



PAAC

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[President's message](#)

The coalition of the compassionate



by Chris Benedetti
PAAC President

This will be New Year's message of a different sort, mainly because what's going on elsewhere in the world makes our local concerns seem small indeed. It has been a sobering few weeks. Just as we settled comfortably into our holiday break, the first unsettling news reports came in. At first it didn't seem worse than usual - yet another natural disaster far away in the world, second in the online news headlines next to the latest mayhem from the Middle East. The first Internet news reports told of hundreds dead in Asia, then it was thousands. But as the full extent of the catastrophe became clear, it has put everything into a new perspective.

Many of us live comfortable lives, for the most part, here in Canada, the jewel of the developed world. And while we digested extravagant holiday dinners and fiddled with newly acquired gifts and considered New Year's resolutions about things like taking off a few pounds, nature rose up out of a distant ocean and swept away lives by the tens of thousands. By chilling coincidence, the tsunami disaster closely mirrors a fictional one described in a new Michael Crichton novel, *State Of Fear* - a odd irony laid atop the human tragedy. It's difficult to watch the aftermath of this all-too-real disaster and not realize how very lucky we are that our lives are dominated by lesser concerns.

Yet despite the massive tragedy, it is uplifting to see how the developed world is rising to the challenge of mounting aid to the disaster victims. And it's especially uplifting to see how Canada is rising to it. We are not well armed for war, but international aid is right up our alley. Despite some media reports, Prime Minister Martin was quick off the mark, with early aid pledges trumping even the initial amount pledged by the United States. Even now Canadian aid remains impressive alongside other major players in this emerging coalition of the compassionate.

Nor are Canadians sitting back and letting their government do the giving on their behalf. Most of us, judging by news reports, are doing as citizens of other privileged and developed nations are, giving unselfishly to various aid organizations. The generosity of Canadians, giving hugely to help others across the world, mirrors the generosity of many locals in the stricken areas. These people, themselves spared death when the waves struck, unselfishly aided foreigners in places such as Phuket, Thailand.

Indeed, world events now seem to hold up a mirror to all of humanity, showing people at their best and their worst. In that mirror we see some people coming to the aid of others in any way they can while other people elsewhere continue to plot bombings and destruction any way that they can. We have seen developed nations rise to the challenge while a U.N. bureaucrat answered as if by reflex, calling them 'stingy' before he was shamed into changing his tune.

In this international mirror, Canada is well reflected as a major player in the coalition of the compassionate. Many PAAC members and their respective organizations are donating to the relief efforts. I challenge all of our members to continue this, in the spirit of our national tradition.

The following is a list of aid agencies from which the federal government will be matching individual donations until January 11th.

Canadian Red Cross; 1-800-418-1111; or contact your local Canadian Red Cross Office. Cheques should be made payable to the Canadian Red Cross, marked "South East Asia Earthquake and Tidal Wave Relief" and mailed to Canadian Red Cross National Office, 170 Metcalfe Street, Suite 300, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 2P2.

CARE Canada; 1-800-267-5232; or send a cheque or money order to CARE Canada, Donation Processing Centre, P.O. Box 800, Station K, Toronto, Ontario, M4P 2H2.

OXFAM; or toll-free at 1-800-466-9326.

World Vision; or toll-free at 1-800-268-5528.

UNICEF; 1-877-955-3111; or by mail to UNICEF Canada, 2200 Yonge Street, Suite 1100, Toronto, Ontario,

M4S 2C6.

Doctors Without Borders; 1-800-982-7903; or cheque donations can be made at 402-720 Spadina Ave, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2T9.

Save the Children; 1-800-668-5036; or cheque donations can be made to Save The Children Canada, 4141 Yonge Street, Suite 300, Toronto, Ontario M2P 2A8.

In this time of unprecedented human tragedy due to natural disaster, supporting international disaster relief is the best way to express the spirit of this nation, even as we renew our appreciation of our families, our many blessings, and of the prosperous and comparatively peaceful communities in which we live.

-Chris Benedetti

Your PAAC membership is up for renewal

by Graham Murray
PAAC Association Manager

The Public Affairs Association of Canada has again held the line on Annual Membership dues, which remain at \$214 (including GST) for calendar 2005. Out-of-town members (those residing beyond a 100-kilometre radius of Toronto) still pay half that amount - \$107 (including GST). Student Membership has been kept at \$53.50 (including GST).

