We saw their anchors take on TV news icons who set the national agenda. We saw Fox lead the mainstream media to reject America’s agenda. Their news coverage was dumb, stupid, and dumb — and they won.

We believe that protecting our values and neighbors and children and oxygen requires mounting a similar resistance to the mainstream news agenda—but a resistance built on the values of smartness, non-stupidity, and undumbness. People already hate mainstream news. They know it sucks. If a small minority of viewers can empower Fox News to chase substantive news from our national TV networks, then we the majority can debullshit TV news.

The Indivertible Guide outlines tactics for individuals and groups to replicate Fox News’s success, only not for evil. This guide is intended to be equally useful for stiffening mainstream-media spines and weakening pro-bullshit media impulses.

We believe that the next four—Jesus H. Christ—years depend on citizens across the country standing indvertibly against the mainstream media bullshit agenda. Our premise is that even evil Trump supporters and craven TV news people are good at heart. We believe that buying into TV news’ false crises and speculative narratives will only further empower Trump to victimize our fellow citizens or, even worse, us (the specific, actual humans writing this). We hope that this guide will provide those who share these beliefs with useful tools to transform TV news.

P.S. We’re doing this in our free time, of which we have a lot thanks to our former employers. We’re not starting an organization and we’re not selling anything, but we sure as fuck better start soon because the...
Summary

Here’s an executive summary of this document, short enough for even TV news executives.

Ch. 1: How Fox News won. We show how the conventional wisdom about Fox’s rise is just as good as that which gave us Pres. Hillary Clinton, and reveal vital lessons about how Fox really did it.

1) A story-selection strategy that changed how we think about news.

2) A story-adhesion strategy that put Fox stories at the center of our national discourse and warped our national priorities.

Ch. 2: How TV news people think and how to use that to save our sanity and/or planet. Ratings, ratings, ratings. That’s all TV news people want. However, not knowing how to get ratings, most of them settle for employment, employment, employment. TV news people want to keep their bosses happy, which means not creating problems—which literally means not breaking news. Conversely, they don’t want to be seen as missing news that’s already out there. Above all, they don’t want to screw up within the narrow confines of what defines screwing up. You will use these interests to make them listen and to suck less often and/or with reduced psi.

Ch. 3: Identify what we want from TV news. Shitting on TV news is not enough, because they’re covered in it and they’re still being TV news. If you want to change TV news, you must know what you want to change it to. We must identify the kinds of stories we want and don’t want.

Ch. 4: Tactics for changing TV news that might actually work. In the days of three TV networks, people could do little about the shittiness of TV news (it was shitty, then, too; don’t believe the hype) short of a letter-writing campaign, which historically won few significant victories other than the third, weakest season of Star Trek. We will outline tactics for you to show TV news what you want, and identify clearly what stories they should cover and possibly also go in early and write the damn scripts for them. We’ll show you how to use social media to fuck with their shit so they stop fucking with ours.

Ch. 1: How Fox News Won

“The biggest journalism bias is toward a good story.”

CNN Senior Media Correspondent Brian Stelter

If you believe what you hear on TV, which you do not, Fox News succeeded by parroting right-wing, conservative talking points to a right-wing, conservative audience. And yet...this same network backed a presidential candidate who espoused the virtues of universal health care, taxing the rich, deficit spending, economic stimulus, picking winners and losers in the free market, and shitting on American
POWs. In fact, Bill O'Reilly and Megyn Kelly hate America so much they did a segment on a veteran’s minor scuffle over flag desecration and said the legal right to desecrate the flag was a bedrock American principle. True story.

The question isn’t what were their opinions about the flag, but what made it “a good story”? It involved no one famous. No one got hurt. It wasn’t national news. It was Fox news. So why would O’Reilly and Kelly make it a Fox News story if not to defend the flag?

The fundamental thing to understand about TV news is that bias manifests most meaningfully not in what they say about a story, but in the decision to tell that story. No matter how objective or impartial a producer or media outlet is, choosing which stories to tell is an expression of opinion. It’s the least examined aspect of TV news bias and it’s the one we’ll target because it matters most.

So, if we can stipulate that, yes, Fox sucks and engages in partisan hackery, let’s shelve that and our condescension for now. Fox became mainstream by first winning the devotion of a small clique of viewers who felt unserved by the mainstream. Fox won their devotion by showing that small clique that Fox was willing to say, “Fuck you” to the mainstream media, journalistic norms, and most viewers. Fox then mainstreamed their journalistic ethos by executing two things really well:

1) Story Selection. What the media say about an issue is less important than the decision to talk about it in the first place. Fox did what businesses should do—offer something new. Fox told stories other media ignored. Viewers had nowhere else to go for those stories. Let’s consider the values that drove Fox’s story selection:

- **Counterprogramming.** Just as Fox told stories no one else told—they utterly ignored some stories driving mainstream media. And, just like mainstream media, they were perfectly comfortable ignoring stories that deserved coverage while elevating bullshit stories in ways that made them seem deserving of coverage.

- **Anti-Intellectualism.** Long before Trump rejected thinking about shit in rigorous fashion with relevant brain parts, Fox News was there, elevating instinct over reason: Just what the conservative intelligentsia used to accuse mushy-headed liberals of. To Fox, stories are important if they feel important. Which means TV news can be utterly, stupidly egalitarian about their sources for stories. Some even consider Trump a reliable source!

- **Egalitarianism.** No high-falutin snobbery about where to find stories here! If your shitty website edits an incriminating-seeming piece of a non-incriminating video, Fox can make it national news before Wolf Blitzer even gets out of his recharging pod. So what if dispositive context comes out later—great, more to talk about! Remember, they’re not invested in an opinion about the story—just that the story matters. Which is how essentialism came to drive story selection.

- **Essentialism.** As you’d expect from anchors and executives who don’t have to worry about retirement, student loans, mortgages, medical bills, or dominatrix blackmail money, Fox News is inordinately interested in stories where the essence of something important is implicated. The flag was a good Fox story because it had essentialist stakes for America, patriotism, veterans, and probably Jesus somehow. ISIS poses a tiny fraction of the peril to America that climate change does, but climate change doesn’t
hate—a function of essence—and it doesn’t oblige the needs of video by having a face—a symbol of essence. So even though ISIS is less of a proven, long-term, existential threat to America than climate change is, ISIS gets to be a Fox story. That’s why Fox covers the *War on Christmas* more than some actual wars on humans.

2) **Story Adhesion.** Fox succeeded because its stories—and its essentialist way of thinking about stories—stuck. It doesn’t matter that the essences are fleeting. Praising Putin was toxic until it wasn’t. RomneyCare was fine, ObamaCare tyranny. Whatever the current “essences” are, Fox uses a reliable combination of tools to make its stories stick:

- **Substance.** Yes, Fox does substance. It’s true! Fox did Benghazi like CNN does plane crashes. Glenn Beck would do a fucking *hour* on the Federalist Papers. On one Federalist Paper...and that’s *without* a catchy, hip-hop score sung by adorable Lin-Manuel Miranda. When Fox decides a story matters, it covers it as if the actual *substance* of it—not just the political conflict over it—matters.

- **Repetition.** Stories live beyond individual shows. They play through dayside and prime, online and on social media, gaining momentum toward critical mass.

- **Validation.** What? Our bullshit story doesn’t seem like a *real* story? Well, we booked a genuine Congressfuck to talk about it! And it’s not as if up-and-fucking Congressfucks will talk about anything just to get on Fox News, so it *must* be that the story matters!

- **Iteration.** Remember that bullshit story we told you about? Well, we have a bullshit update on our bullshit story because a Congressfuck just reacted on our air to our bullshit story with some fresh Congress bullshit. Join us tomorrow when our bullshit panel debates pro-bullshit and con-bullshit regarding our bullshit update on the Congressfuck’s bullshit reaction to our bullshit story.

- **Epidemiology.** Our Fox News Congressfuck can’t exactly proclaim his passionate feelings about our bullshit story while sitting on his hands about it. So now he’s introducing a bullshit bill and talking about the story and soon enough the mainstream media’s debating the bullshit story or debating whether the bullshit story is or should be a story and if you wanted the mainstream media to tackle *non*-bullshit shit, tough shit.

### MAINSTREAM FOX STEW

**Ingredients**
- 1 cup of organic, free-range bullshit harvested fresh from a fringe website
- 11 pint-sized dayside anchors
- 3 100-pound primetime gorillas
- 535 members of Congress
- A dash of animated graphics and other spicy production elements

**Steps**
- Take your bullshit and let it marinate in its own, repetitive juices during the dayside.
- Add one primetime anchor.
- Overheat for approximately 90 seconds while ladling on production elements (a splash of video or a bite of sound).
- Mix in a member of Congress.
- Let bake four minutes or until boiling.
- Remove from the air and let cool.
- When your confection has gelled, pour it into 24 hours of air time.
- Heat to taste.
- Serves no one except Fox News.

Enjoy!
Ch. 2: How TV News People Think  
And How To Use That To Save Our Sanity and/or Planet

“Journalism is not a profession or a trade.  
It is a cheap catch-all for fuckoffs and misfits.”

