

Editor's Checklist: 11 questions to ask yourself in the assigning, reporting and editing process

1. Are we framing the story at the level of democracy or parties?
2. Are only two sides presented in this story?
3. Are we highlighting the odds and not the stakes?
4. Are we focusing on the peccadilloes of candidates and public servants, or on topics of true consequence for the public?
5. Are we mis-characterizing a loudly held belief with a widely held belief?
6. Are we using shorthand descriptions of people that encourage stereotypes?
7. Are we including the “denominator” in any story about protests, violence or other events that go sideways? Are we stoking fear of each other, or of institutions?
8. Is there anything noteworthy about how we approached the story that we should explain in our reporting?
9. How does this story enrich the public understanding of the topic?
10. What emotional state will this story leave the reader / viewer / listener in?
11. Are we covering what is working, as well as what isn't?