Membership dues invoices were mailed out before Christmas, and statements will be sent out later this month to those who have not yet paid. Members can pay by cheque (made payable to The Public Affairs Association of Canada) or by credit card (PAAC accepts Amex, MasterCard and VISA). You can telephone the PAAC office (416-367-2223) with your payment information, or you can download the membership form and either fax it (416-367-3778) or mail it (PAAC, 100 Adelaide Street West, Suite 705, Toronto, ON M5H 1S3).

Please renew your membership quickly, to ensure your continued access to member discounts on PAAC events as well as your right to attend our periodic members'-only events. First up in 2005 is Greg Lyle on 'Opinion Research Frontiers', the third in our Tools & Techniques series on polling. We will present Jim Warren, Communications Director to the Premier of Ontario, in February or March, and are planning an April session to mark the 20th anniversary of the Equality Rights provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. PAAC's Events Chair, Lisa Marsden welcomes program suggestions from PAAC members.

[Event report](#)

Sheila Copps not shy or retiring

To read Jean Chrétien's memoir, *Straight From The Heart*, when he released it in 1985, was to be smacked upside the head by the idea he was thinking comeback. The book, bearing the name of a popular Little Feat song that turned into a Bryan Adams hit, was as upbeat as the song. It was not the memoir of a guy saying good-bye to public life, telling where all the bodies were buried and who had really done what to whom. He wrote nice things for the most part - mostly about himself, but also about colleagues and adversaries. Funny anecdotes. Insightful recollections. The book was clearly intended to position him for a return to politics that is now the stuff of history. And damn near 20 years later you can pick up a copy of *Worth Fighting For*, by Sheila Copps, and get the same vibes.



Star of the show - Guest speaker Sheila Copps with PAAC President Chris Benedetti.

Copps was the featured speaker at the PAAC luncheon on December 17 at the Sutton Place Hotel, where those PAAC members and guests who set aside holiday preparations to come listen to her were not disappointed. She came to talk about her 20 years in public life, promote her book - people lined up after her talk to shell out \$30 in raw cash for a copy - and to tell one and all about her love of country. She made a point of complimenting her audience as experts in communication, the importance of which she had to learn along the way during her political journey.

A million flags

Copps recalled how she once came to grief on a good idea that failed because it was poorly communicated. Faced with her new job to promote Canadian culture in the role of Heritage Minister, she came up with a great new idea one Canada Day. The bureaucrats in her department wanted a simple ceremony in Ottawa, but Copps had grander plans. "What about a challenge to get a million Canadians to fly a flag?" she wondered. It was a good idea, she recalls, but by imposing it top-down upon the bureaucrats she set herself up for a fall. "I got crucified by the media because I didn't have buy-in at ground level."

It was a lesson learned that she would not have to learn again. Indeed, her whole career seems to have been one of leaping wholeheartedly into new things and learning as she went. A native of Hamilton, Ontario, Copps entered provincial politics in 1981, then jumped into the federal theatre of combat in 1984, a relative political newbie who won a seat for the Liberals the year they were all but vaporized by the Mulroney Tories. During her subsequent career she rose to become, at various times, Minister of the Environment, Minister of Canadian Heritage, and the trusted Deputy Prime Minister to the mighty Chrétien. In 1986 she wrote and published her first book, *Nobody's Baby*, which was her memoir up to that point. She kept getting re-elected time after time after time in Hamilton, and to meet her in person is to see why - she's full of enthusiasm for the work. That's why it was impossible to come away from that luncheon believing she's finished with politics. Look at her: She's still fairly young.



Copps: Nobody's baby.

Watch her work a room and you can tell she hasn't quit yet:



Working the room - Sheila Copps talks with Ralph Palumbo (above and below, closeup) while Chris Benedetti confers with Howard Brown (background, above).



Listen to her talk about her love of Canada: "There is a lot about this country that we don't appreciate or reflect on," she reminded her audience - things which people all over the world have recognized set Canada above even the towering United States right next door. Said Copps: "Why would 90 per cent of the world give their eye teeth to come to Canada?" In part, she said, it's because Canada led the way in world-centred domestic politics, becoming the first officially multicultural country in the world, based on a commitment to intercultural amity that extends back to the country's foundation. "The great wedge used by despots to divide is religion and culture," she said. She didn't remind the audience that the blessings of multiculturalism and the world-centered view happened under the Liberal flag because she didn't need to. Her presentation was almost a paean to the Trudeau/Chrétien years - the years during which a young Sheila Copps pushed her career ahead and began to make her mark.

