

EMBARGOED until 12:01am, October 25th, 2017

To request an advance copy of the report or set up an interview, please contact:
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"I don't mind witty heckling, but the quality is often borderline racist and sexist."

"I'm afraid it is much worse than I expected."

Two years after federal election, MPs still torn about heckling: They think it's a problem... yet they persist

Survey of MPs about heckling in the House of Commons shows 1/3 of MPs perceive heckling as harassment and points to potential solutions

Toronto, October 25, 2017—Intimidation. Harassment. Abuse. Call it what you will, but it happens in workplaces around the world, from Hollywood to Ottawa—and findings from a survey of Members of Parliament says it's happening even in Canada's House of Commons.

Midway through the life of the 42nd Parliament, the House of Commons has witnessed some important changes to reduce heckling and improve decorum. However, new research from Samara Canada shows heckling is deeply embedded in the culture of Parliament.

In spring 2017, Samara Canada surveyed all sitting MPs to explore the state of decorum from the perspective of those in the House. The results suggest that MPs have mixed feelings about heckling. They don't like the state of debate in Parliament, but they don't want to get rid of heckling entirely either.

Some of the report's key findings include:

- A majority of MPs (53%) say heckling is a problem.
- 36% of MPs see heckling as a form of harassment.
- Just 16% of MPs see heckling as beneficial, but two thirds of respondents admit to heckling themselves.
- Three quarters of MPs believe the public thinks badly of heckling.
- While 72% of MPs say they heckle to correct a perceived untruth, only 15% agree that heckling increases accountability in the House.
- Rookie MPs dislike heckling most strongly—60% say it's a problem, and half would abolish it.
- 67% of women MPs said they heard heckles on gender compared to only 20% of men.

“While some MPs may be reluctant to ban heckling outright, this research suggests it’s time to think about separating the good from the bad and the ugly,” said Jane Hilderman, Samara’s Executive Director. “Only by cultivating an environment that promotes good behaviour will we make Parliament a place where all Canadians can feel proud and welcomed to serve.”

Please let me know if you would like to receive an embargoed copy of *No One Is Listening: Incivility in the 42nd Parliament, and How to Fix It*.

Just months before his passing, MP Arnold Chan urged his fellow parliamentarians to stop talking at one another and listen, despite their strong differences. “That is when democracy really happens,” he said. “That is the challenge that is going on around the world right now. *No one is listening.*”

The full report will be available at 12:01am on October 25th, 2017 at:
www.samaracanada.com/research/political-leadership/no-one-is-listening

La version française sera disponible ici:
[www.samaracanada.com/fr/la-recherche/leadership-politique/personne-n-écoute](http://www.samaracanada.com/fr/la-recherche/leadership-politique/personne-n-ecoute)

About Samara Canada’s survey of MPs

This is the third time Canadian MPs have been surveyed on their experiences of heckling. The survey included a variety of close-ended questions and allowed for some open-ended written responses. MPs had the option to answer the survey online or on hardcopy. Samara sent the surveys in the MPs’ preferred language to MP assistants’ email accounts and to the main MP accounts, with a link to PDF versions and Survey Monkey links. In-person follow-ups were conducted at 217 of the 338 MPs’ offices. All MPs were promised anonymity for their responses.

Since 84 out of 338 MPs responded, this report should be considered illuminative, rather than definitive. For the complete methodology, please see page 24 of the report.

About Samara Canada

Samara Canada is dedicated to reconnecting citizens to politics. Established as a charity in 2009, we have become Canada’s most trusted, non-partisan champion of increased civic engagement and a more positive public life.

Samara Canada’s research and educational programming shines new light on Canada’s democratic system and encourages greater political participation across the country to build better politics, and a better Canada, for everyone.