

Presidential Address

What Is the Purpose or Goal of a Presidential Address?

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Ladies and gentlemen, members, guests and friends: I would like to begin by thanking Don for that introduction—it sounded a bit like my obituary without the ending! The substance of what one should talk about in an address such as this must cause some anxiety to all who have done it. What is the purpose or goal of a Presidential Address? I am obviously not a philosopher, but Past President Jim Esch told me that people want to know a little of what makes you tick. Since I have lots of opinions on things I don't know much about, I have taken Jim's suggestion and I will describe some events, experiences, and opinions that have influenced me and have brought me to where I find myself today.

Many of us here have had the privilege of being raised in the age of the so-called baby boomers. We have witnessed, first hand, the greatest changes in world history. The boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, represent a "bulge" in the population curve in almost all developed countries. The early boomers experienced the era of the Cold War and the Iron Curtain, the Suez crisis, the Korean and Vietnam wars, the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Muhammad Ali, Elvis Presley, the Beatles, computers, the Internet, and the emergence of English as the world's language of communication. The changes in medicine have been just as dramatic. It is remarkable to consider, for example, that penicillin was introduced to clinical use only during the Second World War and that almost all surgical procedures carried out 50 years ago and many carried out 25 years ago are now obsolete. My own father, a pharmacist, spent hours concocting complex mixtures for prescription use that

had unknown or marginal therapeutic value. An example, taken from his 1947 pharmacy notes, shows his hand-written formula for syrup of ferrous phosphate with quinine and strychnine as an example of postwar therapeutic options.

To the older boomers, especially those of us raised in large cities in the aftermath of the terror of World War II, violence and fighting were always prevalent in our thoughts. I remember the real fears of my 10-year-old schoolmates in Liverpool as we contemplated the reality of a major nuclear war during the Suez crisis. Four years later during the Cuban crisis, we faced similar fears. In all conflicts there are good guys and bad guys, heroes and villains. Last year when I introduced Steve Burkhart, M.D., I mentioned that in the games of cowboys and Indians that I began playing as a 3-year-old I chose to play the Indian. In scripting the games we played, I horrified my playmates by insisting that the Indians should win. Of course in the movies at that time they never did. My attitude changed when I received a cowboy outfit for Christmas one year. The Indians never won again. So much for loyalty and allegiance. Did this mean I was a mercenary? Perhaps it showed I was a citizen of the world without prejudice. Pitting the good against the bad is the common element in the fantasies and plots on which many novels and movies are based. Designations as heroes and villains, the good guys and the bad, friends and enemies can change. We see this throughout history. Whether your idols were athletes, cowboys, astronauts, superheroes, pop stars, or intellectuals, the reality is that we look for role models that we can admire. When we choose the wrong role models or the wrong causes, tragedy and disaster may result. I recall the childhood arguments about such heroes. In young boys, the topic of fantasy conversations often came down to power comparisons and whether a wizard's magic could counter a miracle, whether an angel could fly faster than a fairy, and

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whether Hercules would defeat Superman. Children ask simple searching questions and challenge us. My 6-year-old son Jamie recently asked: "Daddy, I know I go to heaven after I am dead, but where was I before I was born?" Recently Jamie was walking upstairs to bed hiding a tightly clenched fist. He had lost a tooth, and was secretly going to place it under his pillow to test whether the tooth fairy was real or fake. Curiosity for the truth superseded the value of a monetary reward from the fairy. We live in an era where religions are challenged and faced with explaining their basis in terms of the theories of relativity and quantum mechanics, which propose that there was no beginning or end in time and no edge to space. Space and space travel fascinated children growing up in the 1950s.

Comic book heroes of that era, like astronaut Dan Dare of the British Eagle comics and Flash Gordon from the movies suddenly became more realistic with the successful launch of the Soviet Sputnik I on October 4, 1957. A month later, Sputnik II was launched, carrying a dog named Laika. The reality became much greater after Yuri Gagarin circled the earth and of course with the first moon landing. We live in the most dramatic phase in world history. We have experienced man entering space and landing on the moon. It is remarkable to contemplate the excitement and the experiences described yesterday by Captain Wally Schirra, though the breakthrough that I believe had the greatest impact on human evolution was the ability to transport people through commercial flight. When we look at the scale of time, we are told that the first humanlike activity began about 7 million years ago. The first species with the prefix "homo" appeared 2 million years ago and the first true humans 200,000 years ago. Only in the last 50 years have people been able to travel the world in numbers that are large enough to impact on biological change and allow mixing and integration of all of the earth's citizens. When I was 5 years old in England, my parents applied for emigration to Australia, and we very nearly went. Standard travel at that time was by sea and it took a long time—over 5 weeks counting a few stops. That posed the main restraint to people migration. The airplane and specifically the jet airliner have truly shrunk the world, and had an incredible effect on the human race. The laboratory experiment where 10 white mice are separated by a partition from 10 black mice shows that after removing the barrier, and many cycles of intermixing and breeding, there will be no black or white mice, but hundreds of mixed grey and black and white mice. The equivalent barrier for the human race has only been effectively lifted in the last