Nunziata's bathroom break

Her book is full of anecdotes at once entertaining and revealing. Early in the book, she tells how she led a campaign to recognize five women who, in 1919, forced the Canadian government to recognize women as persons, not chattels. Her Strike Force on the issue needed all-party consent for a private member's bill to honor these women with a statue display, but didn't have consent from John Nunziata, who was at the time an independent member. "As speeches from all sides of the House in support of the legislation continued, John remained glued to his seat, ready to object if any attempt was made to have the bill passed," she wrote. But he was being watched by Deputy Whip Marlene Catterall as a cat watches the family budgie. Finally, he did what she was watching for. As Copps puts it in her book: "He had to leave the Chamber to see a man about a horse." Copps reports the ladies then swung into action at a signal, and by the time Nunziata came back to his seat, something else had also passed: The legislation. The story, at once funny and hugely

revealing, is one of many in her book.

At the PAAC luncheon she gave us her version of the story behind the infamous Shawinigan Handshake. The scene we all saw on the news, with Jean Chrétien wearing impenetrable black Wayfarers, looking like a member of Tony Soprano's crew as he grabbed a man by the face and tossed him aside, was never supposed to happen. It was supposed to be a simple flag-raising event to take place after Copps met with people she calls "all the cultural mucky-mucks." Coming out of that meeting she was flushed with success, having aced her performance, she thought. The flag-raising by local Grade Two children, with the Prime Minister putting in an appearance, would simply be the cherry on the cake of her day.

As she relates it, the PMO insisted all the bright orange security barricades be removed because they looked unwelcoming. Copps, who that morning had experienced a bad premonition about the day, looked out a window to check the preparations, and noticed the area filling up with security troops. "I saw all these big men in leather jackets," she said. "They didn't look like Grade Two kids." She suggested to Chrétien that he should lose the shades, but he never got around to taking them off before things went sour, and they contributed to the awful images that followed.

The attack of the nattering gnat

The event went badly. They had hired a Master of Ceremonies, but the man did a fast exit when the trouble started. "He jumped off the stage," said Copps, as the protestors moved in, undeterred by barricades or the RCMP. As the melee developed, the children started to cry. The Prime Minister could not be heard over the deliberate noise protestors caused to drown him out, so he stopped trying to be. "He plowed into the middle of the crowd," said Copps. Security troops formed a flying wedge formation around him for protection. It wasn't working. With something like 50 television cameras bearing witness, a small noisy protestor, a buzzing gnat of a fellow, succeeds in fetching up against The Man, his mouth yattering away like one of those chatterbox toys...the protestors have these little portable horns with them...they're making as much din as possible with their little tooters...suddenly Chrétien feels something metal pressed against his skull...*what is that, a gun?* -

"He thought it was a gun," recalls Copps. So he puts the guy on the ground and keeps going; let the RCMP deal with him. Copps doesn't realize what's happening yet; she thinks the man tripped...*poor man faw down go boom...*and she steps forward to be helpful: "*Oooh, can I help you to get up...?*" But by now the landscape is a churning hellbroth of jostling protestors and looming security people, and Canadians coast to coast, hands to open mouths, have just watched their maximum leader seize a man about the size of a fireplug by his kisser and toss him to the brutes in the black jackets...

Later, Sheila received a phone call from a concerned colleague, wanting to know what the hell just happened: "We've just seen the PM in slo-mo on TV taking out a protestor." Well, Copps claims she had a bad feeling about that day from the start, and her instincts were apparently right. Or was it so bad? A grateful nation, obviously just as tired of horn-tooting protestors as anybody on the Hill, reacted positively to what they saw. "In one day, Mr. C's numbers went up ten per cent."

Copps has dozens of stories. Her book is full of them. But her mission at PAAC seemed to be to remind us all that Canada is a wonderful place, and that people who choose public life (such as, for example, Sheila Copps) are pursuing the highest calling for the best motives. It's the same message her former boss and mentor once gave, in a book released on the occasion of his 'retirement' that really didn't turn out to be a

retirement. It is the quintessential Liberal message, coming not from another guy in a suit this time, but from a woman who still puts out the voltage of youth, ambition and vision. These days, "the focus is too much on the 'me' and not enough on the 'you,' she said. "The West fights the East and everybody fights Toronto." She called aloud for patriotism and, not incidentally, Liberalism.

