

# SPIN<sup>TM</sup>TERVENTION

Your Handy  
Guide to  
Political  
Language

Frame Yourself  
or  
Get Framed!



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CONNECT THE DOTS<sup>TM</sup>  
*for democracy* USA

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**“Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world.”**

**“When we negate a frame, we evoke the frame.” – George Lakoff**

**To fix what’s broken about politics in America, we need to fix what’s broken about our political language.**



**“People make decisions about politics and candidates based on... the language and frames that invoke (their) values.” – Don Hazen**

**Frames are stronger than facts: “If the facts do not fit a frame, the frame stays and the facts bounce off.” – George Lakoff**

# Decoding The Right-Wing



We've cracked the code and deciphered the actual strategies and "values" behind all those right-wing frames. Get past the spin: Do they match up with America's real values? Or is the Progressive frame a better fit?

Let's begin with the  
Dirty Dozen **BIG CON**servative Frames...

# BIG CONservative Frame #1



"Tax Relief vs. Taxes are your dues..." frame by George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant!*, 2004, pgs 25-26 & 40

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**Pay Your Dues for the Benefits of America's Civilized Society.**  
**The More You Prosper, The More You Benefited, The More You Pay.**  
**Taxes = Public Investments • Tax Cuts = Public Theft**



# BIG CONservative Frame #2



"Smaller Govt vs Effective Govt/Better Future" frames by George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant!*, 2004, pg 94

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PROGRESSIVE FRAME

**Effective Govt  
= Better Future  
For All Americans**



**Public Investments are Required for Private Prosperity:  
A Tax Refund Never Built a Highway, an Army or the Internet.**

**Always Ask: Who Benefits from Govt Rules and Spending?**



# BIG CONservative Frame #3



PROGRESSIVE FRAME

# Broad Prosperity & Fair Trade



More Customers: Hey, That's Good for Capitalism!

Reasonable Rules to Protect American Jobs & the Environment



**“(T)here can never be enough super-rich people to power a great economy.”**

“Somebody like me makes hundreds or thousands of times as much as the median American, but I don’t buy hundreds or thousands of times as much stuff... I can’t buy enough of anything to make up for... the falling consumption of the vast majority of middle class families that are barely squeaking by buried by spiraling costs and trapped by stagnant or declining wages.”

**– Nick Hanauer, Venture Capitalist**

Quote by Nick Hanauer, TED Talk, May 17, 2012

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# BIG CONservative Frame #4



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PROGRESSIVE FRAME

# Customers Create Jobs

## Tax Cuts Create Deficits



Good Wages → More Customers → More Hiring  
Enough McJobs: Super-Size Our Wages & Benefits



# Job Creation Cycle



Graph Info Source: Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize-Winning Economist, December 22, 2010

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# BIG CONservative Frame #5



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PROGRESSIVE FRAME

# Protection Consumers, Workers & Environment



**We Shouldn't Have to Choose between a Job and Safety.**

**I Like My Free Market with Speed Limits and Guard Rails.**

**End Too Big to Fail and Too Big to Jail.**



*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**“What does it profit a man to be able to eat at an integrated lunch counter if he doesn’t have enough money to buy a hamburger?”**

**Freedom “Under the Law”  
AND Freedom “in Fact”**

Quote by Martin Luther King, Jr.

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# BIG CONservative Frame #6







**“...(W)hen people say they’re doing something because of the deficit, they are lying to you...”**

**“...Always. Full stop. Republican, Democrat, Liberal, Conservative and everyone in between. No one cares about the deficit. No one cares about the debt. No one votes on the deficit and no one votes on the debt. What they do is they use those words to stand in for the things they like or don’t like.”**

**– Chris Hayes, “All In With Chris Hayes,” MSNBC**



**America is not broke. We were robbed.**

The super-rich have the money that used to be in our pockets,  
in our schools, in our retirement accounts. – Van Jones

**Cut\$ Cost Jobs:** Spending Cuts = Job Cuts

# **A Country Is Not A Kitchen Table:** **“Belt-Tightening” By The Federal Govt** **Just Makes A Struggling Economy Worse**



“We are not a household; we are an economy. And an economy is a very different thing from an individual family because (in an economy) we are each others customers.