Hunter S. Thompson

Would that it were true! Fuckoffs and misfits don’t clink glasses at Mar-a-Lago, they peer in through the window—bellies growling, alienated synapses raging. But some TV news people learned from Woodward and Bernstein not that journalists challenge power, but that journalism can make you famous. Ask an entry-level TV journalist why they want to be in the business, and the answer will likely be to be on TV. Why? To what fucking end? The answer is its own answer. Being on TV is the end.

They’d rather be in sports or entertainment, but whatever. The page wanted to get assigned to SNL, but what the fuck, still cool to spot Fallon in the hallway. TV journalists overall are not questioners of the system, they are its beneficiaries. “Diversity” hiring does not prioritize economic diversity—entry-level pay is low enough to keep out your food-eating, student-loan-paying riff-raff and ensure your talent pool comes mostly from the end with deep pockets of parental cash. Non-white, economically disadvantaged people who do make it in have massive financial incentives to keep their mouths shut and play nice. Don’t rock the boat, for fuck’s sake. Only fuckoffs and misfits rock the boat.
The Secret Training of National TV News Producers

Ready? Here’s the curriculum. Kidding! This is the entire course:

- Don’t commit defamation
- Don’t use pictures or sounds if you don’t have the rights or the right to
- Start your b-roll with an establishing shot
- Write your scripts so the words match the video

Congratulations. You are now a national TV news producer.

Why We Think The Media Do What They Do and Why They Really Do What They Do

In spite of their glaring failures in this election—beyond the polling predictions—TV news has not changed and will not change. Just like Trump, they will act as if they have a mandate, knowing that the opposite is true. Like other influential institutions, the media are subject to theories about motive. They’re almost all wrong, but when people don’t like TV news, they typically apply one of these explanatory theories:

1) Conspiracy. The media are beholden to X so they report/don’t report Y. The media want X so they report/don’t report Y. It’s absolutely crucial to understand that most TV news shows are lucky just to make air, let alone execute a single item on that day’s Bilderberg agenda. There’s no conspiracy; there’s barely an org chart. Do stories get squelched? Rarely. Do sponsors/shareholders bitch about shit? It happens. But media suckitude derives from factors both much more pernicious and more easily beatable than cartoonish bad guys.

2) Ratings. THEY’RE JUST IN IT FOR THE MONEY, MAN! Believe it or not, TV news would be better if this were true. If TV news were run as a ruthless, money-grubbing machine, it might actually produce a better product. But what gets ratings? Story count? Guest fame? No one fucking knows. And because they can’t know whether Tactic X will lead to higher ratings, they turn their energies to tactics that provide cover from the possible consequences of guessing wrong about their tactics. Ass covering.

If TV news isn’t run by the global Zionist conspiracy in cahoots with corporatist neo-Nazi anarcho-Nielsenists, what factors do guide the story selection of our trained TV news producers?

1) Career. Furthering it and—vastly more important—forestalling its untimely cancellation are the single greatest considerations in the TV news production process.

- Risk Aversion. The Student Newspaper Survival Guide advises aspiring young journalists to ask, “What are people talking about?” This refrain echoes at the highest levels of corporate journalism: News is what people are talking about. However, a Fucking News special investigation has revealed that, in fact, “news” is by definition what people are not yet fucking talking about. TV news, ergo, is literally the inversion of news—people talk about it, then TV news reports it. This gives producers cover: If a story generates blowback, they don’t have to defend thinking it newsworthy; they can point to others who already made that determination. Most TV news executives have literally never broken a news story and don’t want to.
• Conflict Aversion. TV news seems like it’s aimed at the lowest common denominator because it goes through a collaborative system that frowns on adversarial processes. Like law and politics, journalism is inherently adversarial—but corporations frown on conflict. Which makes it risky for untrained journalists to pitch stories that don’t appeal to the instincts of untrained coworkers. It’s even riskier to push an actual, original story to a boss who’s never broken a story. And very risky for a stray fuckoff or misfit to point out the dumbness of their untrained, non-news-breaking peers’ dumb story pitches.

2) Instinct. If you are ever in a TV news control room and hear a producer say viewers will be bored by a story, they really mean that they are bored by it. If you wonder why TV news poops all over its own, on-screen real-estate—with text crawls, banners and graphics—and then sets off pyrotechnics of swooping video transitions with percussive audio whooshes, it’s not in service of a rigorously focus-tested audience aesthetic; it’s because producers aren’t allowed to shoot up Ritalin at work any more.

If a white, straight, well-off, privileged, culturally Christian, TV news producer isn’t instinctively excited by a story, it is by definition a bad story. If even their own shitty instincts recognize it’s a good story—but no one’s pre-chewed it for them—their risk-aversion instincts remind them what they stand to lose if it generates blowback and they can’t defend it as instinctively a good story.

What We Talk About When We Talk About What TV News Talks About

The rise of essentialism in TV news story selection has had two, tragic casualties:

1) Materialism. In the philosophical sense, materialism just refers to shit that exists. News should be about shit that is, was, or might be. It’s easier, however, to discuss and debate essentialist bullshit that can’t be proved or disproved. In 2000, when Gore pointed out that Texas health care ranked below every non-Texas state, Bush responded, “If he’s trying to allege that I’m a hard-hearted person…” That’s how you turn a materialist debate to essentialism. Fast forward to 2017, and TV news will air vastly more debates (unwinnable but easy to produce) over whether Trump is racist than discussions/explanations (hard to research and make compelling) of how repealing Dodd Frank will hurt actual people of color in real, material ways.

2) Proportionality. The old line used to be that a story in China had to involve 1000 injuries to beat an American story involving ten. Even without tariffs. Story selection was geography plus calculus. But how many injuries equal one insult to America-ness? Thanks to essentialism, one person can now attack all of America just by stepping on a flag. Story selection isn’t calculation, it’s gut feeling. And gastro-intestinal decision-making gives us lots of stories about violated essences while big stories affecting lots of real people go straight to the shitter.

Careerist ass-covering and essentialist journalism create an ecosphere that rewards and facilitates TV news systems and mindsets that, in turn, beget the signature, crappy elements of TV news today.

• Anti-incrementalism—The American political system disperses and attenuates governmental decision-making to accommodate public response. However, that same attenuation reduces the significance of each incremental “peg” or “news hook” that we need to tickle our TV news producers’ G-I tracts. So, important legislation is most often covered upon passage—too late!
not when it’s written, introduced, lobbied on, referred to committee, subjected to hearings, debated, or reconciled between the two chambers. See: Warming, global; lack of pegs thereof.

- **Conflict Fetishization**—Want to stimulate viewer instincts? **HEY, A FIGHT!** Horserace coverage focuses on who will win because that’s our instinctive first question—so TV news responds with stories that feel like answers. Trump is doing four points better than Romney did in 2012 among Rust Belt lesbian sci-fi fans, so Ohio **must** be a lock! Critics of horserace political coverage tend to suspect partisan motives when TV news makes a contest seem closer than it seems—but it’s not bias toward candidates, it’s intuitive bias toward conflict.

- **Consensus Myopia**—In the absence of conflict, instinct-driven TV news doesn’t challenge conventional wisdom or norms. TV news in practice celebrates conflict but in expression celebrates consensus. Bipartisan legislation is presumed to be good legislation. The notion that Americans don’t want Congress to fight is treated as axiomatic when the reality is Americans couldn’t give a shit. So it was far too late—especially for Phil Donahue—when TV news finally ventured into terrain critical of the Iraq War. Let alone the bipartisan Wall Street “modernization” of the 1990s that gave us a global economic meltdown less than a decade later. Where there is bipartisan consensus, TV news will endorse it.

- **Hypocrisy Vigilantism**—If essence violation is a crime, hypocrisy is the smoking gun. Republicans are considering raising the debt ceiling this spring after opposing it under Obama, so they must **REALLY** be (a) indifferent to debt ceilings, and/or (b) racist. Hypocrisy vigilantism is the pseudo-science of determining what people really are. Which is a fun parlor game, but not news. What people and institutions have said and done before can be useful for context about arguments advanced today; deployed as clues in essentialist mysteries it’s really masturbation.

- **Norm Policing**—Ever notice how TV news anchors remain dispassionate when guests explain why it’s racist to say that black lives matter, but they feel free to weigh in forcefully on whether it’s okay for a guest to interrupt them? As long as politicians and newsmakers stay within the lanes of their institutional norms, they can drive over as many poor and disenfranchised people as they want.

- **Reverse Bubblism**—No one is more sure that northeastern, national TV news operates in a bubble than northeastern, national TV news executives. The irony is that neither TV news nor “the Heartland” see their actual, respective bubbles. TV news G-I systems assume that the same “boring,” “insider” information they don’t care about is also of no interest to the Heartland—that the Heartland cares more about essentialist shit like which candidate has the most Americanosity (never mind the Tea Party’s erstwhile deficit obsession). The Heartland assumes TV news will convey the information it needs, connecting politics to policy to people. **Both** are bubbles. Consider the Trump supporter stunned, too late, by Mike Pence’s opposition to Planned Parenthood. “I guess I’ve been living in a bubble,” the supporter said. He has, because he didn’t know that TV news’ bubble blocks TV news from seeing the bubble in which the Heartland assumes that TV news will tell them that Pence is coming for their uteri and/or mammograms.
Anti-Incrementalism, Conflict Fetishization, Consensus Myopia, Hypocrisy Vigilantism, Norm Policing, and Reverse Bubblism in Search of a "Good" Story: A Tragi-Comedy In One Act

SCENE 1
A newsroom, morning

SOON-TO-BE-FIRED PRODUCER
The House is considering reducing supplemental nutritional assistance for millions of poor children.
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
What's the peg?