Sheila took her shot at the Americans: "Nuclear missile shields will not save us. You have to learn to walk in your brother's shoes." She took her shot at those who belittle people in politics: "Public life is the only place where you can really change a country." And she took her shot at those who would relegate Canada to second status: "Canada is a place where citizens of the world can come and call home," she said. "I'm sick and tired of hearing people talk about this or that grievance. We're living in an absolutely incredible country."

These are not the sounds of somebody who has given up public life. After her presentation, she sold and signed a stack of copies of her new book, and although the book has provoked some outrage and a predictable campaign from Prime Minister Paul Martin to discredit some of the uncomplimentary stories in it - such as her contention that in 1995 as Finance Minister, Martin was set to abolish the Canada Health Act, scupper old age pensions and privatize the CBC - it looks more than anything else like a document that will position its author for a return to the limelight she clearly loves.



In demand - Sheila Copps sold books after the luncheon like hotdogs at a ball game.

It's not impossible. Scare tactics against the Conservatives might not work again in the next election. If the Conservatives run somebody not so easily dismissed as a right-wing crazy as Stephen Harper and they win, a Liberal uprising against Martin is not out of the question. Politicians eat their old. There could indeed come a day when Sheila Copps stands astride Paul Martin's prostrate form while the birdies sing in his head. After

that, who knows?

-D.S.

Background

Codes of ethics and their effect on professions

A quick background look at codes of ethics in two different professions, in advance of developments that will soon see a professional code of ethics drafted for PAAC members - a first in Canada.

In the United States, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) years ago took several initiatives to encourage and require ethical behaviour in their profession, which encompasses one of the many disciplines covered by public affairs. For one thing, they have an Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations, overseen by a Board which includes people from PRSA and other communications organizations. Those who pass the exam may put the letters APR after their names, signifying their training in, and adherence to, a commitment to the ethical practice of their profession.

In addition to accreditation, PRSA has a professional code of ethics, most recently updated in 2000. It includes strong and specific language like this:

I pledge: To conduct myself professionally, with truth, accuracy, fairness, and responsibility to the public; to improve my individual competence and advance the knowledge and proficiency of the profession through continuing research and education; and to adhere to the articles of the Member Code of Ethics 2000 for the practice of public relations as adopted by the governing Assembly of the Public Relations Society of America.

I understand and accept that there is a consequence for misconduct, up to and including membership revocation. And, I understand that those who have been or are sanctioned by a government agency or convicted in a court of law of an action that is in violation of this Code may be barred from membership or expelled from the Society.

The PRSA Code has been specifically designed to ensure that every member understands his or her obligations and the expectation of ethical behavior that comes with membership in their professional association. "The Code is about what we should do, and why we should do it," the document says. "The Code is also meant to be a living, growing body of knowledge, precedent, and experience. It should stimulate our thinking and encourage us to seek guidance and clarification when we have questions about principles, practices, and standards of conduct."

For each rule it even gives specific examples of conduct deemed improper under that rule, such as: "A member representing a ski manufacturer gives a pair of expensive racing skis to a sports magazine columnist, to influence the columnist to write favorable articles about the product." Or, "a member entertains a government official beyond legal limits and/or in violation of government reporting requirements."

The PRSA code is strict, requiring its members to be honest and accurate in communications, to correct erroneous messages, and to check the truthfulness of information released on a client's behalf. It requires them to reveal who their sponsors are for the interests they represent, and to disclose financial interests, to avoid conflicts of interest, and to avoid deceptive practices - all the sort of things that people in public relations have sometimes been suspected of, and been criticized for.

Things like setting up 'front groups' to mount phony letter-writing campaigns to legislators are singled out as forbidden. So is lying by omission and failing to correct disseminated information they know is false. It's a surprisingly uncompromising document, and clearly not intended to appease those who might feel it criticizes them. Instead, the idea is to make membership in PRSA a flag to the public and to journalists; an indicator that here is someone who can be trusted because they have made this commitment.

Another U.S. organization with an effective code of ethics, although not related to public affairs at all, is the Association of Authors' Representatives. It's the professional association for literary agents in America, and their Canon of Ethics is notable for its power to influence the actions not only of members, but of non-members. In the U.K. a similar organization, the Association of Authors' Agents (AAA) has a similar code.