**Your spending is my income.**

**And my spending is your income.**

And if we both try to get ourselves in better shape by spending less, all that happens is we end up reducing all our incomes.”

**– Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize-Winning Economist**



Quote: Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize-Winning Economist at the Take Back The Dream Conference, June 19, 2012

Also see Krugman's book *End This Depression Now!*, 2012, pg 28

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# BIG CONservative Frame #7





**Stop Picking on our Friends Neighbors and Customers.**  
**Public-Sector Workers are as Honorable as Private-Sector Workers.**  
**Remember, the Troops are Govt Workers, too.**



# BIG CONservative Frame #8



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PROGRESSIVE FRAME

**Earned Benefits**  
**= Social Security**  
**& Medicare Part A**



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**You're Entitled to the Return on Your Investment.**

**Are You Attacking Our Beloved Social Security & Medicare?**

# BIG CONservative Frame #9



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PROGRESSIVE FRAME



# Medicare For All



♥ Medicare = ♥ Govt-Run Healthcare

Let's Pay for Healthcare Like We Pay for Roads and Military.



# BIG CONservative Frame #10



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**Jury Trials are our Last Line of Defense against Bad Behavior.**

**Everyone Hates Trial Lawyers Until They Need One.**

# BIG CONservative Frame #11



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PROGRESSIVE FRAME

# Beware Voter Suppression

**More Voters = More Democracy**

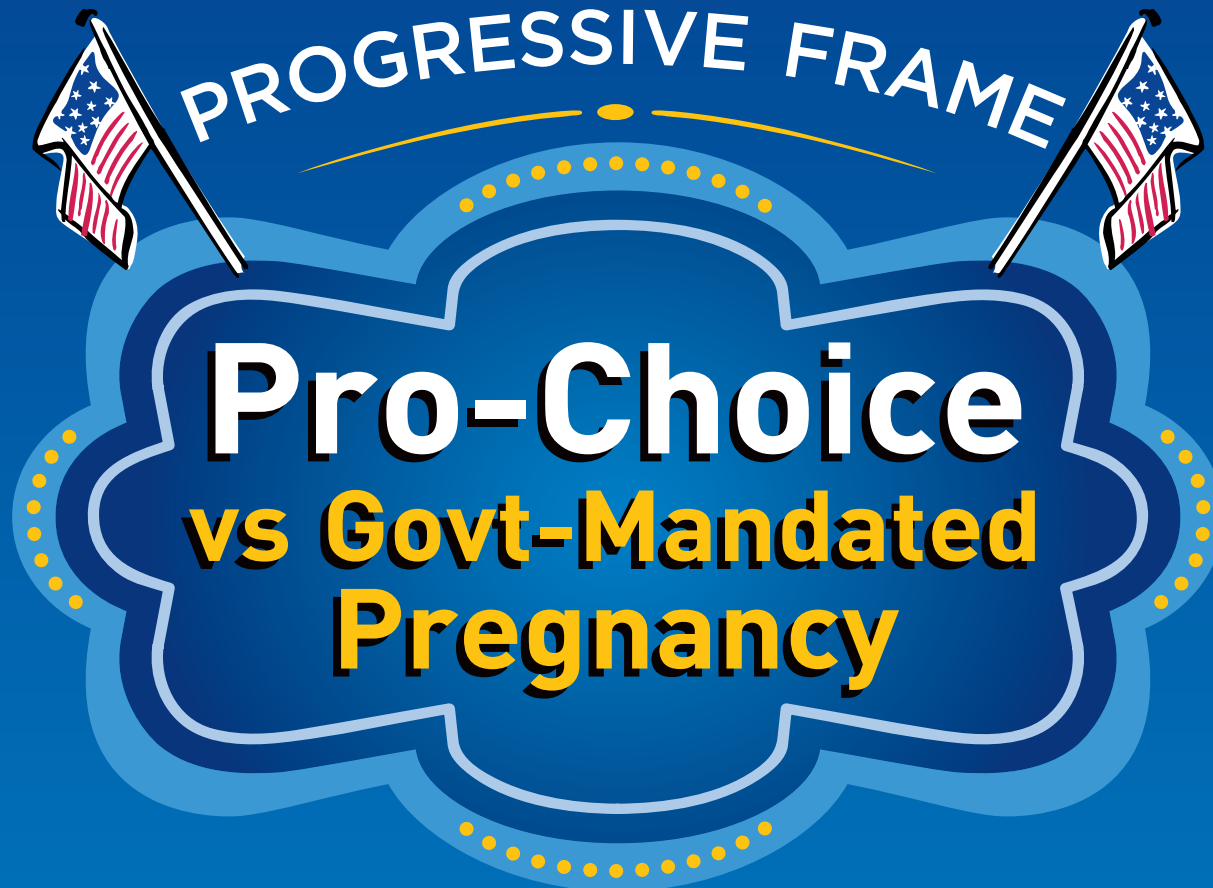
**They've Stolen Our Money. Don't Let Them Steal Our Votes, Too.**

