

Random rumblings

by SHERALYN ROMAN

I might be showing my age (again!) but wondered if any of you recall that old SNL Skit where Mike Meyers, dressed as his ex mother-in-law, would waggle his finger at viewers and in his best New York accent say, 'Talk amongst yourselves, I'll give you a topic?' I'm asking because today I'm sharing just a few of the random thoughts that have crossed my mind recently. They've led to some interesting conversations that have in turn led to great opportunities to pause and reflect. On at least one topic, my point of view shifted, while on another it most definitely did not. I'd love to hear what you have to say. Talk amongst yourselves, I'll give you a topic!

Don Cherry

Love 'em or hate 'em? Lots to dislike at the moment with his poppy rant (it's had enough airplay, I won't repeat it here) for which he remains, for the most part, unapologetic. That's part of the problem and what is so disappointing. We all make mistakes. Don doesn't do humble but maybe, just maybe, this time he should have. Many look up to him and take their lead from him. Yes he has the right to free speech and we have the right to disagree but he is a public figure and as such, called to a higher code of conduct. A lovely young graduate student of my acquaintance expressed it best however, when she commented that more than anything Don Cherry's comments drew attention away from the solemnity of the day, a day we know is important to him. 'Yesterday I was disappointed in my fellow Canadians,' she said. 'On a day that arguably is one of the most important days during the year and deserves our full attention and respect, people were instead focused on Don Cherry. Yesterday was the 100th year celebrating Armistice Day and how did you commemorate it? Many made a Martyr out of a man who has never fought in a conflict to defend his country. Yes I recognize his work with veterans but that is not the point.' I honestly feel that Don let our veterans down and he let his fellow Canadian down. I hate to see him leave this way but he has to go. Finally, for those comparing this to the Trudeau blackface scandal, my immigrant parents had a saying for their immigrant daughter (yes me, I'm an immigrant too) 'two wrongs don't make a right.' Trudeau also should have been held accountable for his actions. Shame on us.

Singles Day

Taking place on the same day as Remembrance Day, the absurdity of this online shopping event occurring on during a day when we are asked to remember and honour our war dead astounds me. I've never even heard of AliBaba (like an Amazon I'm guessing) and it makes me wonder how out of touch am I? Apparently I'm very out of touch because over \$1 billion dollars was spent online in just 67 seconds. How is that possible? Cumulatively, estimates put wartime losses from WWI and WWII at about 77 million people - a horrifying number. How do some people 'pause and reflect' on that fact? By spending the equivalent of almost \$13.00 dollars for every person who died! In 67 seconds! Considered a sort of 'Anti-Valentine's' Day by the Chinese (where it began, apparently circa 1993) and where they don't celebrate Remembrance Day, the problem in my mind is that it has spread globally with many countries in Europe now taking part. We can't be far behind. The date was chosen for the significance of its single numbers '11/11' and I'm sure it wasn't purposely meant to conflict with Remembrance Day. Singles should celebrate themselves, why not? there's a lot to celebrate but would November 1st do? Am I alone on this one? Some big name retailers seem to embrace any opportunity to cash in, and rest assured all the big names are a part of selling product on this day. It leaves a very bad taste in my mouth.

Orange T-Shirts

We are asked to spend money on lots of things 'occasionally even yet another coloured T-shirt to support a cause. I wanted to talk about this one a few weeks ago but timing did not allow. When people (often students) are asked to wear a certain colour to school, it potentially places an undue financial burden on some families and/or some students feel left out if they can't participate. It also concerns me that a great deal of money goes towards the purchase of a T-shirt, money that in my mind might be better donated directly to organizations that support Indigenous peoples. I did some research. 'Orange Shirt Day' began in 2013 as a result of residential school survivor Phyllis Jack Webstad sharing her experience when she arrived at a residential school. Webstad shared her

story at a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration event held in Williams Lake, British Columbia, Canada, in the spring of 2013.[1]? She proudly wore her new orange shirt to her first day at residential school, the new shirt being of significance as it was purchased specially for that day by her grandmother. On her arrival it was summarily removed and her experience is used today to teach students about residential schools and their practice of assimilation. The date of September 30 was chosen for this annual event because it was the time of year in which Indigenous children were historically taken from their homes to residential schools. According to most sources I uncovered ?partial proceeds go to support awareness activities.? The truth is, I'm still struggling with this one. We MUST do more to support our Indigenous populations. If wearing an orange shirt helps to increase awareness that's a good thing but if you're spending money on an orange shirt that could better be donated, in its entirety, directly to an Indigenous support agency ? I think that's better. P.S. Mr. Trudeau, fix the damn water problem on reserves. Now!

Facebook Postings

I know, I know, I've ranted about this before and I admit it ? I spend too much time on facebook. Today I'm talking about pictures. I've said it before and I'll say it again for the people in the back. Posting random pictures of people who show up on your doorstep (probably just to sell you something) then posting them as ?suspicious? just isn't a good idea. Posting a picture of a car, with the license plate clearly visible and ?suggesting? this car is parked randomly, could be abandoned or is in some way suspicious is NOT OK. Get up off your couch, knock on your neighbour's door and ask them if there is an issue/problem or a concern ? maybe they even need help? Maybe they pulled up to the curb quickly in response to an emergency in the house or were feeling ill and have since been bedridden for three days. Why the rush to judgment? If it's too much trouble to go and ring the doorbell (but not to go and take a picture?) or, you're truly concerned and suspicious ? call the OPP non-emergency number. That's the right way to handle it.

I should probably stop now. Unlike Mike Meyer's character, who was beloved by many and even prompted Barbra Streisand to actually do a ?walk on? during a live show, I'm probably only prompting most of you to consider using this page of the paper for something other than reading! I hope you'll agree on at least two things however; the first, that free speech matters and this column falls under the category of free speech and the second that you have the right to disagree! I wish I could hear all the conversations as you ?talk amongst yourselves.?