

That's why you can't reply directly to tax cuts so easily. They are about getting rid of all social programs and regulations of business. Vouchers and school testing are not ultimately about vouchers and school testing; they are about conservative control of the content of education and the elimination of public resources. To respond you have to put the individual issue into a much larger framework that fits your understanding of the situation. Tort reform is not about tort reform; it is about allowing corporations to act without restraints, and about taking funding away from the Democratic Party, since trial lawyers are a major source of Democratic funding.

Instead of trying to reply to strategic initiatives, you need to reframe the larger issues at stake from your point of view. You can discuss the strategic initiative, or at least some parts of it, from your framework. Take tort reform. Trial lawyers are really public protection attorneys, and tort law is law that allows for public protection—it's public protection law. When tort law tries to cap claims and settlements, its effect is to take claims out of the hands of juries—that is, to close the courtroom door, to create closed courts instead of open courts. In open courts, where there are juries, the jury can decide whether a given claim is a matter of public protection. Large settlements often have to do with issues of public protection—that is, they go beyond the case at hand. And open courts are the last defense that the public has against unscrupulous or negligent corporations or professionals. When conservatives talk about the lawsuits, you don't just say, "No, no, the lawsuits weren't frivolous," you talk instead about public protection, about open courts, about the right to have juries decide, and about the last line of defense against unscrupulous or negligent corporations.

If facts that don't fit frames are rejected, does that mean we should stop using facts in our arguments?

Obviously not. Facts are all-important. They are crucial. But they must be framed appropriately if they are to be an effective part of public discourse. We have to know what a fact has to do with moral principles and political principles. We have to frame those facts as effectively and as honestly as we can. And honest framing of the facts will entail other frames that can be