**Be a Democracy Champ, Not a Corporate Chump.**



# BIG CONservative Frame #12

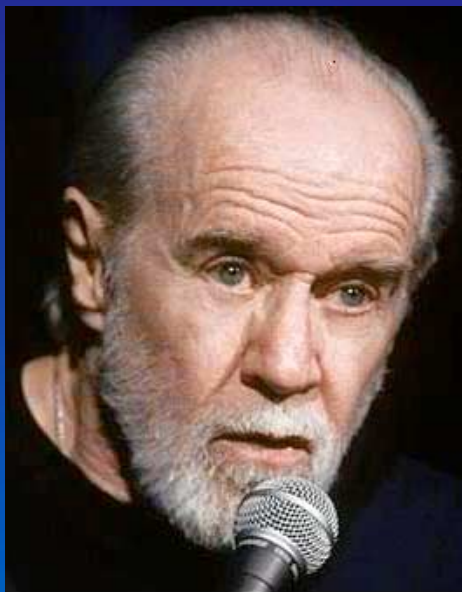




**Real Pro-Lifers Support Universal Healthcare & Gun Safety Laws.**

**If the Right to Life were Absolute,  
Kidney Donations would be Mandatory.**





# **“They’re Not Pro-Life... They’re Anti-Woman.”**

**“Boy, these conservatives are really something, aren’t they? They’re all in favor of the unborn. They will do anything for the unborn. But once you’re born, you’re on your own.**

**Pro-life conservatives are obsessed with the fetus from conception to nine months. After that, they don’t want to know about you. They don’t want to hear from you. No nothing. No neonatal care, no day care, no head start, no school lunch, no food stamps, no welfare, no nothing. If you’re preborn, you’re fine; if you’re preschool, you’re f\*\*\*ed.” – *George Carlin***



**But wait, there's more!**

**BIG CON**servative framing has been going full tilt for over three decades. The Dirty Dozen are the most important, but there are many more. Also practice working the following “quick” progressive reframes into the public discourse.

# **BIG CONservative Frames**

**Death Tax**

**Beware A Govt Tax**

**Govt Is The Problem**

**Privatize Govt**

**Corporations Are People**

**Raise The Retirement Age**

# **Progressive Frames**

**Dynasty Tax**


**Beware A Corporate Jack**

**Deep vs Cheap Patriotism\***

**Necessities Over Profits**

**People First, Then Profits**

**Scrap The Cap**



## **BIG CONservative Frames**

**Worship Wealth**

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**Union Thugs**

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**Right-To-Work**

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**Illegal Aliens**

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**Strong Defense**

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**War & Austerity**



## **Progressive Frames**

**Respect Sweat**

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**Collective Bargaining**

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**Right-To-Shirk\***

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**Economic Refugees**

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**Strong America**

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**Peace & Prosperity**

\*"Right-To-Shirk" frame by Richard Eskow, "How 'Right to Shirk' Laws Kill Jobs and Hurt All of Us,"  
NationOfChange, Dec 14, 2012

