

Hers &  
About Men

*from the New York Times*

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## は し が き

*The New York Times* は1851年 *New York Daily Times* という名称で創刊された。その後1857年現在の名称に変わったが、その間一貫して大衆紙の手法を取り入れながらも「品性のある」新聞としての姿勢を保ちつづけてきた。またベトナム戦争、ウォーターゲート事件などに際しても終始公正で毅然たる態度を取り続けてきたこともまだ多くの人の記憶に新しいところである。他のアメリカの有力新聞と同様に『ニューヨーク・タイムズ』も「地方紙」ではあるが、アメリカの良識を代表する新聞としてアメリカ全土及び世界の各地で愛読されており、1988年の時点で日刊紙の発行部数は100万部強、日曜版は160万部以上と言われている。

日曜版の発行部数が多いひとつの理由は、その付録で「教養のある人」向けといわれている書評誌の *New York Times Book Review* と *The New York Times Magazine* に負うところが多いとされているが、特に後者の内容の豊富さはその執筆者の高い質と相まって抜群のものがある。

この *Magazine* に毎号登場するコラムとして“Hers” “About Men” がある。毎回執筆者は変わり、作家、弁護士、ジャーナリスト、学者、コラムニスト、映画・テレビ関係者その他各界に活躍する人々が登場する。また扱われる題材も千差万別であるがそれぞれ自由な立場から女性の世界、男性の世界が展開されるが、内容、文体ともみな心憎いほど洗練されており、気が利いたものである。

このたび、三修社編集部の勧めにしたがって、このコラムから12篇を選んで編纂をしたが、内容についてはなるべく偏りがないように努めたつもりである。注釈は学習辞書で容易に分かるものは省き、多義にわたる語句や誤解を招きそうな語句、事項を重点として付することとした。その際は学習者に英語のニュアンスに慣れて貰うためにできるだけ日英並列を心掛けた。その過程で多くの友人たちから貴重な意見、情報を提供していただいたことは感謝に堪えない。

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# 1. The Wrong Man

*by Richard Bernstein*

*(March 3, 1991)*

THE first letter, bearing a West German postmark, began innocuously enough with “Dear Richard,” but it quickly got into what seemed a funny, embarrassing mistake. The mistake is still being made, but I don’t know anymore whether it is funny or sad. 5

“At last I have found you,” the letter said (I am paraphrasing, since I have lost the original text). “Ever since we met on the Eiffel Tower in Paris in 1960, I have thought about you. I am so sorry for the terrible thing that I did to you, but hope you can forgive me 10 and be mine again. I only want to love you in mutual respect and admiration. Yours . . . .”

That was five years ago. The letter writer—I’ll call her by her initials, R.S.—had seen from a byline in an article reprinted in *The International Herald Tribune* 15 that I was covering France for *The New York Times* and could be reached at *The Times’s* bureau in Paris. Apparently, since she had met somebody with my name in Paris many years earlier, she believed that she had rediscovered a long lost love. I wrote back immediately. 20

“Dear Ms. S.,” I said. “I have received your letter and must tell you right away that you have made a mistake. Perhaps back in 1960 you met somebody with

the same name as mine (there are more than a few such people), but I can assure you that it was not I. I was pretty young in 1960 and was never in Paris until quite a few years later. I am sure that you and I have  
5 never met. I wish you the best. Sincerely . . . .”

R.S. has never acknowledged that one and only statement I ever made in writing to her. Nonetheless, she has never stopped writing to me. Sometimes two or more letters arrive in a week, sometimes only one every  
10 few months. I have still not learned what exactly was the terrible thing she says she did to the person she thinks is me, or much of anything else that supposedly transpired between us. Her letters almost always reiterate her undying love; they often complain of my cruel  
15 and indifferent treatment of her. They close with a kiss.

Three years after this one-way correspondence began, and after I had returned home from my tour of duty in Paris, R.S. tracked me down on my office phone in  
20 New York. I seized the opportunity to engage in a somewhat exasperated effort to convince her that I was not the person she thought I was.

“You are he,” she kept on saying. “I know it’s you.”

“Look,” I said, “I’m telling you that I’m not. Why do  
25 you insist that I am?”

“Because I saw your picture,” she said.

“My picture?” I said, incredulous. “Where did you see my picture?”

“I saw it in The New York Times,” she replied. “It  
30 is you.”

