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## 'What Do Women Want?'

So *Chronicles*, like Freud, is asking the big question in its May issue: "What Do Women Want?" Appropriating the Good Doctor's question, *Chronicles* is also replicating his breathtakingly stupid approach to answering it.

Freud talked at length to his female patients, ignored salient parts of their answers (when he listened at all), and triumphantly dumped his own desires, fears, and obsessions all through his case studies. Not surprisingly, all that he learned was a lot about himself. *Chronicles'* current issue offers a series of men pontificating about women. Granted, it is yet another opportunity for you boys to get some much-needed self-knowledge. But why drag us into this exercise in narcissism? Save some time and space and cut out the middle [wo]man.

If, on the other hand, by some chance, contrary to centuries of prevailing practice, you actually want to stop talking about yourselves long enough to consider, however briefly, what the other half of the human race wants, you might just try a real revolutionary tactic. Ask *women* the question. Just for once, listen to what *women* have to say.

Note the plurals. For starters, we want the question "What Do Women Want?" permanently recycled into compost. It's misstated and therefore misleading. Because "Women" is not a monolithic category; no one person can speak for *women*. Lesbian women, for example, may not want exactly what heterosexual women want, and individual lesbians may not want the same things that other lesbians want. Drag queens like Margaret Thatcher and Christina Hoff Sommers, victims of spousal abuse or the glass ceiling, secretaries, astronauts, subsistence farmers, doctors, lawyers, Indian chiefs (oh yes there is: Wilma Mankiller is currently Chief of the Cherokee tribe)—women around the world in offices and nurseries, on kibbutzim and construction projects—they probably don't all want the same things.

To find out what women want, then, you can't just ask a spare woman or two. Particularly not one of those female housepets that the conservative movement keeps around for window dressing

to prove that it represents somebody other than angry white men. You need to ask a lot of women, from various places, with differing viewpoints and experiences. And even then you'll have only the beginning of an answer. But at least you'll know just a little bit about something other than yourself.

In answer to the question, then, one thing women want is to be treated as the individuals that we are. We'd also like to be respected enough so that we would be allowed—nay, even encouraged—to speak for ourselves. Some genuinely interested listeners, too, would be a real treat, although we wouldn't think of asking for so much. Nor do we really need to. Because you see, the conversation is going on anyway, across the country, around the world, whether you boys decide to participate in it or chose to continue ignoring it. Women are talking to each other, evolving our own approaches and our own answers to the great issues of our time. It would do you good to listen. At best, working together, we might just save the planet. At worst, you'd get a break from your own endless monologues.

But back to the wish list. Above all, what I want—and what most of the women I know want—is peace in our time and the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness equal to those of white males. We want to be free to do anything for which we meet the standard qualifications, whether it's childcare or combat. One woman acquaintance of mine can tear the Boston phone book in half. In a war I'd much rather she waded ashore under fire than most of the men I know; our nation would be safer. Granted, this woman isn't typical, but even so, why should her sex consign her to the kitchen?

Conservatives direct an unending stream of recklessly incendiary rhetoric against women's rights to control their own bodies, and then are shocked, just shocked and amazed, that those whom they incite firebomb women's clinics and murder doctors and staff. Conservatives attack "Welfare Mothers," as if reproduced by parthenogenesis. Conservatives plan whole magazine issues around *their* answers to *our* questions. And then conservatives wonder about

the “gender gap.”

Congratulations, *Chronicles*, you’ve textualized it. Even if you had made the prudent decision to throw in an essay by a token woman or two, your plans reveal the basic mentality at work. And it’s that mentality that the women I know really do *not* want.

Like *Chronicles*, Freud had ample opportunities to get good answers to his famous question. He ignored them, like *Chronicles*. Is this similarity because of shared conservative values, which, far too often, both in Freud’s Vienna a century ago and in the later 20th-century United States, require ignoring the actual concerns of real women?

—Martine Watson Brownley  
Women’s Studies Program  
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## On Crime and Race

Steven Goldberg’s honesty (“Black Murder,” January 1995) is much to be

admired, but it does not penetrate nearly far enough to the causes of racial disparities in crime. What is yet to be acknowledged is the race/crime relationship that is common worldwide. The matrix found within the United States, with Asians being the most law-abiding, Africans the least, and Europeans intermediate, is also evident in other multiracial countries like Britain, Brazil, and Canada. I have published several sets of data from recent *Interpol* yearbooks showing that African and Caribbean countries consistently average double the rate of violent crime (an aggregate of murder, rape, and serious assault) than European countries, and three times more than countries in the Pacific Rim. Whatever the causes of the racial pattern in crime, it is clear that they go beyond American particulars.

One neurohormonal contributor to crime is testosterone. As I review in my book *Race, Evolution, and Behavior*, studies show 3 percent to 19 percent more testosterone in black college students and military veterans than in their

white counterparts, with the Japanese showing lower amounts than whites. Sex hormones go everywhere in the body and have been shown to activate many brain-behavior systems involving crime, personality, and sexual behavior. Statistics from the World Health Organization and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reveal greater sexual activity, higher fertility, and greater rates of AIDS in African than European and East Asian populations. Race differences in crime do not exist independently of these other variables, and they cannot be understood without taking into account biological and neurohormonal processes and ultimately genetic and evolutionary explanations.

—J. Philippe Rushton  
Professor of Psychology  
University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario



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## CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

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WHEN *CHRONICLES* talks, people listen—at least in New Zealand. I have had my allotted 15 minutes of total fame, all because of a couple of paragraphs snatched by the Kiwi press out of a little piece of mine (Letter From Inner Israel, “Sorting Out Jew-Haters”) printed in these pages in March.

Readers will recall that I reflected on the problem of sorting out the many diverse forms of hostility to Jews and Judaism. Specifically, I referred to three incidents I experienced while in New Zealand last summer which set me thinking not about what is, but what is *not*, appropriately labeled “anti-Semitism.” I never suggested New Zealand was a fascist, anti-Semitic country—that was the judgment of a professor at Waikato University, whom I quoted and whose outrageous opinion I rejected. The pinpricks I did notice struck me not as anti-Semitic but as gauche, provincial, and uncomprehending. To make that point, I set into context the observations I made during my

winter in a cold country, a place far off the beaten track, where little happens that matters to anybody anywhere else—that is, life in nowhere special, where all of us live who are fortunate; in the heart of the human condition.

Since a reporter in Christchurch had taken an interest in my prior reflections on Canterbury University, I sent him an advance copy of the article. He wrote a story about it, and poor O.J. Simpson lost his place to me as the prime American news item in the New Zealand press. The *Christchurch Press* put the story on the Kiwi counterpart to the AP wire; it appeared all over the country. The *Press* even published an editorial of its own—a bit inane, but quite august in all.

But it did not end there—nor with more editorials elsewhere, follow-up stories, and columns and columns of mighty hot letters to the editor. Radio New Zealand called from Wellington for a live interview. When I returned their call, they interrupted their morn-

ing talk show to put me right on the air. They spent 30 minutes of expensive trans-Pacific phone time hectoring me on my observations, along the lines of, “Do you really think it’s cold on the South Island in July?”

“Yes, very cold.”

“Do you think you’ll be invited back?”

“Not to Canterbury University.”

“Would you go?”

“I’m busy next year and the year after, but try me in 1998.”

Finally, at the climax of perfect fame, New Zealand TV asked me to come back to Auckland to take up the argument on their *Sixty Minutes*. “We know what other people say about you, now we want you to have your say.” This is summer in New Zealand, so I would help on a slow news day.

When, thinking the controversy somewhat disproportionate, I said I saw no point in pursuing the matter, having