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# **BIG CONservative Frames**

**Conservative vs Liberal**

**Global Warming Hoax**

**Freedom**

**Personal Responsibility**

**Investors & Job Creators**

**Beware Liberal Media**



# **Progressive Frames**

**Regressive vs Progressive**

**There's No Planet B**


**Liberty & Justice For All**

**Shared Responsibility**

**Vulture Capitalists**

**Beware Corporate Media**





## BIG CONservative Frames

### Death Tax

Get average people to defend  
our billionaires' establishment of  
*a de facto* American aristocracy.

### Beware A Govt Tax

Starve govt of revenue, kill off all  
protections and safety net programs.  
Then it's really time to pillage!

### Govt Is the Problem

Red, White & Blue Wrecking Crew:  
Wreck govt from the inside and then  
say how it can't do anything right.



## Progressive Frames

### Dynasty Tax

(aka Paris Hilton Tax)

The Lucky Sperm Club should  
make a contribution to society.


### Beware A Corporate Jack

I need insurance premium relief,  
bankster fee relief, outsourcing relief,  
tuition relief and pollution relief.

### Deep vs Cheap Patriotism

Trashing *America's* govt and the  
things We The People do together  
sure is some Cheap Patriotism.\*

\*"Deep Patriotism vs Cheap patriotism" frame by Van Jones, "Rebuild The Dream" presentation, June 23, 2011



# BIG CONservative Frames

## Privatize Govt

Any “efficiency” savings go into our CEOs’ pockets. Even better, with necessities, customers are hostages.\*

## Reform

Our “Reform”— bankruptcy, health, tax, financial, education, pension — just means “Rigged for the Rich.”

## Corporations Are People

“Of, by and for We The Corporations” is our patriotic right to increase profits and CEO pay over country and people.



# Progressive Frames

## Necessities Over Profits

Every dollar going to profits and lavish executive pay is less for education, food, health, safety, etc.\*

## Fairness & Protection

No Rules for the Rich →

No Rights for the Rest\*\*

Tax Reform for 1% = Cost Shift to 99%


## People First, Then Profits

Corporate personhood is legal fiction.

I’ll believe corporations are people when Georgia or Texas executes one.

\*“Necessities” frame by George Lakoff, DailyKos, Dec 10, 2010 & Dave Johnson, “Privatization Nightmares,” AlterNet, Nov 17, 2011

\*\*“No Rules for the Rich...” frame by Van Jones, “Rebuild The Dream” presentation, June 23, 2011



## BIG CONservative Frames

### Worship Wealth

We don't actually produce anything.  
We *extract* from the working stiffs.  
It's Wealth by Stealth.

### Union Thugs

Divide and conquer. Get the ants to  
fight over the crumbs so they don't  
see us stealing the whole pie.

### Illegal Aliens

Scapegoat poor, brown people for  
Americans' empty pockets. Of course,  
Big Biz is addicted to the cheap labor.



## Progressive Frames

### Respect Sweat

Value Laborers over Looters.  
"Labor is superior to capital, and deserves  
much the higher consideration."\*

### Collective Bargaining


United We Bargain. Divided We Beg.  
Unions got us the 40-hour work week,  
health benefits, paid vacations, etc.

### Economic Refugees

Careful what you wish for: When  
American wages go to \$1/hour, that  
border fence will be keeping you in.

\*"Labor is superior to capital..." quote by President Lincoln

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## **BIG CONservative Frames**

### **Raise The Retirement Age**

Scare the 99% that Social Security is broke so we can cut benefits and funnel the trust fund into Wall Street.

### **Strong Defense**

Wage more wars so we can funnel oodles of taxpayer money in no-bid contracts to Halliburton, etal.