few fractions of a second of the human timeline. Eventually there is likely to be near full integration of the races. Biological reality and evolution will hopefully lead to the end of the race-based violence and terrorism that now faces the world. As a child, I played and watched a lot of soccer. The hypothesis I just made is vividly illustrated when comparing the British soccer teams of the 1960s and 1970s with those of today. Now teams are comprised of players of all ethnic backgrounds from all over the world. Contrast for example the current Chelsea football team squad with that of almost 35 years ago.

Even in the aftermath of Hitler's Germany, we witnessed widespread race-based prejudice and violence. The young are not born with such prejudices. As a Protestant being raised in postwar Liverpool, I marched with other children in the anti-Roman Catholic Orange parades. I witnessed major street fights between Catholics and Protestants. I was taught by older children that I would have 7 years bad luck if I did not cross my fingers and turn my back when I saw a nun, and that sins were sins, but not if they were against Catholics. The Northern Ireland issues and the terrorism that existed there and that spread to England were a result of religious intolerance. Similar vicious conflicts continue between Muslims and Hindus, Jews and Arabs, and just about every other religious or racial group one can imagine. The tribal and racial conflicts in Africa, the war in the former Yugoslavia, the genocide in Rwanda, September 11th, and the recent attacks in Madrid, one of which occurred while a number of us in this audience were there, are a few of the many examples. Returning to soccer, the Catholics and Protestants in cities such as Liverpool and Glasgow supported different teams. Fights occurred at every game, and were occasionally serious enough to result in death. "Soccer hooliganism" based on territorial, tribal, or racial loyalties is prevalent all over the world. In July 1969, ethnic rivalry during a soccer match erupted into a war between El Salvador and Honduras that left 6,000 dead and 12,000 wounded. The racial and tribal basis of competitive sports has been described by anthropologist Desmond Morris in his book "The Soccer Tribe."¹ The conflicting philosophies of cultural diversity and racial integration have recently been recognized in Britain. Like Canadians, the British had been advocates of "multiculturalism" since the 1960s. Just last month, a turnaround in policy was announced by the British government and "integration" is the new policy. It is now realized that there may be a price to pay for keeping one's cultural identity, namely a risk of fostering racial or religious

intolerance. My parents liked the education offered in a local Jewish school and I was sent there for a year before entering High School. I was the only non-Jewish child in the school. I was accepted by the other children and there was no resentment that I did not participate in their religious classes. I was therefore exposed to both religious tolerance and intolerance during my childhood. It is a fact that virtually all wars and terrorist acts are based on religion or race and are tribal in origin. These are, I theorize, temporary events that will be taken care of by the airplane, time, and 3 or 4 generations of evolution. In the beginning, there was perhaps only one race and one religion. It is possible that evolution will complete the circle and take us back to that status. Does any of this relate to AANA? Arrogant though it may seem, I believe that AANA is, evolutionary speaking, several generations ahead of many other American organizations. We are an inclusive organization that seeks out and nurtures younger talent and reaches out to the international community, aiming to complement, cooperate with, and support our sister organizations around the world. We believe in excellence and achievement—virtues that are too often rejected in these times. Thanks in part to the airplane and global shrinkage, we have currently a situation in which each of the 5 in the current AANA Presidential line has been born in a different country.

Humor was a basic ingredient for survival in post-war Liverpool. It was a city that was progressing into a severe economic crisis. Its once proud shipbuilding industry was being destroyed, largely by the activities of powerful trade unions. My family was strongly socialist in class, but capitalist in philosophy. My father's close friend was Bessie Braddock, a Labour Party MP and a former member of the British Communist Party. Bessie is famous as the MP who accused Winston Churchill of being "drunk" during a debate. He retorted: "Madam, I may be drunk, but you are ugly, and tomorrow I will be sober . . ." Many famous British comedians were from Liverpool. There is in fact a "Scouse" vocabulary and sense of humor; an Irish-English hybrid that some do not understand or even find offensive. It embraces being self-critical and laughing at oneself. It is humor targeted against hypocrisy and undeserved elitism. It is a satirical and quick form of the British humor that characterized the Goon Squad, Monty Python, Fawlty Towers, and Yes Minister. Liverpool was the hub of a music craze that has, in many ways, changed the world. The Beatles were influenced more by a young Texan named Buddy Holly and his group the Crickets, than anyone else.