SOON-TO-BE-FIRED PRODUCER
They're trying to attach a rider to tomorrow's omnibus spending bill.
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
There's bipartisan consensus for entitlement reform.

SOON-TO-BE-FIRED PRODUCER
Yeah, but—
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Any hypocrites flipping their position on it?

SOON-TO-BE-FIRED PRODUCER
No, but—
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Are they following Robert's Rules of Order?

SOON-TO-BE-FIRED PRODUCER
Yeah, but—
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Anyone involved outside the Beltway?

SOON-TO-BE-FIRED PRODUCER
Just kids who eat food, but—
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Well, if it's just one rider in one house of Congress, and everyone supports entitlement reform un-hypocritically and they follow Robert's Rules of Order, and it's not a Heartland story, why the fuck should we cover the proposed reduction of supplemental nutritional assistance for millions of poor children?

SOON-TO-BE-PROMOTED PRODUCER
You guys see this Trump Tweet?

Exeunt

The Pressure Points of TV News People

TV news producers want to create programming that draws positive attention and makes their anchors look good. They do not want to draw hostile attention, especially from viewers or groups with a
constituency. And you thought journalists relished the chance to piss people off! There are two kinds of feedback that determine TV news success:

**Internal**

- **Show Bosses.** Make the on-air talent happy and do what the bosses tell you. Don’t pitch stories that require them taking risks with the on-air talent or the network higher-ups.

- **On-Air Talent.** Do what they want you to do, stimulate them intellectually on occasion, win them favor with viewers/critics. Don’t put their face on your fuckup.

- **Network Higher-Ups.** Keep the on-air talent happy. Don’t fuck up. Solve problems, don’t create new ones with your “journalism.” If they genuinely like your show—or, better, they win praise for it from people they care about—you’re set. For now.

**External**

- **Ratings.** Despite some cherry-picking—*we’re #1 among Chicago males 18-34!*—this one’s pretty cut and dried. If you’ve got good ratings, you know it. This is usually fail-safe protection—*assuming you’ve locked down your internals.*

- **Buzz.** Are people talking about your show—or at least about shit that happened on your show—in a way that’s positive or at least neutral about the show? Do viewers actually engage on Facebook and use your Twitter #hashtag during #TheShow? That’s buzz—a sign that some quantity of people like your show and that word about your show could reach others and might eventually lead to ratings.

- **Critical acclaim/awards.** The last stand of a desperate TV news producer. Critical acclaim matters—depending on intensity, volume, and source—as an indicator of a show’s potential, but also for your internals. You can not, however, survive indefinitely on critical acclaim alone.

In the absence of ratings—which *most shows don’t have*—producers want *signifiers* that they are doing good work. That means social media. So they care about things that indicate to their anchors and their bosses that they are nurturing an engaged, enthusiastic viewer base. They only care about something that represents a tangible threat to their journalistic success *if it also implicates their professional success.*
Producer Could Give a Rat’s Ass  |  Producer Scared Shitless About
---|---
Haters. Haters who hate-watch. Haters who hate-Tweet about hate-watching.  |  Tweeters who demonstrate familiarity with their show and influence with its fan base.
Tweets about sweeping, systemic problems with their show, no matter how trenchant.  |  Tweets about specific, factual errors on their air, no matter how trivial.
General condemnation from the Columbia Journalism Review.  |  Any condemnation from their bosses/other media/influencers/interest groups.
Essentialist, ungrounded speculation by you about why they really do the shit they do.  |  Essentialist, ungrounded speculation by Fox News about why they really do the shit they do.
Sad Twitter eggs with 28 followers.  |  Tweeters with many/influential followers.
Negative feedback from non-constituents—disenfranchised viewers and other poor people.  |  Negative feedback from their real constituents—their bosses and on-air talent.
This guide.  |  What you can do with this guide.

### Ch. 3: Identify What We Want From TV News

“When you’re on television every day it’s very hard to be a real reporter. Now, I can see a story in The Guardian and say, ‘I really want to do this story...’”

Yahoo News Global Anchor [Katie Couric](https://www.yahoo.com)

Imagine if a major global power orchestrated a steady stream of information that swayed the U.S. presidential campaign. Imagine if this major global power said openly that it did so to serve its own interests. Imagine if this major global power explained that it was just telling “a good story.”

TV news, of course, did not leak DNC emails, Benghazi emails, or campaign emails. It weaponized them with speculation about emails, essentialist questions about releasing the emails, and prognostication about the horserace effect of leaked emails. TV news told us these things mattered. More than reverse redlining. More than climate change. More than Mike Pence’s Journey to the Cervix of the Earth.

Journalism is a means to an end. It’s a tool, wielded not by journalists but by us. When we choose what news to consume, we are picking a tool from the toolbox. We have to understand our tools. When we don’t have the right tools, we have to change them.

**What Can TV News Tools Do?**

TV news drives public opinion. It drives the rhetoric and actions of others even in anticipation of its effect on public opinion. Not just about issues, but about which issues matter. Fox News made millions of people care passionately about made-up essentialist problems such as Benghazi, ACORN, and black
people voting. And so, today, Benghazi has been fixed or something, ACORN is dead, and so is the Voting Rights Act.

TV news creates incentives for social actors—individuals and institutions—to respond directly and indirectly to social needs and priorities. They are all susceptible to public opinion and therefore media:

1) **Politicians**—Want money and support to enact policies that win them support and money.
2) **Business Leaders**—Want public and political support for taking your money and retirement.
3) **Labor Leaders**—Want public and political support for earning money and retiring.
4) **Non-Profit Leaders**—Want public and political support for doing good and/or evil.
5) **Media**—Want money and support from #1 and #2 so they can ignore #3 and #4.

*All of them need the public.* Public opinion, like cash, is a powerful lever each can use to move the others. Together, these institutions craft the policies that shape our lives. Moving one moves the others, so we want to create public pressure—or fear of it—in ways that lead to policy outcomes we want.

We scream at Wolf Blitzer not because his hirsuteness brings out our inner Neanderthal, but because we understand the equally primitive, and valid, notion that institution #5 talking about “the issues” can lead #1-4 to address those issues.

**What We Scream About When We Scream “Talk About the Issues!”**

It’s not enough to say TV news sucks. To change it, to incentivize it toward a model that serves democracy instead of underfucking democracy, we need to think about what kind of TV news will best move our institutions the way we want them to move.

A utopia shaped by the priorities of present-day TV news would look like this:

- A presidential cabinet of honest, experienced, middle-class, smart people (who might still gut our social safety net and outsource our jobs to robots)
- A president with financial stakes in none of his former businesses (who might still gut our social safety net and outsource our jobs to robots)
- A president who wasn’t chummy with Russia (but might still reignite the arms race)
- A president who accepted the science of climate change (but might let it happen anyway)

A TV news of materialism—in the philosophical sense—gives us a different utopia, in which our institutions, however imperfect, respond accordingly to overwhelming public support for:

- The social safety net
- Full employment (*or* robot workers PLUS universal basic income for humans)
- Not World War III
- Not SPF 400

When we scream for TV news to talk about the issues, we want the importance of those issues validated. But we also want to set in motion the wheels of institutions #1-4 toward positive outcomes. We want positive, materialist outcomes that will improve people’s lives, not just essentialist indicators of *possible*, positive materialist outcomes.
On some level, we know that we all share goals that can be defined materialistically—health, prosperity, autonomy—and that we are divided by essentialist debates over how to achieve those goals—socialist, liberty-snuffing health care vs. Invisible Handjob-giving, personal-bankruptcy-causing free markets. If you think most Americans care whether their health is in socialist hands, grill them on it when they’re signing up for Medicare. It’s only when we succumb to the canard that our methods say something meaningful about essences—America’s and ours—that our debates divide us.

America is divided today not because we differ radically from each other. We’re divided because we’re talking about shit that doesn’t matter. So when we scream, “Talk about the issues!” we are screaming for a civic discourse that permits us to be whole.

To achieve that, and to give specific, materialist issues the bandwidth they need, we must reduce the high-pressure flow of essentialist bullshit clogging up our pipelines.

**What TV News Shouldn’t Do**

Trump is or isn’t racist, but his supporters definitely are or aren’t. This kind of bullshit courses through our allegorical bloodstream as surely as TV news sat by while drug companies shot opioid painkillers into our literal bloodstream. So we need to identify what TV news does to inject us with bullshit.

1) Suck. **We all know TV news sucks.** Even “good” TV news often kinda sucks. With a handful of exceptions, TV news sucks in at least one of two areas.

- **Substance.** Bullshit topics. Worthy topics addressed in bullshit fashion. Worthy topics addressed with integrity followed by bullshit “debate.” Sucky substance includes false equivalencies, oversimplification, non-credible people getting airtime because they represent... something, and neglect of important stories.