### **War & Austerity**

Our spending reflects our priorities:  
More wars and corporate welfare.  
Privatize the Gain. Socialize the Pain.\*



## **Progressive Frames**

### **Scrap The Cap**

Social Security can pay full benefits until 2033. Stop favoring the rich: Apply the tax to income over \$117,000.

### **Strong America**

Also requires strong infrastructure, strong middle class, strong schools, strong people, strong environment.

### **Peace & Prosperity**

Build Bridges Not Bombs  
More Schools Fewer Prisons  
Healthcare Not Warfare

\*"Privatize the Gain..." frame by Van Jones, "Rebuild The Dream" presentation, June 23, 2011



## BIG CONservative Frames

### Conservative vs Liberal

Trick people into thinking we're the fiscally responsible ones. For our wars, corporate welfare and tax cuts for the rich, "Deficits don't matter."\*

### God, Guns & Gays

Our faithful followers don't like too many facts. Dazzle 'em with a catchy bumper-sticker and a shiny flag pin so we can finish picking their pockets.

### Global Warming Hoax

Ditto for Evolution and Round Earth.



## Progressive Frames

### Regressive vs Progressive

The right-wing (regressives) want to take the country back to the Gilded Age of robber barons and child labor. They are borrow & spend BIG CONs.

### Solutions Over Spin

Progressives actually think about, care about, and want to do something about real problems in people's lives.\*\*  
Real Solutions Not Phony Symbolism.

### There's No Planet B

Humans affect Climate Chaos.

\*"Deficits don't matter" quote by Vice President Dick Cheney, 2002

\*\*"Progressives actually think about..." by Representative Alan Grayson, Nov 23, 2011



# BIG CONservative Frames

## Freedom

Nice word, which pretty much means the financial elites get to pillage and plunder without any restrictions.

## Personal Responsibility

You're on your own to succeed or fail. Unless you're the 1%, then bailouts, subsidies and loopholes galore!

Socialism for the Rich;  
Darwinism for the Rest.\*\*\*

## Investors/Job Creators

Deceit speak for "filthy rich"

# Progressive Frames

## Liberty & Justice For All

Freedom from poverty, ignorance, disease, discrimination, war and fear.\*  
"Fair Play, Fair Shot and Fair Share"\*\*\*

## Shared Responsibility

Public investments in creating a modern, civilized society make private prosperity possible, so  
"When you do well *in* America, you should do well *by* America."\*\*\*

## Vulture Capitalists

aka Banksters and Merge & Purgers

\*See Franklin D. Roosevelt's "The Four Freedoms," 1941; \*\*See President Obama's speech in Kansas, Dec 6, 2011  
\*\*\*"Socialism for the Rich..." & "When you do well in America..." by Van Jones, "Rebuild The Dream" presentation, June 23, 2011



## BIG CONservative Frames

### Beware Liberal Media

We scare and mislead the masses and then get them to distrust any other source of info so they only believe us.

### Class Warfare

The 1% has been redistributing the wealth upwards for decades. We only scream “class warfare” when the 99% try to recoup their stuff.

### More Is Better

More stuff reflects moral superiority. Just look how much swag Jesus had.



## Progressive Frames

### Beware Corporate Media

Protects Big Money interests and gains market share by replacing real journalism with info-tainment.

### Rebuild The American Dream

Those who work hard should be able to find a decent job, afford a home, send their kids to college, have secure health care and retire with dignity.\*

### Enough Is Best

One thing a billionaire will never have is the satisfaction of having enough.\*\*

\*See President Obama's speech in Kansas, Dec 6, 2011 & Van Jones, "Rebuild The Dream" presentation, June 23, 2011

\*\*Based on "Joe Heller" poem by Kurt Vonnegut, "The New Yorker," May 16, 2005

# REFRAMING

## Is Social Change



“Reframing is changing the way the public sees the world... Thinking differently requires speaking differently.”





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"Busy Majority" said by Jon Stewart, Sept 2010

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