They shared many similarities—rock, sentimental ballads, and melodies—and they wrote and composed their own music. Hundreds of groups were formed in Liverpool in the years before the Beatles became dominant. Almost all of us played guitar and many were Buddy Holly and the Crickets clones. The Beatles name was of course inspired by the Crickets. I was at school with McCartney and Harrison, both of whom were several years ahead of me. I rode to school on the same bus that they did. At school, lunchtime visits to the Cavern Club would be broken up by soccer or chess. At the age of 11, I was obsessed with the game of chess. It is a great teacher of techniques that help in fields as diverse as politics, medicine, business, and sports. Chess requires one to assess the status quo and then plan and think at least 3 or 4 moves ahead. There is a need to consider multiple alternatives and quickly reject the least suitable options. This is an approach that is a key to success in many intellectual and also physical pursuits. In the simple example of skiing down a steep mogul ski run, it is the ability to look at the third and fourth mogul ahead that will allow you to ski the run well. Chess embodies competition and is the safest form of combat and war. Competition, whether at work, socially, or in sports is, like it or not, a fact of life. The first really competitive sport that I participated in was boxing. It was fun at first because I nearly always won; although I liked it less as the other kids grew bigger and stronger and began to beat me up. In my last fight against Mickey, a lad the same age but much bigger, I decided to gain an advantage by making my opponent lose his cool. Muhammad Ali used a similar strategy to rile his opponents. I modified an Ali quote "I float like a butterfly and sting like a bee." I told Mickey before we boxed that he floated like a bee and stung like a butterfly. My strategy succeeded in making him mad and he broke my nose. Boxing taught some important lessons about winning and losing, about being knocked down and getting up, about punching your opponent as hard and often as you could, and then embracing and walking away arms around each other at the end of the contest. It is a much criticized sport, but one which I still follow, much to the disapproval of my wife Nina. I sometimes sneak into the bedroom to watch fights on TV and if my kids find me, they go and report back to their mother, "Mummy come quick, Daddy is watching the punching show again." I went on to enjoy other competitive sports, especially soccer and tennis. Soccer became my main sport and was a passion during my youth, but also led to my first and so far only significant health problems—a torn lateral meniscus and a

dislocated shoulder. I believe the lessons we learn from competition in games and sports of all kinds are valuable and equip us to cope with many aspects of life. In our area of medical practice we also gain a better understanding of the frustration and concerns of injured athletes.

As a member of the International Arthroscopy Association (IAA) and its old North American Chapter, I became one of the founding members of AANA. I don't remember joining, I think Bob Jackson just told me I was a member. The last Board meeting of the North American Chapter of the IAA was in 1981 and the first of the newly formed AANA in 1982. Due to a quirk and probable error in the AANA database, I am documented as being the first AANA member, some 2 months before the first of the above 2 meetings! Being involved has of course been an important and stimulating part of my professional life. We have seen the dramatic evolution of a specialty that was and still is rejected by some of the establishment. We were criticized for our close relationships with industry, and yet it is that very relationship that has contributed to so many of the tremendous advances that have been made in the treatment of sports injuries. The remark that the arthroscope was a tool and should not define a specialty had some validity, but we never did look upon the instrument as the basis for our subspecialty. It was this tool that allowed us to see and treat pathology hidden from those who lacked the skill to use it. We proved that to study sports injuries without an arthroscope is like studying astronomy without a telescope, or microbiology without a microscope. It is a tool, but an essential one. Orthopaedic surgeons who prefer not to see what they are doing should continue to reject arthroscopy. We are an organization built from true grass roots, and many of the founders and original leaders of this group are still involved. Economically, we may feel threatened as surgeons, but we have a great profession and subspecialty that brings incomparable rewards and great satisfaction. Rick Myers, M.D., reminded us of this so eloquently in his Presidential speech in this same city some years ago. No other specialty offers so much opportunity to treat potentially reversible pathology. However, money and resources are needed to allow us to function as doctors and educators and we must strive to continue with our efforts to maintain our economic value and strength. I am pleased that next January AANA will launch a winter meeting at Whistler, British Columbia, ranked the number 1 ski resort in North America and recently chosen as the host site for the 2010 Winter Olympics. I first organized an arthroscopy meeting there in 1983.

