

From Susan Stokes, *Trash-Talking Democracy: Why Leaders Erode Their Democracies and How to Stop Them*, forthcoming in 2025

The Playbook: Targets, Strategies, Examples		
Target	Milder Strategy	More Severe Strategy
Press	Self-censorship and censorship (Turkey 2013)	Extrajudicial killings of journalists (Philippines 2022; Mexico 2022)
Courts	Change composition (Hungary 2010; Poland 2015; Mexico 2019)	Defy orders and decisions (South Africa 2021)
Elections	Reduce Ballot Access (U.S. 2020)	Dispute Outcomes as Fraudulent (Macedonia 2016; U.S. 2020; Brazil 2022)
Legislature, Opposition Parties	Defy Oversight (U.S. 2019–2022)	Close Legislature, Ban Parties (Nicaragua 2021)
Civil Administration	Regulatory Harassment (Serbia 2019)	Close Down, Take Over (Poland 2017)
Public Bodies	Weaken by De-Funding (Brazil 2019)	Disband or Staff with Loyalists (Botswana 2012)
Civil Society Organizations	Regulatory Harassment (Bolivia 2013)	Close Down, Take Over (India 2014)

*Note:* Examples not exhaustive. Source of much of the information in this table is from the Democratic Erosion Event Dataset (DEED).