- **Style.** Worthy topics addressed with integrity by serious people offering enlightening substance and boring our faces off. The finest substance conveyed with the noblest of motives but the suckiest of styles does not, by itself, accomplish jack. Policy doesn’t resonate in stories devoid of people; stories about disenfranchised people don’t move us to act in the absence of politics. If a story lacks any of those three, vital ingredients—people, policy, politics—it will likely suck in execution, impact, or stickiness.

2) **Amplify Outrage.** Essentialist norm policing, combined with gastro-intestinally disproportionately story selection, gives us a media of outrage. Worse, we get an audience that doesn’t even recognize this as shitty TV news because the outrage is genuinely righteous—albeit misprioritized—and the audience shares it. The audience feels guilty not investing these bullshit stories with their outrage. If we want meaningful journalism, we have to resist the pull of these stories. Yes, someone, somewhere is saying/doing something they shouldn’t to someone who doesn’t deserve it. Sorry: Not news.

3) **Collapse Under Its Own Gravity Into a Puckered Black Hole of Bullshit.** The pull of stories others go big with is the gravitational singularity of the TV news universe. It sucks energy, reason, and Anderson Cooper alike into an irresistible Black Hole of Cordcutter (we’re still workshopping that one). If all of a TV news producer’s friends jump off a bridge, they will, too, and put it on their résumé. Better to drown in shitty ratings with friends than explain to their boss why they’re alone on a bridge with shitty ratings.
TV taught Nixon you can win a debate and lose the debate. Reagan proved that critical coverage can help. What TV news said about Trump didn’t matter—the fact that they were talking about him mattered. It told people that what he said mattered, regardless of what TV news said about it.

No matter how nobly TV news covers a bullshit topic—no matter how much they push back on, rebut, or mock said aforementioned bullshit—they are still wallowing in bullshit. As Nietzsche almost said, if you cover bullshit, so bullshit also covers you. So the great media debate right now is what to do about bad information—like Trump’s factually incorrect Tweets. How do you rebut them without amplifying them in the process? They don’t even consider ignoring them.

TV news is produced by people just like us. They share our values and hopes (and lack of training in critical thinking and enterprise journalism). They are on our side...essentially. But are they, materially?

They lead with “interesting” stories. They ignore “boring” stories. Imagine if our national-security apparatus said they ignore boring, material threats in order to prioritize interesting but essentialist threats—flag-burnings. That’s dereliction of duty. If you’re derelect in your duty for money or ratings, that’s treason.

We want TV news that’s able to ignore a Trump tweet—even if everyone else is all over it—because it is produced by such skilled journalists that they can succeed internally and externally by doing their duty and by talking about the issues. Knowing how to enterprise a story is the first step to resisting the gravitational pull of bullshit stories.

4) Essentialism and Third-Order Causality. Sometimes we focus on essentialist issues because we consider them omens of first-order, material outcomes. You might want TV news to talk about the deputy secretary of commerce’s background because you think his background indicates he will do bad things. But if you make him the focus, his badness is the debate. Nomination aside, it’s not actionable. It’s a second-order debate, and we need first-order debates, with concrete conclusions and measurable outcomes. We need TV news to address not who people are, but what actions they should take regarding material issues. We need TV news to focus on policy. On first-order causality. Okay, address second-order causality in ways that home in on implications for first-order results. Ignore third-order bullshit.

Similarly, we can’t let essentialism about intent lead TV news to skip orders of causality. We might “know” that Putin wanted to influence the presidential election, but the essence of that intent doesn’t entitle us to characterize alleged hacking of emails as hacking the vote. We might “know” the essential meaning of a Trump tweet, but that doesn’t entitle us to assume it—or the outcomes—in our coverage.

The value of TV news debate about what something or someone “is” depends on what the meaning of “is” is. Far too much of our national, civic discourse is concerned with whether this party “really” “is” something or that politician “really” “is” something else. Beware the Really. Forswear the Is. Do not have textual relations with that thinking. Focus on first-order.

**Treason: Sample Exercise**
* (answer key)

1) Is TV news literally guilty of treason?
   - Yes.
   - Sorry, I get carried away.

2) Should we treat TV news as if they committed treason?
   - Yes.
   - Remember how the Tea Party used levers of civic power to block a treasonous Kenyan socialist tyrant? That.

3) Who determines treasonous guilt?
   - Juries.
   - My gut.
**How To Tell The Difference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Order Trump Tweets</th>
<th>Second-Order Trump Tweets</th>
<th>Third-Order Trump Tweets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We’re imposing tariffs on China, which will raise our cost of living and cost U.S. jobs.</td>
<td>I’m nominating a fantastic guy who has supported raising tariffs on China, which might mean we raise tariffs on China.</td>
<td>Fuck China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will reduce access to abortion, which will kill some women.</td>
<td>I will nominate someone who opposes Roe v. Wade, which might mean that we attempt to roll back Roe v. Wade.</td>
<td>Fuck women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivanka will oversee my efforts to improve family leave, which will make parenting easier.</td>
<td>Ivanka will be part of my team, which might mean improved family leave, which would make parenting easier.</td>
<td>I’d fuck Ivanka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m repealing Dodd Frank.</td>
<td>I’m appointing guys who tried to fuck Dodd Frank once, which might mean they’ll go back for sloppy seconds.</td>
<td>I’d fuck Barney Frank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will outsource U.S. jobs in return for money from overseas interests.</td>
<td>I will continue to do business with overseas interests, which will create at least the appearance of a conflict of interest and might mean I’ll sell us out by outsourcing U.S. jobs.</td>
<td>I’m going to keep doing business with overseas interests so I can fuck Ivanka at my Scottish golf resort.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What TV News Should Do**

For TV news to move our institutions toward positive change on substantive, material issues, it can not obsess *just* over electoral politics. It can not sustain itself *solely* on the pathos of stories about individual, personal travails. It can not *only* explicate public policy.

We need a TV news that takes our three ingredients—people, policy, politics—and connects them so that people see how they relate to each other, and how they move each other. That’s how TV news can contribute to positive, political activation of people who currently see no connection between their lives and our politics.

So we need TV news to operate independently of partisan consensus. To focus on the substance and outcomes of policy proposals, not on hypocritical contradictions with past statements. To care more about the outcomes of process than about the process of process. To assume the Heartland is interested in real shit. To produce stories about real shit *as if it’s real shit*. 


1) Substance. Where Fox champions essences, and mainstream TV news champions norms, our TV news must champion people. Flesh and blood and dignity and autonomy. Over essences. Above norms. Robert, not Robert’s Rules of Order.

Our TV news should identify the issues that matter most, with the greatest potential to impact the greatest number of people’s lives. Then find stories that implicate those issues, revealing remedies and policies that lead to optimal outcomes. Our TV news stories should name the stakeholders, identify the policies affecting them, and hold accountable the politicians who enacted those policies. And connect all three ingredients in ways that reveal their inextricability.

- **Investigative Reporting.** Most TV news outlets sequester investigative reporting from political debate. They aim not at systemic issues—norms—but at aberrations—norm violation. They target businesses that violate fraud laws—not industries that normalize fraud by rewriting laws. Even when investigative reporting zeroes in on substantive, systemic issues, it often siloes its subject matter to exclude at least one of our three, vital, story-telling ingredients. Laudable documentaries may reveal how entire industries warped the way we think about issues as fundamental and apolitical-seeming as our own food—but our TV news needs to show the faces of the politicians abetting it, and name the policies they wield. Our investigative reporting must go beyond revealing shoddy veteran-care policies and profiling poorly served veterans to confront the politics of austerity and militarism that make it happen.

- **Enterprise journalism.** Any news outlet can do enterprise journalism. When TV journalists suggest that being a real reporter means re-reporting someone else’s real reporting, it’s problematic not because we need TV news people to break stories constantly, but because we need them to have the traits it requires. Reading a story in The Guardian is not sufficient. Our TV news should know how to connect new data points to already-reported data points, entangling all three of our vital ingredients. Doing this requires enterprise—the ability to see things as no
one else in the media has. It requires courage—the willingness to face the internal opposition and external blowback that come with challenging prevailing narratives. It requires storytelling skill—the artistry that makes a great story feel like a great story.

Part of the ability/willingness to enterprise is the fortitude to resist the lure of the false equivalence. The false equivalence is a shibboleth of impartiality. It’s parents showing they love both kids by grounding them both when one doesn’t clean up his room. Our TV news signifies impartiality in its enterprising by applying standards equitably. Whoever fails to clean up their room or embroils us in a war of choice gets grounded, even if it’s the same idiot every time.

But the best, most Peabody-winning journalism in the world won’t move a single mover of policy if no one is watching. TV NEWS WILL NOT MATTER IF IT’S BORING.

2) Style. Style is what our TV news uses to reveal the intuitive appeal of stories that don’t advertise it. Style affects story adhesion. It’s not enough for our TV news to talk about the issues if they bore us in the process. Ironically, this does not mean compromising journalistic principles for shallow, flashy technique. Just the opposite: It’s the ratings flounders that kowtow to the dynamics of shitty TV news. The best-rated, most successful shows routinely violate the “rules” of surface-skimming, essentialist journalism that most TV news programs so slavishly follow.