The AAR Canon of Ethics specifically forbids certain abusive practices that unethical agents have long been tempted to use. In the U.S., as in Canada, publishers don't accept manuscripts or book queries from unpublished writers because if they did they would be snowed in by mounds of material. Instead they have ceded this territory to agents. This state of affairs tempts some agents to use would-be writers as a profit center, charging them fees to review material while they decide whether or not to offer representation. It has been deemed unethical by AAR and AAA to do this because there is no way to determine if the fee is honestly charged. Given the number of people who think they can write a book but are mistaken, it's very easy to set up a business to charge people money to read their material and then say 'no thanks.'

The AAR Canon of Ethics therefore demands that a member agent who accepts queries from the vast unwashed does so on his own dime. When he negotiates a publishing contract he is entitled to charge 15 per cent of whatever income it generates for the life of the work. This is a good income base for an agent with good contacts and sales skills, who is a good judge of literary works. The rest charge reading fees. And anybody who encounters an agent who wants to charge a reading fee knows this. That's the point.

This has had a salutary effect on most U.S. agents, because even those who are not AAR members are well motivated to adhere voluntarily to these ethics. To join AAR, an agent must sell ten books in 18 months of solid work as an agent, and agree to adhere to that Canon of Ethics. Most who plan to go big-time start early, declaring from the outset that they will adhere to the ethical code. Those who don't sometimes post elaborate and hollow-sounding explanations on their web sites, as to why they think they are entitled to reading fees. As a result, would-be clients can accurately judge what kind of people they are thinking of dealing with. Quite an accomplishment for a simple ethical code.

In Public Relations, PRSA tried to achieve a very similar effect upon those dealing with, or thinking about dealing with, public relations people Stateside. PRSA also subscribes to a Global Alliance Ethics Code, which is similar. Both these codes are known to PAAC as we work on our own Code of Ethics for the whole spectrum of disciplines in public affairs, and when it arrives there will no doubt be similarities.

-D.S.

[Point / Counterpoint: Hockeyless night in Canada](#)

This month we once again welcome Chris Ballard, President of CSB Communications, former journalist and a past-President of the Public Affairs Association of Canada, in a point/counterpoint exchange with Web Editor David Silburt. This time Ballard is on point:

[Point: The Hockey lockout](#)

A pox on both their houses

by Chris Ballard

President, CSB Communications

As we inch toward January 14th - the day this year's NHL season will be cancelled - it's that time again when we Canadians take a shot at an institution that has done more to raise our collective standard of living and protect our health than all the actions of governments over the past 80 years. It's Bash-the-Unions-and-Greedy-Workers time.

Except this time, we're not just accusing union members of being greedy, we're really ticked that they've ruined our Saturday nights. That's right, no *Hockey Night in Canada*. No hockey because of the greed of a bunch of muscle-bound union members who dare to exercise their right to get what they can while they can - before their bodies can no longer support the crush and grind of professional hockey.

How dare they. How dare these athletes do nothing worse than what our captains of industry do - be paid well for creating shareholder value. It's just that our leaders get their payoffs behind closed doors and away from public scrutiny. David, I'm really quite astonished on two fronts: Canadian's seemingly negative views of collective bargaining and our knee-jerk negative reaction to NHL players.

Clearly, the National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA) has lost its case in the court of public opinion, in spite of its smart move to offer a salary reduction of 24 per cent (knowing full well that's not what the owners wanted). But the real issue is not the alleged greed of the players, rather it's the lack of business sense of the owners. In any other business, these businessmen would have been driven from their respective organizations by enraged shareholders - yet we're supposed to feel sorry for them.

The owners tell us they've lost \$200 million in each of the previous two seasons. Salaries now account for 70 per cent of franchise revenue. How could these geniuses of corporate North America let this happen?

A little history is in order. When rookie salaries were capped back in the early 1990s, or was it the late '80s, it wasn't the players who found a way around the cap - it was owners who exploited a loophole and ended up paying massive bonuses to sign new players. Rookie salaries were capped, but signing bonuses and performance bonuses ran amok.

My question: Who, ultimately, is responsible for the quality and cost of the product? Isn't it the owners? NHL owners are drowning in a sea of red ink and want the players to throw them the life preserver of a salary cap.

