

How to take down Drumpf

It's interesting to watch how, almost 100 days into what's sure to be a long four years, the Drumpf brand of egomaniacal chaos is shaping the media narrative. Every week, he has another temper tantrum on twitter. He throws his toys out of the pram and the media is flapping around analysing the trajectory of the flying objects. Every twitter fuelled controversy sets the news agenda for the day. The economics of journalism means that what gets clicked is what gets reported and his twitter rampages are a sure bet for clicks.

I get the impulse - when someone is egging you on, your first instinct is to jump right into the shitstorm and start throwing punches. But by sinking to his level, we allow him one of his most important advantages: Drumpf sets the agenda and the terms of the debate. In just 100 days, he's shifted the narrative immeasurably. It's the first frontier we should fight back on.

The opposition movement against Drumpf has been swift and inspiring. But in our energy to fight back, we should interrogate our methods. There was a moment for grief, a moment for anger, a moment for defiance and now, there is a moment for strategy. It's time to move beyond internet bunfights and airless outrage. We don't give an inch in standing up to his policies, the ethics violations or his treatment of well, anyone who isn't white, male, and kissing his ass.

But, the media shouldn't report his tweets with the same earnest authority usually reserved for press statements or presidential speeches. By treating him like any other president, we elevate him. We can't allow him to govern in 140 character chunks. Meeting him at this pathetically low level represents an erosion of the public discourse, a norm that's essential for a functioning democracy.

You can't have a political discourse with someone who has no understanding of the concept of truth. If we try to take Drumpf down with the usual political playbook, we will fail. As [Anne Helen Petersen wrote](#), Drumpf will be taken down not by the rules of politics, but by the rules of celebrity.

He thinks of himself as a star, a celebrity playing politician. We should treat him like we do Tom Cruise, with bemusement and pity. He should not be treated as a respected political opponent. This is not about slagging off his orange-ness, his fake hair, his small hands or his long ties. This is about methodically underpinning the identity he's built - as a star, a marketer, a celebrity, a business man. He is a punchline, not a statesman.

Petulant toddlers don't get to decide what goes in the trolley when you're shopping. Drumpf's twitter feed cannot be allowed to set the prevailing media narrative. As all parents of toddlers know, it's best to ignore the behaviours designed to provoke a reaction and keep your eye on the prize - getting this bozo out of office in 4 years, if not before. Let him wear himself out on twitter all he wants. We'll be busy knocking on doors, talking to voters, putting together solutions to the big policy questions. We'll be getting ready to win the next fight.

When I was in college, a joke candidate for student president insisted on answering debate questions through the medium of interpretive dance. It was hilarious, and brought some much needed light heartedness to the intensity of student politics. But obviously, all the candidates didn't start answering questions through the medium of interpretive dance. They laughed and when the joke was over, they went back to their talking points. We should take the same approach with Drumpf. Point, laugh, and then get back to work. We keep our eye on the horizon, on the long arc of history and on our daily to do lists of action. Anything that keeps us from that mission is a distraction.

P.S. Thoughts on [Drumpf's election](#), why I call him [Drumpf](#), a [Drumpf reading list](#).