- **Breaking the Rules.** Willingness to break the rules is inherently exciting to viewers. Most TV news subordinates the moral imperatives of its subject matter to the prevailing norms of its form. Breaking the rules implies the courage to subordinate the norms of TV news to the moral imperatives of the subject matter. If viewers care about the news, they care about it more than they care about TV news norms. Shows that break the rules with moral purpose convert viewers into evangelists. Here are two rules we want our TV news to break:

  **Keep It Short.** This is a TV news mantra. The most successful TV news show in history, however, is not called *Six Minutes*. It’s called *Sixty Fucking Minutes* So Get Comfortable, *Motherfucker*. MSNBC’s best-rated show kicks off each night with 15 minutes on one topic. Despite this, most TV news *tries* to be short. Four minutes with a guest. A minute or two if there’s a tape piece. Topics begging explanation don’t get it. Or don’t get covered. Topics artificially complexified—by the robber-baron-think-tank-industrial complex—don’t get plumbed in ways that clear away the artifice of complexity and render them accessible. We want our TV news to go long and get into the weeds.

  **Don’t Get in the Weeds.** It’s an axiom of TV news that TV news viewers are not interested in the details of the news. Literally, the self-fulfilling premise of the entire industry is that *its customers want LESS of whatever product it’s offering at any given time*. It’s a vestigial attitude dating back to the imperatives of network newscasts that served as headline services. But today most TV news—and especially cable news—draws audiences actually invested in outcomes. Nichification of other genres has led to the creation of entire networks that devote whole hours to single topics. Remember the O.J. Simpson trial? Weeds. Missing planes? Weeds. Benghazi? Weeds.

TV news viewers love weeds like Matlock fans love clues. We need our TV news to get into the weeds every day as if it just discovered Professor Trump, in the Billiards Room of Air Force One, with a wrench in millions of health-care plans.
• **Tell Stories Using Story-Telling Techniques.** If the FEC story is boring, our TV news makes it wry. If a regulatory story is arcane, our TV news casts a mortgage-backed-securities-twirling villain to spur interest in understanding the villainy. If our TV news can’t stimulate synapses with actual, non-bullshit, breaking news, it can stimulate synapses exactly the same way with epiphany. Without spending a dime on investigative reporting to reveal New Fact Point A, our TV news can enterprise its way to synaptic stimulation that’s just as exciting, simply by revealing Previously Unseen Connection between Existing Fact Point A and Forgotten Fact Point Q, using two simple tools.

1) **Historicity.** Nothing is new. Except finding out that the thing you thought was new isn’t new. If our TV news can’t break news about Trump’s proposal to stimulate job creation by slashing taxes on overseas corporate profits, it can “reveal” the fact that Bush tried this and it didn’t work.

2) **Context.** Our TV news is not circumscribed by the fact patterns drawn by the principals of our stories. So when our TV news talks about America’s corporate tax rate, it also “reveals” America’s effective corporate tax rate.

• **Ambiguity.** Fox News is sure of its opinions. Mainstream TV news is sure of its objectivity. Our TV news acknowledges journalism’s inherent subjectivity; it concedes and reveals fallibility. It embraces ambiguity—opening the door for unorthodox thinking and individuals who don’t fit convention. On Fox, stopping to think about shit implies a lack of essentialist, intuitive, G-I commitment to the values of America, Jesus, or Hannity. On our TV news, thinking about shit implies the value of thinking about shit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fox News</th>
<th>Mainstream TV News</th>
<th>Our TV News</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essentialist</td>
<td>Essentialist and norm-policing</td>
<td>Materialist and norm-challenging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda-setting</td>
<td>Agenda-following</td>
<td>Agenda-defining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict-driving</td>
<td>Conflict-driven</td>
<td>Conflict-agnostic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certain about means</td>
<td>Certain about facts</td>
<td>Certain about ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity-creating</td>
<td>Complexity-averse</td>
<td>Complexity-explaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False equivalence-creating</td>
<td>False equivalence-observing</td>
<td>Equitable standard-applying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideologically contextual</td>
<td>Acontextual</td>
<td>Impartially contextual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indifferent to incrementalism</td>
<td>Anti-incrementalist</td>
<td>Incrementalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-intellectual</td>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>Intellectual, duh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vast numbers of Americans don’t watch TV news because it doesn’t illuminate roads to better futures. Or they do watch TV news and it doesn’t illuminate roads to better futures. TV news doesn’t illuminate those roads, because—like institutions #1-4—it's agents put their own, immediate interests above long-term, collective interests. Just like humans do! But TV news can be made to illuminate those roads if we realign the former, individual interests with the latter interests of our greater good.

Ch. 4: Tactics for Changing TV News That Might Actually Work

“Their eyes be like, ‘For real?’”

Political activist/college student/Amazon worker **Artiste Mayfield**

We want our TV news to connect people to policy to politics to viewers. That’s how Fox News changed our media and our politics—convincing people to care about stupid policy and the stupid politics needed to enact it. That’s how we can change media and politics, too.

When our children hit other kids, we do not shriek at them that they are fundamentally evil/racist/sexist/neoliberal. When bank robbers take hostages, we do not treat negotiations as being soft on crime. And when theocratic dictators seek nuclear weapons, we do not label diplomatic talks treason. Because we are **grown-ups**.

And so we likewise solemnly swear in this endeavor to abjure essentialist thinking regarding our media and politicians just as we abjure it with kids, criminals, and theocrats. Anything else puts indulgence of our shitty, essentialist, instincts about moral righteousness over the pursuit of best outcomes for the people who need us.

**Do Not Assume/Accuse/Speculate Motive**

Yes, Chapter Two was all about what drives TV news people. You’ve read it, now forget it. It wasn’t well organized and, let’s be honest, it should’ve been 30% funnier. What matters is that it disabused you of conspiratorial/partisan thinking about the very real, very you-like, very untrained humans who create TV news. So your speculation about the “reasons” for their choices is very likely to be wrong. And that’s likely to discredit you and make it easy to dismiss you.

Think of it this way: When a child falls down and opens their knee, we do not let our faces reflect the grisly horror we see. Not because we are indifferent, but because we are working toward a greater good—a society in which we are calm and still enough to clean and bandage and heal our wounds rather than touch off a fucking screaming fit that will cost you screen time for the rest of the goddamn weekend, mister.

**The single hardest thing to do if you want to influence the media to improve will be to deny your instincts for “justice” and instead...**

- Engage with TV shows that don’t “deserve” your eyeballs,
- Pretend they don’t suck,
- Pretend you don’t “know” why they do what they do, and
- Mask your contempt as you lead them to do their jobs better and/or teach them how to do their jobs better and/or do their jobs for them, better.
If you are wedded to notions about the sanctity of your eyeballs and the injustice of talking with people who don’t “deserve” your civil talking-with-ness, then we apologize for wasting your time with this guide and recommend you fuck off now to devote the coming four years working on your next, brilliant, third-party campaign to preserve the political virginity of your magical precious soul.

Okay. Still here? Our first tactical step toward moving the media involves three choices which we’ll address sequentially but which should be fluid, changing, and made in conjunction with each other:

Choose Pygmalions—the shows you’ll reshape,
Choose Kryptonians—show staffers vulnerable to Kryptonite, but superpowered by your light,
Choose Crusades—the issues/stories/policies/norms you’ll fight for/against.

Choose Your Pygmalions

Where The Indivisible Guide exhorts us to focus on local politicians, TV news is defined not geographically, but biologically—you are a constituent based not on where you live, but on whether you live. So you have a broad range of shows to choose from. And you need not limit yourself to one—we can fight on multiple fronts. Because we are not Hitler.

Discriminate between different kinds of media. It doesn’t make sense to ask The Today Show for incisive political commentary. That’s what Teen Vogue is for. There’s no point picking a good Pygmalion if no one pays it any heed. Likewise, don’t choose a Pygmalion too popular to woo. 60 Minutes will never do your segment on “Transgender Intersectionality and Neoliberalism in the Dakota Access Pipeline Standoff.” That said, here are five considerations for choosing your Pygmalion:

1) Familiarity/Credibility. Media take criticism to heart when it clearly originates from people whose familiarity with their show establishes fan credibility. The best Pygmalion is one you already know. If you don’t have TV news shows you watch regularly, congratulate yourself on your discernment and find one using the remaining guidelines.

2) Repeatability. Can you watch your Pygmalion regularly—ideally, daily—and, even more importantly, engage with its fan base in real time online? Your influence will come with time, so pick Pygmalions that logistically permit you to accumulate influence through quantity/regularity of input, not just the quality of one day’s lustrous Tweets.

3) Sentience. Pick Pygmalions with signs of materialism—changing the ratio of essentialism: materialism is easier when it doesn’t start off at 1:0. Pick Pygmalions whose gardens sprout occasional, brave little shoots of originality, creativity, enterprise thinking, counter-intuition, risk-taking, or rule-breaking. Someone trapped inside that show is tapping Morse code on the walls of stupidity that imprison them.

4) Potential Energy. You want a show on the cusp of influence. One that could be influential. Big names visit your Pygmalion once in a while, but it would like more buzz than it gets. Its online fan activity is more latent than realized. It’s easier to catalyze a fan base than to create a new one or redirect an active one. If the show’s on the cusp of influence, their hope of achieving it is powerful and the fear of slipping back is agonizing. You will have more influence the more you are seen as able to help them.
5) **Pre-Existing Conditions.** Is your Pygmalion already subject to significant influencers or a vocal fan base pushing for change? Join in. Swell their numbers. If they’re misguided in their approach, move them with jujutsu, not fisticuffs (more on this later).

