



Activism - Mainstream Talking Points

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Greetings!

Conservatives must become better at making emotional connections to people's pre-existing beliefs in order to turn passive support into action. Too frequently, we rely on logic-based arguments to make our case. These do not capture the heart, but instead, only engage the mind. People, who are busy and inherently resist change, will only be motivated into action with an emotional appeal to which they can relate.

Progressives are experts at engaging passions with their appeals to *fairness, social justice, children's health, and saving the environment*. Progressives are also experts at choosing emotional issues and slogans that can be individually interpreted and adopted, such as Obama's 2008 campaign slogan "*Change we can believe in*", Obama's 2012 campaign assertion of "*GOP's war on women*", and *environmental causes* which affect everyone. It is also important to communicate with people in a language that allows them to understand the issue. Additionally, the message needs to be factual and non-inflammatory. Too frequently, Conservative messages are too detailed, insufficiently persuasive to the target audience, and perceived as preaching.

We need to also learn from Progressives how to win arguments. Most misinformed and low-information constituents share many



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of the values and principles of the mainstream, but align themselves with Progressive ideas and arguments because they believe Progressives are sophisticated and smart, whereas Conservatives are ignorant. We must change this perception by fighting back. These misinformed and low-information constituents would be appalled if exposed to the Progressives' hypocrisy. Progressivism cannot stand the light of day and it is for this reason we need to shine a light on it!

Learning from Progressives

The following learnings are based on reverse-engineering the Progressives' successful strategies and converting them to Conservative talking points. Instead of arguing with Progressives, these learnings will allow you to get Progressives to argue with themselves. Most of the tactics focus on asking questions of Progressives with a request to reconcile the obvious contradictions in what they say versus what they stand for. Most likely, you will not convince a hard-core Progressive that you are winning the argument, but take solace in the fact that your intended audience is the misinformed or low-information constituents who are listening in on the narrative. Many of the points discussed below are based on an excellent book, "[*Waking the Sleeping Giant: How Mainstream Americans Can Beat Liberals at Their Own Game*](#)" written by Psychologists Timothy Daughtry and Gary Casselman.

Don't Defend; Attack!

Progressives always attack with emotional-laden accusations to put Conservatives on the defensive. They may preach tolerance of opinion and freedom of speech, but rarely practice it when it relates to Conservative or mainstream ideas. Unfortunately, the mainstream usually counters by using logic and facts instead of counter-attacking and pointing out the hypocrisy of the charges. When Progressives are forced to defend, they either change the narrative or agree that both sides are guilty of the accusations. Another favorite Progressive tactic is to quickly morph themselves into a victim when attacked. Consequently, Conservatives need to hit hard and then quickly seize the moral high ground by calling for an end to all negativity.

Humor

The most effective verbal weapons are satire and ridicule, e.g. solving the debt crisis by borrowing money. Much that is tolerated through humor would be rejected if presented seriously. Humor works because it is impossible to counter-attack ridicule. It infuriates the opposition and frequently causes the opposition to make foolish missteps. Cartoons can also be very effective. Through humor, we can expose the fact that Progressive thinking frequently is at odds with itself and with common sense. Or through humor, we can create the impression that

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From

[The Nine Laws of Successful Advocacy Communications](#)

by Progressive
www.fenton.com

People start from the wrong premise: If the public only knew the truth, they'd do the right thing.

Making an emotional connection that touches pre-existing belief turns passive support into action. People are busy and resist change. Capture hearts first, then minds. Engage their passions, e.g. environment, children's health, or social justice.

Translate things into language that people will understand. Inevitably the

Progressive thinking is odd and incongruent with mainstream thinking. When Progressives sense that they are not taken seriously, and instead are viewed as humorous, they will lose confidence, their arrogance, and their will to fight.

