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Bromberg, P. (2023, June 8). *Real World Policy and Messaging Issues From the Trenches* [Webinar]. EveryLibrary. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsNCDMK6IFs&list=PLGvt9IyrGCa5-EtEPqWqkj9pynH4WSZrZ&index=9>

Responding to Challenges

Effective Messaging

We have to tailor our message to the audience in front of us. Not every person cares about the same issues or sees the world in the same way... We have created very progressive language around libraries... We tend to default to talking about the library in ways that reflect OUR OWN POLITICAL WORLDVIEW. We must therefore know our default worldview and intentionally use language that will appeal to others. Talking like an ALA/OIF strongly worded letter or press release may not be [a] recipe for success in your neck of the woods.

The Three Languages of Politics by Arnold King		
<i>Progressive</i>	<i>Libertarian</i>	<i>Conservative</i>
Support the vulnerable, oppressed, marginalized	Support individual rights, liberty, and small government	Support western values, traditions, morals, law and order
Speak to Equity, Social justice	Speak to Liberty, Gumption, and Self-Direction	Speak to Shared Culture & Traditional American Values

Effective Keywords and Concepts	
<i>Left of Center</i>	<i>Right of Center</i>
Access	Fiscal Responsibility
Equity	Families
Environment	Morality
Choice	Freedom / Liberty
Standards	ROI Opportunity
Social Justice	Guidelines
Systemic Problems	Self-reliance
Class / Class Structure	Honoring vets & military
Microaggressions	Boost jobs/economy
Privilege	Serving rural America
Inclusion	Local control
Diversity	

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Employ “Yes, and…”

Start by positively affirming the underlying value or concern that is being expressed. In book challenges, the underlying values/concerns tend to be: parental control; age-appropriate reading materials; child safety.

EXAMPLE: “These materials are not age-appropriate for my children and I don’t think they should be reading this smut.”

“I hear that ensuring your age-appropriate materials is very important to you. Children develop at different rates, and parents have different standards for their children. To support the needs of all patrons, we group materials by age of intended audience, and provide many tools and one-on-one consults to help kids and empower parents to make informed reading choices that work for them.”

EXAMPLE: “Well, I don’t think anyone’s kids should read these books because they’re pornographic.”

Thank you for sharing your concerns. I understand that what materials are available in the library is very important to you. I can provide you with a copy of our selection policy, and if you are still concerned that these materials fall outside of the scope of the policy we welcome you to initiate a request for reconsideration.

EXAMPLE: “Well, I don’t think anyone’s kids should read these books because they’re pornographic.”

I understand that you think these books are not appropriate for your children and can help you make acceptable selections for your child. And we extend that same respect for parental oversight to all parents, who can determine the guidance and level of freedom they want to give their children when choosing what to read.”

EXAMPLE: “These books are obscene and pornographic.”

I’m hearing that you don’t like the content of these books. I want to assure you that we don’t purchase materials from any publishers that publish materials that meet our state’s definitions of obscenity or pornography. I’m happy to help you find books that are more aligned with your interests and values.