**Choose Your Kryptonians**

It’s easy to find a Death Star. (“That’s no moon.”) It’s trickier to locate the unguarded thermal exhaust port that’ll let you in to fuck shit up. The good news is, your show’s gaping vulnerabilities are larger than the womp rats you used to bullseye back home. At the risk of mixing fantasy/sci-fi metaphors, the vulnerable points of your Pygmalions are the people associated with it. If you bathe them in sunlight they soar. If you Tweet rays of toxic kryptonite they weaken.

1) **On-Air (Anchors, Correspondents, Guests).** News Flash: TV news anchors are not idiots. True fact. Not even the one you think is obviously an idiot. Nope, not even that other fucking idiot. And even if they are, treating them like idiots doesn’t work. If some seem like idiots, that may just stem from the common network belief that viewers are idiots and should be spoken to as such. Most on-air folks want to be perceived as smart. And most are terrified of The Thing That Will Cost Them Their Job and/or Career. So, focus on the ones that (a) respond/engage online and (b) want you to like them. Anchors trump guests; recurring and important guests trump correspondents; everyone trumps harmless one-off guests. **There is little point targeting a show where the anchor is clearly intransigent, unreachable, or unmovable; never admits fault; or sneers at limp-wristed epistemologists.** Conversely, anchors on some of the biggest shows actually do engage and respond online. Speak as civilly as you would in person and your critiques/suggestions might take root.

2) **Off-Air (Internal—Producers, Bosses; External—Sponsors, Guests, Allies/Enemies).** Networks encourage their people to interact online. Search the web/Twitter to identify people who work on, oversee, pay for, appear on, boost, or critique your potential Pygmalion. Follow the show hashtag or thread—do off-air people engage/respond? Does the show have recurring guests—especially ones with sensitive institutional affiliations? Does the show, or a franchise segment, have ONE, primary sponsor? These are all potential Kryptonians who have direct control over aspects of the show (producers), direct influence over it (bosses, guests), or implied potential influence (sponsors).

**Choose Your Crusades**

To choose your crusades, apply any relevant shit we’ve already covered that maximizes your odds of success. In addition, weigh your potential victory’s benefits (lives improved and/or saved) against its immediacy (time remaining to act). Consider whether you can amortize your victory—will it open a door for future victories? Or will it be pyrrhic?

Choose a crusade about which you are knowledgable (or can be). Choose one in which you’re interested (or can be)—climate, environment, economic inequality, social justice, Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ, voting rights, immigration, Lady Parts Justice, organized labor. Go with imminence—is there an actionable milestone such as a hearing or a vote? Fight for attention to be paid before it’s moot.

Fighting over media language is important. BUT...**don’t be fucking lazy.** It’s easy to fight over language. But **story selection** is the most important element of agenda-setting. Fighting over language cedes the
very ground we’re fighting for—what topics to address with language. So do some damn research to determine which stories (a) should be on their air, and (b) you stand a chance of getting on their air.

Too damn lazy to do some damn research? Would a list of two-fucking-hundred things they want to do be any help? That’s the Tea Party agenda for just the first 100 days of the Trump Administration. For any TV news English majors out there, that’s two, specific, concrete, actionable, agenda items they want to accomplish every single day. (Fine, here’s a cheat sheet. Jesus.)

Do not automatically choose a crusade in which you are personally implicated. Some Pygmalions and Kryptonians value you having skin in the game. Others consider the fact that you personally might die fatal to your objectivity. The single most important determinant in choosing your crusade should be that you know what victory looks like. If you fight so you can feel better, fuck you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lame-Ass Crusades</th>
<th>Worthy Crusades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing how people think</td>
<td>Getting people to show up for a hearing on Shitty Bill X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridiculing Congressperson X</td>
<td>Electing Congressperson Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boycotting an anti-choice entertainer</td>
<td>Boycotting an anti-choice corporate donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bashing Congress</td>
<td>Discriminating between good/bad members of Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bashing politics</td>
<td>Ennobling politics that helps people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding your precious normalization</td>
<td>Normalizing hostage-takers if that frees hostages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reveling in gaffes and Tweets</td>
<td>Citing gaffes and Tweets to discredit a shitty bill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don’t imbue process with the import of outcomes. Is Citizens United your hill to die on? Why? Because it will lead to bad things? Maybe. But maybe enabling corporations to pour money into politics will create pressure on them to do good things—like support gay rights. Maybe the first post-Citizens United campaign will see a small-donation socialist give the big-money candidate a run for her/Wall Street’s money before she loses to a guy who spent half what she did. Maybe losing the War on Christmas will make “Merry Christmas” lose its Christian exceptionalism and become just as secularized as “Happy Holidays” did. Evil-seeming processes can have unintended consequences. Prioritize outcomes.

Bottom line: Find concrete and specific measures with direct impact on people’s lives. Make them happen or prevent them. Pres. Bush lost on Social Security because people paid attention in time to show lawmakers the price they would pay. So find a crusade that’s materially in play, with discrete, predictable pegs—hearings, testimony, report releases, votes, etc.—and draw attention to those moments where public reaction can have an impact on actual outcomes.

**TACTIC ONE — Coalesce the Willing**

The best way to gain influence with your Pygmalion is to demonstrate consistent ability to (a) offer something new (facts or entertaining creativity) or (b) move the opinions of its alpha fans. If you focus on (a), (b) will likely follow. If Pygmalion doesn’t have a coherent cabal of Twitter fans, create one (you can hear the prickling of cold TV news producer sweat right now). Facebook is useful for sharing clips, but you will wage your crusade mostly on Twitter.

Remember that if your personal circumstances relate to your crusade, that can help you! Or compromise you. Here’s a rough guide to what to expect—but remember, don’t assume your cabal—or your Kryptonians—will react as indicated, just keep the possibility in mind. You probably know best!
**How TV News Sees Your Personal Stakes: Are You Sympathetic or Hopelessly Biased?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sympathetic</th>
<th>Hopelessly Biased</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need life-saving abortion after rape</td>
<td>Need sanity-saving abortion after drunken five-way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need free, life-or-death health care</td>
<td>Need free, not-yet-life-or-death health care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising private donations to save your life</td>
<td>Raising corporate tax rates to save your life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being female</td>
<td>Being too and/or unacceptably female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being black</td>
<td>Being too and/or unacceptably black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being exotically non-black-or-white</td>
<td>Being boringly non-black-or-white</td>
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<td>Too Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Too LGBTQ</td>
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<td>Fired due to good old American automation</td>
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<td>Fired due to Wall Street extraction</td>
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<td>Angrily old/young</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Groups of individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving in the police/military</td>
<td>Teaching/nursing/making life better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having to wait on line to vote</td>
<td>Not having a site close by to wait on line to vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiously anything</td>
<td>Rationally anything</td>
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</table>

Let personal experience guide what you reveal, flaunt, or hide about yourself. Disclose as little as possible before you get the lay of the land and determine which aspects of your identity ease or encumber your crusade. Here are some tips for getting started:

- Tidy up your **profile**—avatar and bio should display personality.
- Pepper your Tweets with **baseline affection/respect** for on-air talent, even shitheads.
- Recruit allies from relevant interest groups/sites.
- If you know Pygmalion’s topics before air, **read up** on them—policy, not just politics.
- **Promote** Pygmalion online before air time.
- **Live-Tweet** Pygmalion (sharing your research/ignoring essentialist piffle).
- If Pygmalion lacks a **hashtag**, inspire another fan to create one. Use it.
- If Pygmalion’s alpha fans appear scattered, name and **unite them**—“We,” “Us,” “Pygmalites.”
Refer to the group as a **group**; don’t **speak** for the group. **Respond** to Tweets by alpha fans. RT fans generously, with **affirming comments**/augmentary info. Avoid negative judgments. Focus less on Pygmalion and more on the **substance** Pygmalion addresses. When Pygmalion delves into bullshit, **ignore** it and continue prior discussion of substance. Offer interesting/insightful/thoughtful **attaboys** when Pygmalion/Kryptonians do good. Don’t share opinions about Pygmalion or the story, share the **factors** that inform your opinions. Provide **links** when you can. Share video/images if relevant. **Address** almost all your Tweets to the **fans**, not **Pygmalion**—fans are where the power is.

You’ll be surprised at how quickly a steady, recognizable cabal will cohere. (Don’t laugh, but if you get just five allies reliably live-Tweeting Pygmalion about your crusade, you’ll raise Kryptonian eyebrows. Just a dozen will constitute a crisis. *Now* you can laugh.)

Remember to model the same behavior you want Pygmalion to adopt. *Be the thing you want TV news to be.* In your media criticism and materialist journalism, model what you want from Pygmalion. Don’t harp on essentialist bullshit about the news *or about Pygmalion.* Display interest in the concrete, factual, substance Pygmalion addresses—not in style or theatrics that don’t affect substance. Not in the implications for electoral politics or Trump’s popularity. Just the material implications for real people.

If you make a recurring, convincing case that real people are affected by the substance discussed by Pygmalion, you can subtly move your cabal to your moral high ground and win their investment in whether Pygmalion discusses substance. As Pygmalion’s cabal coheres and #Cabalers routinely respond positively to you, Pygmalion will want to keep and nurture your cabal. Here’s how to exploit that.