Moral Arguments

To engage both the heart and mind, Progressives shroud all issues or arguments in "moral garments". For example, Progressives like to use phrases such as "*Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*", "*Of the Common Welfare*", "*Pursuit of Happiness*", or "*Bread and Peace*". We need to point out the irony that Progressives use moral standards as a basis for many of their accusations while believing that moral standards, such as those based on Judeo-Christian beliefs, do not exist and are purely personal matters. The Progressives' nihilistic, relativistic beliefs are in clear violation of the dogmatic moralism they use in attempting to make their arguments.

Make Progressives Live Up To Their Own "Principles" and Arguments

Progressives continuously challenge Conservatives to live up to the Judeo-Christian values and principles, while knowing full well that people-of-faith recognize that everyone sins and that even the Christian church cannot live up to Christianity all the time. Ironically, they will state that "*poverty is bad*" and that "*the environment must be saved*", while believing Darwin's evolution theory based on "*survival of the fittest*". They believe, after all, that mankind is engaged in a meaningless struggle for survival.

Beware of how Progressives frame their arguments. Typically, they focus their arguments on a very narrow topic and wrap it in a moral shroud. It is critical to expose their underlying assumptions in order to control the narrative. Additionally, refocus the discussion to drive the mainstream agenda and to put the Progressives on the defensive. An excellent technique is to argue a Progressive position with another Progressive position that contradicts it. Common Progressive value positions are: *diversity is good, hate speech is bad, all morals are relative, it is wrong to impose your values on someone else, artistic standards are a matter of personal preference, humans are products of blind evolution, and we need strong women in society*. If Progressives play the *Race Card*, counter with how much damage their policies have done to the black family and community. In discussions pertaining to *education*, never criticize teachers, but instead, focus on how the teacher unions hide their agenda behind innocent children in schools and raise money for left wing politicians.

message will be too detailed and not persuasive to the target audience. No one likes to be preached at or talked at. Needs to be factual, non-inflammatory, and in way that audience can understand.

Advocates need to identify wedge issues and specific messages that capture the public's attention if they are to succeed. The great thing about environmental causes is that it is all around us and means so many different things to so many different people. If we were not so hung up for winning for our reasons, we'd be smarter about listening to everyone else's reasons and appealing to them.

Targeting and segmentation are crucial to breaking through and having the edge to persuade. The fact is that you need to persuade the small group of people who can actually change things. The trick is to figure out who those 5, 50, or 5,000 people are. For example, to reduce swordfish consumption, activist group targeted chefs instead of consumers.

Once identified, figure out how to reach them via their belief system and common ground. It's easier to motivate someone around something they already believe than to convince them of something new. E.g. the nerd who reminds everyone at a frat party at midnight about the toxicity of alcohol will not be effective.

Use Progressives' Own Laws, Rules, & Regulations Against Them

Many *laws, rules, and regulations* created by Progressive government bureaucracies are internally inconsistent, defy common sense, and can thus be used against them in arguments to make a point. Stated differently, a citizen who follows a given *law, rule, or regulation*, would in turn violate another *law, rule, or regulation*. We need to undermine the Progressives' arrogance and confidence with doubt, hesitation, and embarrassment. This technique works well with low-information voters who are typically not interested in politics and are cynical about both political parties. These low-information voters normally react negatively to threats to their *personal resources, freedoms, and any unfairness of laws, rules, and regulations*.

Must give specific instructions of what people can do to help versus vague inferences, e.g. "Race for the Cure" for cancer; Put babies on back in Sudden Infant Death campaign; for recycling, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle".

Misinformed voters, on the other hand, are more interested in politics and view themselves as well-informed, although they are typically indoctrinated by Progressive-biased media outlets. A confrontational approach with them will likely backfire, although they can be persuaded by arguments pertaining to any *laws, rules, and regulations* that can be exposed as being unfair, that actually hurt those they claim to help, or that can be exposed as actually hurting the country. With these misinformed voters, it is usually most effective to expand the discussion from narrow, practical considerations to a discussion of underlying deeper principles, where liberalism usually falls apart. Emphasize the distance between the Progressive positions and those of the mainstream, e.g. on issues such as *spending, tax barriers to jobs, and homeland security*.

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