Unfortunately, the NHLPA will have to ride to the rescue of the owners, and the cost of the owners' incompetence will be borne by the players. Don't blame the players for breaking the bank, blame the fiscally irresponsible owners who can't police themselves.

If we believe in a marketplace economy we should simply let those teams that have become unprofitable - because of high salaries, lousy product, or whatever reasons - sink beneath the ice. Once three or four teams fold, owners will realize they have to smarten up and players will realize there is an oversupply of former multi-million dollar players seeking jobs. Payrolls will decrease, the quality of the product will increase as the talent pool is concentrated, and consumers will be the winners.

At least consumers should be the winners. Given their past history, owners will take the golden opportunity to make amends and find some way to screw up.

And what do we public affairs practitioners have to learn from all of this? Darned if I know ... I'm just ticked I won't be tuning in this spring, when hockey gets interesting, to watch Toronto trounce Ottawa. And, hey, with my last name I'm entitled to some point of view about hockey and especially the Maple Leafs.

(Chris Ballard is a recovering hockey fan who swears he's related to the Ballards of dog-food fame, and not the infamous Harold Ballard, former Leaf owner and Carlton Street curmudgeon - Ed.)

[Counterpoint:](#)

Goons just want to have fun

by David Silburt
PAAC Web Editor

Huh? The hockey players are locked out? You're saying a labour dispute is behind the refreshing lack of hockey images on TV and in the papers? Cool. With a bit of luck it will continue. Because after considering all available evidence, it is the conclusion of this department that the game of hockey epitomizes everything that is nasty, brutal and thuggish in this First World society of ours; all the things people should reject as unacceptable behaviour.

I can find no point on which to disagree with your analysis of the business aspects of it, Chris. Certainly, as a guy whose brother-in-law works construction, I have to stand very far back and squint to see a parallel with the "hockey players' union." But the big picture is, this nation is plagued by people who react with blind and mindless fury to little provocation, and the example set by professional hockey is responsible for most of it. It may even be responsible for night club shootings and road rage and the rising popularity of gas-thirty SUVs whose only purpose is to intimidate enemy drivers.

Don't get me going about the sad plight of hockey players, particularly the stereotypical overpaid enforcer with the soul of a Cape buffalo and the morals of a hammerhead shark. Get into a beef with a guy, raise a big stick in your hands and smash his brains loose with it, see what the courts have to say. Skate up and clock him from behind with a clenched fist on the end of a superbly gym-trained arm, then see if your lawyer can get you off with a fine. If you're a hockey player doing these things in a stadium before 40,000 blood-crazed fans, with another few million watching on TV, you're in good shape. Do it on the street and you will

go directly to jail - do not pass 'go' and do not collect two hundred dollars.

Chris, I can't believe I'm hearing hockey fan-talk from a guy who won't let his twelve-year-old son play Grand Theft Auto because it teaches gratuitous violence. In GTA you score points for killing pedestrians, I'm told, but its vendors say relax, it's just a game. Yet the game of hockey seems about to degenerate into something similar, while parents still send children to junior hockey and call it 'character-building.'

Character-building? In NHL hockey, the fans reserve their highest hero-worship not for the most skilled icemasters, at least not since Gretsky left the game. Above all they seem to love the men whose job is to intimidate the other players; hired goons who collect their big paychecks - currently in dispute - for putting the fear of injury into play as a tool of the game. And in minor league hockey games, fights happen in emulation of this.

Hockey goons don't track other players like a Sidewinder missile, then bonk them from behind in vengeance for a body-check committed half a period in the past *because they are in the heat of passion*. The zest for the attack comes first; the justification comes later. Hockey goons do what they do because it's natural for them. The game teaches fans, including children, to admire this as heroism - and anybody who tells you anything different deserves to be driving at the speed limit in front of a tailgating Lincoln Navigator driven by a hockey fan whose favourite team just failed to win the Stanley Cup.

If I had a son I'd sooner buy him the latest release of Grand Theft Auto and leave him alone with it than let him watch one hockey game or listen to a word Don Cherry has to say. May the lockout last this season, and the next as well.

If it does, watch for a statistical decline in schoolyard fights and road rage.

Have your say

Why not tell us what you think about issues and events? PAAC members wishing to submit a letter or a guest column on issues important to public affairs may [email us](#).

All suggestions and submissions are subject to approval by the PAAC Editorial Board.

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