**TACTIC TWO — A Countenance More in Sorrow than in Anger**

Any TV news show wants to make its superfans happy. When you express anger, you transform from superfan to enemy. Enemies need much more power to wield influence (if you must be an enemy, skip ahead to *Just Gotta Hate-Watch*). Stay a superfan by masking your anger/annoyance/moral righteousness. The disguises we wear are surprise, disappointment, and confusion. There are Three Stages of Fake TV News Grief:

1) **Surprise.** You imply expectations for more substantive coverage and express shock that you’re not getting it. “Whoa...did I miss them talking about tomorrow’s hearing on the leadership structure for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau? Huge story!”

2) **Disappointment.** You outline why your crusade matters and at least imply that you think Pygmalion usually does good journalism and ergo would have done this. If you can identify a cohort Pygmalion cares about that will suffer material harm due to Pygmalion’s neglect, say so. “I’m sad they didn’t decide to draw attention to an imminent issue that could cost millions of people of color the chance to afford their own home. I really thought Pygmalion of all shows would want to let people know what’s at stake here.” Laying it on thick: “If an anchor as smart and influential as Anchor Y doesn’t let people— and Congress—know how important this is, who will?”

3) **Confusion.** The first rule of TV News Club is we do not talk about motive. We do not imply Pygmalion is corrupt or Network X is in Zionist pockets or Anchor Y is a registered
Libertarian. We do wonder what the motives could possibly be. In doing so, we prebut Pygmalion’s reasons for doing what it does—and we arm friendly Kryptonians to fight for change. “I know Essentialist Bullshit Story Y is important to a lot of people, but I don’t get why Pygmalion wouldn’t even mention Imminent, Materialist Story Z that will directly affect millions of people of color. It rated really well on [Insert your prebutting Nielsen research here]. It can’t be that they don’t have enough time, they decide how to allocate their time.”

The short form looks like this:

**Pre-show:** I hope Pygmalion tackles Y today. NPR did it great. Lots of potential follow-ups!

**Live-tweeting:** Surprised Pygmalion ignoring Y in favor of Z. Everyone’s doing Z. I’m actually going to switch over to rival network/online platform A for a while.

**After show:** Did anyone see whether Pygmalion had anything new to say about Z?

Avoid absolutism. You’re attempting to infect them with a virus, not convince them of its beauty. Don’t suggest that Story X is the right story to cover today. Simply share your expectation, based on your love for Pygmalion, that of course Pygmalion would cover Story X today. They’re smart, loaded with journalistic integrity, and concerned about real issues—so you’re surprised/disappointed/confused by the decision not to cover Story X. Narrow the field of argument so that their only defense is that you’ve mistaken them for a show that’s smart, loaded with journalistic integrity, and concerned about real issues—or that you’re wrong about which issues matter most. Neither of which will be comfortable for them. If you make it easy for them to dismiss you, they will. Don’t.

Notice again that you are not talking to Pygmalion, but to the fans. Don’t try to convince them, make your statements/questions open-ended; create space for a dialogue to arise. If others rise to rival your leadership of the dialogue, let them—that’s what you want. Getting Pygmalion’s superfans discussing the merits of covering substantive stories is a massive victory and dilutes your prominence as instigator—taking your personal motives off the table as a way for Pygmalion to dismiss the case you’ve built. Reward the dialogue’s participants with affirmation and credit.

*(Note: Lack of response from the show does not indicate failure. It more likely indicates no one on the show knew how to respond and the show was unable to reach institutional consensus on how to respond. This is great.)*

**TACTIC THREE — Framing Your Argument**

Don’t tell Pygmalion what it should do. Lead its fans to conclude what Pygmalion can do. Here are some ways to frame an argument for substantive coverage of material issues:

1) **Prebuttal.** As soon as one episode ends, start building a case for what tomorrow’s episode should cover. Show excitement about it. Don’t argue for it, assume it. Leap over wondering whether Pygmalion will cover tomorrow’s House hearing on defunding Planned Parenthood to wonder which witnesses they’ll book. Give them pegs, hooks, conflict. Do the work for them. Go to OpenSecrets.org. Check SEC filings for corporate giving to think tanks, etc. Discuss how the story might be iterated/validated. You’re laying the groundwork for just how shocked you will be when they don’t even do the story. Noting how well other programs do with the Planned Parenthood story lays the groundwork for your confusion. You can also prebut style- and norm-based defenses. If Story X is complex and takes time to
explain/discuss, you can prewonder whether Pygmalion will use two segments to do it—which requires less work (reducing story count reduces research/production load) and makes it easier to retain viewers (better to drag viewers across a commercial break with a cliffhanger than an ending). In other words, establish beforehand that you’ll be surprised/disappointed/confused if they rely on the bullshit stylistic excuses of TV news.

2) Boss-Blaming. This gets a little close to motive speculation, but fuck it. When Pygmalion indulges in essentialist bullshit, put it on the bosses. If you’re right, you’re giving Pygmalion ammunition to push back against the bosses. If you’re wrong, bosses won’t like being blamed for it and will tell Pygmalion to stop. Bosses want superfans to like the show.

3) Hallucination. When your anchor launches into a bullshit, essentialist story, “see” how she “really” feels about it. Don’t argue that she should reject such piffle, say you can see her rolling her eyeballs at it. That way you’re not blaming her, you’re making it seem as though the Kryptonians put her in a bad situation—one she’s better than. You’ve just become her ally and driven a wedge between her and the Kryptonians. (If the story is her idea, you’ll at least crack her resolve against any Kryptonians trying to convince her otherwise.)

4) Fail Branding. Nothing stings like a failure that recurs often and predictably enough to be noticed and named. A clever play on Pygmalion’s name, or the name of Anchor X, that describes a particular kind of lameness is an almost sure-fire remedy for it. If Anchor X habitually drags stories or discussion to a narrow, arid field of electoral trivia, name it. Doing so discredits the implicit conceit that their one stupid obsession has any real relevance and reveals it as their own personal hobby horse. Do it with playful disappointment. If you’re hate-watching, keep your cruelty substantive, not superficial. If the show airs any time after noon, make it a drinking game.

5) Polling. Similar to fail branding, you can embarrass with Twitter polls that imply the predictable triviality of Pygmalion’s story selection by asking your cabal to guess—playfully, of course!—which dipshit stories will be on today’s episode. Or which substantive stories will get ignored.

There’s a jillion ways to do this. Create and share your own!

TACTIC FOUR — Rigorous Mortification (or: Journalism By Proxy)

Depending on your Pygmalion, you may actually, literally teach some Kryptonians how to journalism. It shouldn’t feel like teaching, so do it by example. If Pygmalion doesn’t announce its topics beforehand, you’ll still have a pretty good idea what the day’s big stories will be. Go back to Chapter 3 and actually do the things we want good TV news to do. Share your findings/analysis/context. Connect our three ingredients and demonstrate how powerful that can be (see sidebar, next page). Dig up stakeholders who are actually informed about your crusade—rather than pundits who drag it into horserace politics—and suggest them as guests.

Make this a group activity, divvying up the work among your cabal. If it feels like you’re doing Pygmalion’s work for them, you are. Just don’t let them know that. When they use your ideas, applaud them for their great ideas.
When you live-Tweet Pygmalion, link to stories they could do, context the show should have, and deeper analysis. (Hint: Skip Politico’s front page and dive into the policy pages. Great, substantive reporting there every day.) Act as if these stories are already mainstream among the savvy, and you’re surprised Pygmalion is missing the boat. Spotlight information that clarifies the material stakes. Identify the real people implicated. Nothing answers Krypтонian excuses for not doing it like your obvious ability to do it. And remember, think like a parent...wrap critiques not like critiques, but like presents, tied with ribbons of praise and affection. They’re very sensitive.

**TACTIC FIVE — Jujutsu**

While we’re protecting the delicate feelings of Pygmalion and our Kryptonians, keep in mind that shows are not monoliths. They may have internal battles over exactly what you’re talking about. If there’s a Morse code tapper trying to send a message to the outside, let all the Kryptonians know you hear the Morse code tapper, and that they’re right. Arm them for their internal fights. Establish their credibility with the talent/bosses. Let them know you’ll be back soon with help. Identify the show’s energies and tensions and use them to your advantage.

If you are DIRECTLY addressed by Pygmalion or Kryptonians, respond with AWE. This weakens the argument that your crusade is about your ego (which you’ve just established is meek and humble) and disarms their ability to smite you without looking like dicks.

If they defend their shitty choices, don’t argue with their premises about what matters, jujutsu them. Double down on their excuses and take them to their logical conclusions—real stakes for real people. “You’re so right! Trump’s implication that Latina nurses might be undocumented is HUGELY important! No one is better suited than you guys to stick it to Trump by showing the real conditions Latina nurses work in—all [insert researched fact here] thousand of them—and spotlight next week’s vote on their collective-bargaining rights! There’s a great guest you could have. Here’s her link!”

If they acknowledge error or lapse in judgment, praise and jujutsu. “Thanks so much for acknowledging. Can you explain a bit about how this happened?” One step at a time. “How was it an error, in your eyes?” Baby steps.