That was Whistler's first convention of any type. This is the kind of meeting where a valuable educational event is combined with the ability to enjoy a trip with one's family. Many of us suffer from overwork and neglect recreational activities. Some of our orthopaedic training programs were clearly to blame in that regard, and there is a sense that the newer generation of physicians may have a better sense of balance than many of us. We need to remind ourselves that 2 days from now, tomorrow will be yesterday. AANA has and should continue to reflect the need for balance. One of the main secrets of AANA's success is that we are friends and we are inclusive. We actively recruit younger members because we know that they represent the next group of teachers and leaders. We try to deliver what our members and attendees at courses wish to receive and we review and respond to criticism. We learn from our mistakes but not in the way that Peter Cook and Dudley Moore did when they stated "we learn from our mistakes so well that we are able to replicate them in every precise detail, over and over again."

One of the areas that has occupied my time and effort over the past 15 years has been the sad and sorry saga of the Canadian medical system. During this period I have learned a lot about politics and politicians. I have debated and argued with, agreed and disagreed with, wined and dined with, and on occasion have both threatened and been threatened by them. There is a tendency for politicians to attempt to control choice in all areas of government through manipulation of public opinion. The Canadian health delivery system was built on strong socialist principles and it suffers from the dreadful deficiencies of socialism. Laziness and poor work ethic are rewarded, while hard work is discouraged. As Churchill stated, all men are born equal, but socialism preaches that they must be kept equal. I founded Canada's first private for-profit hospital in a province that was governed by the most left-wing government ever to hold office in North America. I learned that the best weapon against propaganda and lies is the truth. A key to rational debate is to recognize when beliefs (both your own and your adversary's) have become prejudices. We must learn the tricks that opponents use and turn the tables on them. The book "Straight and Crooked Thinking" by Robert Thouless² is an excellent guide to those who wish to improve their skills in that area. This book was written in the 1930s between the two great wars and at a time when there were many famous and infamous orators, including Winston Churchill and his adversaries. Truth is often used

sparingly by those who debate in the political arena. Public-sector health trade unions in Canada have spent many millions of dollars on propaganda campaigns against the introduction of competition. Their technique of repetitive exposure of the public to biased and false information and statistics is beginning to fail. As a writer and a journal reviewer, one learns to check reference sources. It is surprising how easily a false statement is accepted into doctrine if it is repeated often enough. The only way to fight such misinformation is through repetitive bombardment with the truth.

There are many examples of how we are misled by repetition. Many believe that in the Old Testament there is a story about the Garden of Eden in which mention is made of Adam and Eve and that Adam bit on an apple. We might also recall that in Genesis there is another story about Jonah being swallowed by a whale. The facts are that the Bible refers only to fruit; no mention of apple, and Jonah was swallowed by a large fish, not a whale. Neither is there a book "Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll that refers to a mad hatter. Many refer to the character Sherlock Holmes using the phrase "Elementary my dear Watson." He did not.³ Crick and Watson did not discover DNA nor did Alexander Graham Bell invent the telephone. Darwin was not the originator of the Theory of Natural Selection, nor did he promote survival of the fittest. King Wenceslas was only a Duke and Alexander Fleming did not discover penicillin. St. Patrick was not Irish, but a Welshman, and at least two individuals flew planes prior to the Wright brothers. There is no evidence that Newton observed an apple falling and certainly no documentation that it ever dropped on his head. However, these and many other alleged facts are entrenched in the minds of many. The technique used to entrench false beliefs is a form of brainwashing. The commonest form in which we encounter this are the "Vote for John Kerry" signs used in election campaigns, and the only effective counter is to put up more signs than your opponent.

Another trick is the refusal of politicians to answer a question; or answering a question other than the one you asked; or even replying with another question rather than an answer—a strategy that Socrates used. I must confess that I have learned on occasion to use this technique myself. It is one way to get an opponent frustrated. Frustrated or angry opponents become physiologically impaired when it comes to rational thought and effective argument. When challenged by the accusation "How come you always answer my questions with another question," the response "I

