Bridging the Partisan Divide: How to Lobby People Who Don't Agree with You

Presented by Jim Driggers

Disclaimer: Remember everyone has unique and changing personal experiences, beliefs, and opinions. Everyone uses a blend of moral foundations when making moral judgements. Be aware and wary of assumptions.

Moral Foundations Theory

Developed by Jonathan Haidt and Craig Joseph. Moral psychological theory that everyone uses one or more of the following "foundations" when deciding what is morally good or bad. Unless otherwise noted, quotations are from **The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion** by Jonathan Haidt.

- Care/Harm: This foundation "makes us sensitive to signs of suffering and need; it makes us despise cruelty and want to care for those who are suffering."

- Liberty/Oppression: "makes people notice and resent any sign of attempted domination. It triggers an urge to band together to resist or overthrow bullies and tyrants."

- Fairness/Cheating: "makes us sensitive to indications that another person is likely to be a good (or bad) partner for collaboration and reciprocal altruism. It makes us want to shun or punish cheaters."

- Sanctity/Degradation: "makes it possible for people to invest objects [objects, places, people, principles] with irrational and extreme values--both positive and negative--which are important for binding groups together."

- Authority/Subversion: "makes us sensitive to signs of rank or status, and to signs that other people are (or are not) behaving properly, given their position."

- Loyalty/Betrayal: "makes us trust and reward … people, and it makes us want to hurt, ostracize, or even kill those who betray us or our group."

Models of Fairness

In Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think, George Lakoff lists these models of fairness:

1. Equality of distribution (one child, one cookie)
2. Equality of opportunity (one person, one raffle ticket)
3. Procedural distribution (playing by the rules determines what you get)
4. Rights-based fairness (you get what you have a right to)
5. Need-based fairness (the more you need, the more you have a right to)
6. Scalar distribution (the more you work, the more you get)
7. Contractual distribution (you get what you agree to)
8. Equal distribution of responsibility (we share the burden equally)
9. Scalar distribution of responsibility (the greater your abilities, the greater your responsibilities)
10. Equal distribution of power (one person, one vote)

In Haidt's view, conservatives seem to favor Lakoff's #6. My personal view is liberal's seem to favor Lakoff's #5. **Note**: *Fairness is situational and contradictory. Each model is unfair from the other models' perspective.*

Authority Hierarchies

The Authority/Subversion foundation is based on hierarchies. This foundation "makes us sensitive to signs of rank or status, and to signs that other people are (or are not) behaving properly, given their position."

Liberals and Libertarians

These two groups don't respect authority as much as conservatives do, and instead seek to overthrow existing authority structures. In general, these two groups believe we're all equal, no better and no worse than anyone else. These groups believe it's better to question authority, rather than respect authority.

Conservatives

Conservatives believe hierarchies are intrinsic and are required to maintain a moral community. My perception is conservatives have one or more of these hierarchies in their belief system.

1. Deity 2. Men 3. Women 4. Children 5. Animals	1. White skin 2. Yellow skin 3. Brown skin 4. Black skin	1. Very wealthy 2. Wealthy 3. Middle class 4. Poor 5. Very poor

Comparison of Moral Decision Making Foundations

Foundations (Numbers indicate relative value each group assigns to foundation)

- Care/Harm - P1, L3, C2

- Liberty/Oppression - P2, L1, C1

- Fairness/Cheating - P3, L2, C1

- Sanctity/Degradation - P4, L3, C1 *

- Loyalty/Betrayal - P4, L3, C1

- Authority/Subversion - P4, L3, C1

* Haidt's research indicates conservatives use the Sanctity/Degradation foundation about equally with the other foundations. My personal view is the beliefs that conservatives (and perhaps liberals and libertarians) have within this foundation are used to build the structures that support the Authority/Subversion and the Loyalty/Betrayal foundations.

Sacred Values

(P) Progressive (Liberal) - Care for victims of oppression

(L) Libertarian - Individual liberty

(C) Conservative - Preserve the institutions and traditions that sustain a moral community

Which Foundations to Use When Lobbying

Progressives	Libertarians	Conservatives
Link reasons and calls to action on the Care/Harm, Liberty/Oppression, and Fairness/Cheating foundations in that order.	Link reasons and calls to action on the Liberty/Oppression and Fairness/Cheating foundations in that order.	Link reasons and calls to action on any and every foundation other than Care/Harm. The more you emphasize Care/Harm, the more you're perceived as a liberal—someone who seeks to destroy the conservative's moral community.

Examples of Reframing Issues to Trigger Different Foundations

Lobbying	Conservatives	Libertarians	Liberals
Foundations to link to	1. LoyaltyBetrayal; Sanctity/Degradation; Authority/Subversion; Liberty/Oppression; Fairness/Cheating; 2. Care/Harm	1. Liberty/Oppression 2. Fairness/Cheating 3. Any of the remaining	1. Care/Harm 2. Liberty/Oppression 3. Fairness/Cheating 4. Any of the remaining
Housing Assistance "A renter's credit - paired with measures to reduce evictions and increase the supply of affordable housing via the National Health Trust Fund would …"	reduce the number of families betrayed by government policies hobbling hard working Americans from succeeding.	ensure more families are freed from oppressive rents forcing them to sacrifice other necessities.	ensure more families have a safe, affordable place to live in good times and bad and free up money to spend on other necessities.
Global Nutrition U.S. needs to lead international food and disaster relief programs toward improving their focus on improving quality of nutrition (especially in first 1000 days of life) as programs address hunger for women and young children.	To prevent countries such as China from usurping our leadership role in the world, the U.S. must maintain robust funding for international development aid, and ensure money is being used to increase self-sufficiency.	Quality of nutrition in first 1000 days of life significantly and irreversibly influences a person's economic liberty.	Poor nutrition in first 1000 days of life significantly and irreversibly reduces a person's physical, mental, and financial health.

Sources

- **The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion** by Jonathan Haidt

- **Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think** by George Lakoff

Resources

The Narrative Project U.S. User Guide – Search for "Narrative Project" in RESULTS.org website. Great source for specific words to use and avoid when making arguments to support development.

Jim Driggers
jdriggers@astound.net
cell: 925-231-5825