**OPTIONAL POLLYANA TACTIC — Direct, Genuine Interaction.**

Say specifically what you want. Explain its journalistic merits, its commercial advantages, and how you will help draw attention to it.

If we thought this would work, The Indivertible Guide would be a lot shorter. But keep hope alive!
how does a show prevent that from happening again?” You’ll get more reflection from them if you approach as an ally. Don’t try to pin them down, just guide their momentum naturally.

Above all, stay “friends.” Unless you make a conscious decision to hate-watch.

**TACTIC SIX — Motive Assumption**

Another reason not to assume the motives of TV news is that often there is no motive, just untrained folks trying to make TV under lots of pressure. This tactic is not the assumption of a specific motive, but the assumption that there must have been some motive. They must have had some reason for doing X, but gosh darn if you can figure out what it was! Brilliant Anchor X would never knowingly miss a chance to muster public support to keep that life-saving EPA regulation in place. She must have had a good reason to do so.

Assume motive, don’t impugn it. It’s effective and satisfyingly cruel.

**TACTIC SEVEN — The Summoning of The Gaffe**

When it’s dark out, thunder crashing, TV people huddle under the covers and imagine they hear the footsteps. What was that? A floorboard creaking? In the hallway...is something...breathing? To scare each other and keep the young ones in line they gather around the fire and tell the ancient stories about the ones who were claimed without warning by that rough beast, its hour come round at last, known as The Gaffe.

Although it is widely believed that Gaffes are born in the mouths of on-air personalities, the reality is that anyone with the proper ingredients can alchemize an innocuous comment or Tweet into a lumbering, slavering Gaffe. Gaffes typically arise from essentialist rather than materialist environments, so invoking them is a great way to disincentivize pointless debates about what politicians “really” “are.”

To turn a comment into a potential Gaffe, assume the gaffeness as self-evident. Skip the first-level debate over whether it really is offensive and go right to the second-level debate over who will be offended, how they will react, motive speculation, etc.. Don’t be offended on your own behalf, articulate how/why others will take offense. If Pygmalion wallows in essentialism, use essentialism on them by characterizing the remark with its own self-evident ism-ness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Gaffe-Summoning Tweet</th>
<th>Gaffe-Summoning Tweet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchor X’s Remark Y struck me as potentially offensive.</td>
<td>Man, wait til Interest Group X hears that Anchor X sided with racist Klan rhetoric like that.</td>
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**TACTIC EIGHT — Damage Reports**

Everyone is the good guy in their own story. Good guys don’t knowingly hurt people. So when our Kryptonians hurt people with neglect, we make sure they know it. We deny them deniability by introducing them to the victims of their neglect. When they fail to connect people to policy to politics, we show them the connections with two kinds of damage report.
1) **External.** Research the real-world stakes for your crusade. Connect them to your show’s coverage choices. “If Pygmalion doesn’t cover Ohio voting to ban abortions after 20 weeks, at least 5000 women and girls will either have unwanted children next year—or risk death by attempting illegal abortions.”

2) **Internal.** This is where you show the connection between real people, politics, and Pygmalion’s policies. Demonstrate that Anchor X also has real-world stakes in the real-world stakes of stories, and therefore the Kryptonians do, too. “If Pygmalion lets Ohio ban abortions after 20 weeks without covering it, the Kryptonians are gonna make Anchor X look indifferent to the plight of working-class women and girls.”

**TACTIC NINE — The Lasso**

The Lasso is a tactical escalation. It can be used disingenuously, with no apparent ill intent. Or it can reveal that your interest in changing Pygmalion supercedes your ostensible affection for Pygmalion. It doesn’t necessarily transform you from superfan to enemy, but it carries the risk. Use with caution.

The Lasso looks like this: @

You sling it to tie Pygmalion to a third party in order to leverage that third party’s potential influence on Pygmaion. A mere slip of rope to you, The Lasso to a Kryptonian is a weapon of terrible power. It is become Death, the destroyer of shows.

Ideally, you tie your Lasso to look like an allusion, rather than a summons. You up the ante when you use it to cc your third party. You go nuclear by directing your remarks explicitly to The Lassee. Either way, The Lasso weaponizes other tactics in any of its varieties.

1) **Internal Lasso.** Has Pygmalion violated a high-minded pronouncement by the network boss at a gathering of critics? Lasso the boss to the relevant show clip. (This is also called “tattling,” which for some reason kids shouldn’t do, but is cool for grown-ups when they need 911, lawyers, etc.) Does a big network star rail against media obsession with Trump Tweets? Lasso the star when Pygmalion does it. Remember—try not to sound like a snitch; you’re just wondering, gosh, why might these differences all exist within one network?

2) **Third-Party Internal Lasso.** Show sponsors and guests have skin in the game when it comes to fan opinion of any show they implicitly endorse with ads or their face. It’s essentialist, yes, but use The Lasso on them to suggest that the show’s superficial focus says something meaningful about the essential priorities and values of your Third-Party Internal Lassee. With sorrow, not anger, wonder why such a well-liked brand of toothpaste would...
support journalism that ignores the imminent repeal of school-breakfast and -lunch regulations and does stories on tooth-rotting bullshit instead.

If you really want to be a dick about it, use The Lasso to let politicians know that when they participate in bullshit sessions rather than giving their time to shows—or alternative media—that focus on materialist issues, you’re going to consider them enablers of toxic dumbing-down that’s literally going to kill people. They’d never appear on “Happy Today, KKK!” so they damn well better not appear on “Good Morning, Who Gives a Shit About the Voting Rights Act!”

3) Interest-Group Lasso.
There’s already an interest group fighting their faces off for your crusade. Lasso them. Invite them to the party. Daily. If you want to maintain your innocent façade, Lasso them by posing questions. “Dear @NAACP, hoping Pygmalion will cover SCOTUS voting-rights case today. Any stats on how many people of color stand to lose their vote?”

4) Internet Celebrity/Media Watchdog Lasso. A lot of Twitter users with BIG followings love to spotlight the good/bad that TV news does. Help them, with clips, transcripts, links, etc. Don’t assume their reaction, solicit it. (And remember to Lasso @TheFingNews and #Indivertible so we can help.)

Remember, The Lasso need not be an offensive weapon. You can and should incentivize Pygmalion’s good behavior by bringing it to the attention of others.

**TACTIC TEN — Release The Hounds**

This is the weapon that both fully exploits and ultimately destroys your influence. It’s a last resort more effective in the fear of its use than in its actual use. That said, apparently it’s cool now to say everything’s on the table, so whatevs.
You’ve mobilized Pygmalion’s cabal. They’re woke and you’ve got a non-trivial cohort of sympathetic third parties. You should probably also have the attention/investment of an existing advocacy group with experience at this kind of thing. When you’ve lined up your resources, you can deploy them in specific types of operations:

**Statement Solicitation**—Request that relevant individuals—network executives/politicians/spokespeople/etc.—or entire groups (corporate sponsor/advocacy group) release an official statement on its involvement with/thoughts on the toxic/diverting focus of Pygmalion and its neglect of real issues affecting real people.

**Petitions**—Ask signers to endorse a specific change by Pygmalion, and to pledge to reward Pygmalion for said change by regularly watching. Consider carefully whether to threaten a boycott.

**Boycotts**—With as much allied support as you can muster, announce that you will boycott Show X. Make sure to elucidate specific examples of the behavior you are condemning. Just as importantly, quantify the desired behavior(s) that will permit you to end the boycott. Depending on your tactical scenarios, you can expand boycotts to include the network, sponsors, individual guests and guest institutions. (Don’t show up in person if it’s just you. That’s just creepy.)

Lasso as many media reporters/watchdogs/sponsors/etc. as you can. Keep in mind, the true purpose of your operations is not to kill Pygmalion. It is to make every show aware of the demand for substantive news and to strike fear in their essentialist hearts of the consequences of essentialist journalism.

**Conclusion**

This isn’t about Donald Trump. This is about us.

This is our acknowledgment that we let our national discourse degenerate into fluff and noise. And that we want better.

We wrote The Indivertible Guide as a complement to The Indivisible Guide because what divides us is what diverts us. Because corporate media treat elections like the Super Bowl. Because elections are actually Draft Day and we—all of us—are supposed to be on the field every day, every year. Not just campaigning and electioneering. Governing. Learning what works and what doesn’t. Tracking what’s happening and determining what can and should happen.

Because we are grown-ups we must invest more in long-term results than in short-term indulgence of our magical thinking about what our actions “endorse” or bad actors “deserve.” We do not have souls to be tainted by engaging our adversaries and we lack the wisdom to judge the non-existent souls of others. Our sole focus is outcomes.

The same illionaire ideologues who tell us through our media not to rely on government spend illions getting government to work for them. We want government to work for us all and we want our TV news to move it that way. Both will respond to us. We just have to start speaking.
INDIVERTIBLE CHEAT SHEET

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What We Do

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<th>What We Do Not</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Talk about what matters</td>
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<td>Focus on story selection</td>
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<td>Our Tactics</td>
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<td>Add your own:</td>
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Extra Credit:
Do all this shit on a local level.
Subscribe to The Fucking News

Supplemental Reading:
How To Help Trump, by George Lakoff (h/t LOLGOP)

Now go forth and unfuck the fucking news. Thank you.

- The Fucking News