

# LETTERS



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## Re: Serf Up

Dear Editor:

It seems to me that Trish Bell should stand back, take a deep breath, and assess her level of anger and hate. This was the most extraordinary column. The comparison to Hitler—Justin's spewing of lies have been faster than Adolf's—tipped off that Ms. Bell has got some serious personal issues that need to be attended to.

I have appreciated her writing about the need for more support for children on the autistic spectrum, but after this article, I could never take her seriously again. You may want to assess whether she should again be allowed to issue forth such hateful words in a publication like yours.

Sincerely,

Peter Carver  
Rockwood

# SPORTS TALK

## The NBA All Star Weekend

The NBA All-Star Weekend is upon us. This annual festival celebrates the

National Basketball Association and all its affiliates and roughly marks the half way point of the 82 game regular season. The three-day event comprises the celebrity game, Three Point and Slam Dunk contests, and the highlight is the "All Star Game" which is traditionally held between a select team of the NBA's best players from the Eastern and Western Conferences. The 2018 All Star Weekend will be held in Los Angeles.

The 2016 All-Star Weekend in Toronto was particularly interesting. It brought with it all the national attention of the major media outlets in the USA, along with all the "who's who" of the Eastern and Western conferences of the NBA. That particular celebration was hugely significant—it was the first All-Star Game to be held outside the USA, and also the final All-Star to feature the highly decorated basketball legend Kobe Bryant. The celebrity game for that year was between Canadian stars—including Eugenie Bouchard, the Scott twins from Property Brothers and their American counterparts coached by the comedian Kevin Hart. The

By **Michael Oke**  
Canadians won 74-64.

The format of this year's All-Star Game has been changed. Due to the observed non-competitive nature of previous games, which could be linked to players not wanting to get injured for a game that has little consequence and the generally held notion that the Western Conference has more talent depth than the East, the teams have been put together using a draft pick style selection process, led by respective team captains. In this case, LeBron James of the Cleveland Cavaliers and Steph Curry of the Golden State Warriors.

It remains to be seen whether this change will bring some much-needed excitement and competitiveness to the All-Star Game.

On a serious note, the end of festivities this weekend marks the countdown to the playoffs with teams beginning in earnest to jostle for places on the standings as well as put themselves in contention for the post season.

It is important that the Raptors prove doubters wrong by confirming themselves as more than just a very good regular season team, but a championship caliber side. This is our year. Let's go, Raptors!

## Re: Serf Up

To the Editor,

Clearly, it did not take long for Trish Bell to reprise her role—starring in the Return of the Bride of Stephen Harper, or better, Bridezilla Rides Again. She just cannot step away from her Liberal bashing, vitriolic uber partisan diatribes.

Clearly, she obviously fantasizes herself as some sort of phoenix rising from the ruin of "reprimand" and ridicule. She

fantasizes being "Fifty Shades Freed" of Liberal tyranny. Equally clear is the attendant master-slave fantasy of throwing off her shameful chains and marching in some form of political apotheosis to Queens Park, or Parliament Hill or "Duck Dynasty" Heaven.

Clearly, Bridezilla revels in the political or personal role characterized by victimhood, abuse, betrayal and subjugation.

# JUST A THOUGHT

## Errors of argument create false court

Outrage is easy; raw emotions simply letting loose. And in the death of Colten Boushie and the subsequent trial of Gerald Stanley that is exactly what has happened. One Canadian died and an entire community, province and nation became divided as to whether another one should be—or would be—punished for it. Yet, somewhere in that visceral anger, facts became murky as they gave way to emotion. And it is in this perfect mix of reaction and assumption that arguments get sloppy. Because—contrary to emotion—arguments are not easy. They, like so much in our lives, have rules, and sorry Canada, in your so-called pursuit of justice, you just broke a bunch of them.

First—and sit down 'cause this isn't gonna be easy to hear—this case is NOT about racism. If every time you end a tidbit about this case with "because they were white" or "because he was Cree," there is a good chance you are perpetuating a false argument based on what big thinkers like to call Argumentum ad Populum—or more specifically the Bandwagon or Snob approach. Basically, by appealing to popular thought, often arousing emotions and hearing famous people like Justin Trudeau—who really have no expertise and are they themselves wanting to appear on the popular side—spew opinion as truth, a seemingly compelling case is born. Actual truth matters little in these versions because validity comes from how many people—and who—is making the points. It becomes so murky that even truth becomes painted as propaganda. But kid yourself not: race had nothing to do with why Boushie died or why Stanley, the man on trial, was acquitted. Race was merely a tool to fuel the idea of injustice, and sorry folks, we took the bait: hook, line and sinker!

Now, it isn't entirely your fault. The devices at work here do some heavy lifting, making us all easy prey. Basically, logical fallacies are arguments



By **Trish Bell**

that sound true but are actually flawed because there is an assumption or false linear thinking at play. In this case, there are several. A key one involves the overwhelming outcry that a guilty man was set free because he was white, despite killing an aboriginal man. Problem is: there is absolutely no evidence that this is what happened, nor why he was set free. In fact, there is little to no proof either way—nor will there be. Witnesses have changed their stories. Evidence has been cast aside. And motives have been ignored. The game here has eroded any value truth ever had. People will now only see what they want to see. But kid yourself not: this crime was never about race. Stanley never claimed he felt threatened, got his gun, or fired it because the people in his yard were not white, nor did Boushie's cohorts ever claim to go on the land because the landowners were white. In fact, race didn't matter to anyone—until the court of public opinion got involved. Courts, on the other hand, are about holding any person who breaks our laws to account for those transgressions via admissible proof that is beyond a reasonable doubt, judged by a group of one's peers. That's it.

But, sadly, the racist argument—even a fallible one—persists further. The idea that there was an unjust jury selection—and subsequent upheaval over it—is based on a genetic fallacy; the argument that the jury couldn't be trustworthy because of its racial origins. This assumes that the twelve white jurors would not—or could not—be fair and unbiased in their ruling despite the facts of the case. These jurors were chosen randomly from some 750 potential names. None of these people had done anything

to demonstrate they could not be trusted, save—according to some—the fact they were white, which, last I checked, is the very definition of racism. This begs several questions, which

Globe and Mail columnist John Ibbitson put nicely: "are we to assume that jurors invariably reach their verdict based on race, that Indigenous jurors would have found him guilty?" Clearly, this is not how justice remains blind. If race and all other identifiers are ignored as they should be, then how is the jury not fair? Yet, let's entertain the idea that the jury—on the basis of race alone—wasn't representative of the population. According to Statistics Canada, 4.42 per cent of the population self-identifies as Aboriginal. If the jury is to be representative, that means one member on each jury needs to be .52 per cent Aboriginal across Canada while in the province of Saskatchewan, two members of a 12-person jury would be required. Would this have changed anything? Should it have? Let alone the fact such numbers might be easier accomplished had the other 77 per cent of prospective jurors even shown up to the court as requested. And leaving out such facts—for the record—is called a fallacy of omission.

Terry Ferguson

No, this case, like so many other populist-charged cases in the media today, wasn't about justice, or rights, but thanks to hasty generalizations, either/or fallacies, false causes and other faulty logic, it became a muddled example about race. In places like Saskatchewan, where this recent courtroom saga and its outcome, will have lasting implications, we should all take heed. Some might call it outrageous. Some might label it blatant racism. And some might even call it aboriginal injustice. However, that is not the only story and we should all remember that just like the jury on this case, we should let the facts dictate our decisions, not what others say.

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