don't do I?" is sure to irritate them. For those of you who are unaware of the extent to which Canada's health system has become dysfunctional, I will give you a few examples. In several Canadian provinces, health care is now devouring 43% to 49% of the total budget and is projected to rise to 100% within 20 years. It is depriving other essential services such as education, environment, roads, and law enforcement of needed funds. Canadians are denied access to new technology and languish on wait lists as long as 3 years for joint replacement and often over 3 months for cancer treatment. Letters are sent by government hospitals to patients advising them that their urgent heart procedure will be booked several months down the road. In an example of the Orwellian, big brother-type activity doled out by government health bureaucrats determined to hold on to power, letters contain a footnote "If the person named on this computer generated letter is deceased, please accept our sincere apologies." This is just one example of the arrogance that is displayed toward sick Canadians. It should not be a surprise that the law on which the system is based was proclaimed in 1984—a date that coincides with the title of George Orwell's novel. The legal system may soon lead to the establishment of a better system. This summer, the Supreme Court of Canada will hear a Charter of Rights Challenge to the law that prohibits private delivery of medically required services in Canada. We are interveners in this case and hope to help the Court decide that it is immoral to condemn patients to suffer, deteriorate, and even die while they await treatment. Canada shares with North Korea the distinction of being the only countries in the world that legislate against a nongovernment option in the delivery of health care. We hope and expect that the Canadian Supreme Court will rule in our favor. Our Center in Vancouver refused to conform. We openly challenged the morality of a system and laws that attempt to force patients to wait years for treatment. No government has dared to challenge us in the courts. The media has provocatively labeled us the best medical facility in the country. We have shown that we can improve the quality and efficiency of health care delivery to Canadians.

My year as President of AANA has been a wonderful experience. I am the second Canadian to be President of this Association, and who would ever mind being second to Robert Jackson? Our achievements this year have been built on a solid foundation laid by our predecessors. We remain on a solid financial footing, without which we could achieve nothing. Our success in our prime area of education has been out-

standing. Rick Ryu, M.D., and the Education Committee, and Emory Chapman, M.D., and the Learning Center Committee have strengthened our leadership role in education. Our Specialty Day program at the Academy meeting in San Francisco was their most attended event and the envy of all other societies. Our other committees remain the backbone of our Association. I am pleased to report that our new Web site is completed and it will be dynamic, interactive, and offer many new features. Under the guidance of Vic Goradia, M.D., and his technology committee, and with the support of our incoming President Don Johnson, I predict it will set new standards. Our membership continues to grow and now exceeds 2,200. We have a great and mutually supportive relationship with industry. We have an excess of talent in our organization at all levels. I am very grateful to all of the AANA staff in Rosemont who helped me so much this year. Holly Albert, as everyone involved with AANA knows, is irreplaceable. Donna Nikkel does a remarkable job with our committees, and Pamela Beaumont performs the essential task of organizing our laboratories at the Learning Center. I would also like to thank Marge Blahut and those who are left behind in Rosemont. I welcome Charles Jenkins, the new Managing Editor of our Journal. Our Executive Director, Ed Goss, has skillfully overseen the activities at the Rosemont office with the attention to detail that one expects from a talented accountant. Gary Poehling, M.D., the best medical journal editor in the world, continues, with the support of Jerome Jennings, M.D., and the Journal Board, to make our outstandingly successful Journal better every year. I was on the first editorial board with Gary and I have had a long and rewarding relationship with the Journal.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors, Buddy Savoie, M.D., my Program Chair, and all Committee members for their hard work and for making me look better than I am during this past year. Our Executive Vice President, Whit Ewing, M.D., has offered great personal support and help. Whit has a great ability to offer counsel and advice and at the same time step back and let the President and the Board govern the

Association. Whit epitomizes the word integrity and he is a mentor and a friend.

I would like to thank my special friends, Drs. Anne and Larry Warshawki, Lorraine and Doug Varner, Dr. Alastair Younger, Dr. Edgardo Gonzalez, and Eva Bayot who traveled from Vancouver to be here today. Christopher, my oldest son, is here today. He is very successful in his own technology business and he has helped me a great deal with my professional activities. Jonathan, my second oldest son, has just finished at McGill University and could not be here because his jazz group, of which he is the leader, is currently on a concert tour in Canada. To say I am proud of them both is a gross understatement. Alexander, Jamie, Stephanie, and Andrew, thank you for being good during daddy's talk. Finally, I would like to thank Nina for her support. No previous President has taken on this role with 4 children under the age of 7 years. I was only able to accomplish this because, like many of my predecessors and my successors, I am married to a superwoman. She is a Phi Beta Kappa honors graduate of Berkeley and, for now, a nonpracticing MD. She is a former world-class athlete and, behind the gentle exterior, is a strong and determined woman who still won't let me beat her at tennis. She combines the virtues of strength, intelligence, athleticism, and capacity for hard work like no one else I know. She is, more importantly, a loving mother and wife. Having four very young children actually makes things easier in some ways. They teach us emotional honesty. They laugh when they are happy and they cry when they are sad. They constantly allow me to put life in its proper perspective. Family and friends are what is important in life and I am very lucky to have so many friends, both in North America and from around the world, related to my involvement in AANA. Thank you for the honor of having me serve as President during this past year.

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