This was a mystery. I didn't admit it, but the fact is that a while before her call The Times Magazine had run some photographs to accompany an article I had written and I could be seen in one of them. It was odd that she thought the person in the photograph was the same person she had met in Paris in 1960, but I reasoned that if she wanted badly enough to believe that she had found the right person, any picture would do. 5

During that telephone conversation, I took down the Manhattan phone book from a shelf nearby and looked myself up in it. I wanted to demonstrate to her that a lot of people have the same name. I told her that I knew she couldn't see what I was doing, but I asked her to believe me when I told her my findings. "There are 20 entries under my name, and this is just one phone book, only Manhattan!" I exclaimed. "Now, for God's sake, will you believe that I'm not the one? 15

"You are the one," R.S. replied calmly, her voice steady with conviction. "Why do you hide from me?" 20

After the phone conversation, R.S. said in one of her letters that she wanted me to tell her if I had gotten married since our putative meeting in Paris in 1960. The implication was that she would accept the situation and write to me no more. I considered that possibility. Why not invent a little story, I said to myself, tell her that I have a wife and a family, even though the truth is that I do not? It might bring this strange and bothersome bit of wasted effort on her part to an end. 25

But I didn't do it. I'd like to say that the reason 30

was my unwillingness to tell a lie, that I didn't want to tarnish my record of truthfulness with R.S. But it's more complicated than that.

For one thing, given her clearly obsessive state of  
5 mind, I was afraid that she would see any communication from me as an encouragement. She might twist what I said into something I did not mean, find confirmation of her beliefs even as I tried to talk her out of them and thus open up a new stage in this tale of  
10 madness. I had occasional waking nightmares that R.S. would leave Germany and track me down in New York, stabbing me as I got out of a taxi in front of my door at night in her rage at my betrayal of her with my supposed wife. I would have been killed by a  
15 woman I never met because of a woman who never existed.

But there was another reason for not springing a wife and children on R.S. The fact is that despite my sincere efforts to convince her of her error, I didn't  
20 really want her to stop writing. I was disturbed and annoyed at her stubborn obsession, but at the same time I was secretly enjoying it. There was something novelistic about its absurdity. And it was absorbing, this descent into the depths of a disturbed mind. It was my  
25 private soap opera. I was starting to look forward to each installment.

Perhaps, I mused to myself, someday I will think of a way to use the whole episode in a novel, a film script. I will create some dark, convoluted Graham Greene-like  
30 entertainment, a different sort of fatal attraction, a

## 凡 例

c = census 「人口調査」

cf. 「参照」

colloq. = colloquialism 「口語」

d. = died 「死亡」

Gr. = Greek

*Informal* 「くだけた表現」

L = Latin

*Med.* = Medicine 「医学用語」

*pl.* = plural 「複数」

pop. = population 「人口」

*short for* 「短縮形」

*trademark for* 「商標」

U.S. 「アメリカ英語（用法）」

## 1. The Wrong Man

By Richard Bernstein

見知らぬドイツ人女性から、同じ社に勤める同名異人の人物宛の手紙を受け取った筆者は、その誤解を解こうといろいろ努力をする。そのうちに、彼は内心、おそらくは孤独で、年をとりつつあるこの女性の執念にひそかに同情している自分に気がつく。人生の機微を伴ったエピソードを筆者は軽妙に描いている。

筆者は二ニューヨーク・タイムズの文化担当の記者。

- 1 2 **innocuously enough** 「まったく問題も無く」 *innocuously* = harmlessly; *inoffensively*
- 14 **byline** = [U.S.] a line identifying the writer of a newspaper or magazine article 「記事の署名」 署名入りの記事は by ~ と書いてあることから。
- 15 **The International Herald Tribune** New York Herald Paris edition として1887年に創刊されたが、1967年に Whitney Communications Corporation, The Washington Post, The New York Times の三社の共同経営のもとで現在名で発行されるようになった。1880年には香港でも印刷をするようになり、文字どおりの国際紙とな



- った。
- 16 **The New York Times** 1851年に創刊された。高級紙として有名  
 (「はしがき」参照)  
**cover** 「[ジャーナリストが]報道範囲に入れる。取材する」
- 17 **The Time's bureau in Paris** 「ニューヨーク・タイムズのパリ支局」
- 22 **Ms.**[miz] 女性の未婚、既婚を区別しないために用い、Miss, Mrs. の  
 両方を含める。
- 23 **right away** = immediately
- 2 **one and only** 「唯一の」
- 9 **every few months** 「数か月おきに」
- 10 **I have still not learned** 「今もってわからない」
- 11 **she says** は挿入句。
- 11 **to the person she thinks is me** = to the person who [she  
 thinks] is me 「彼女が私だと思っている人物に」
- 12 **much of anything else** 「他に何かあったとしても(今もって分  
 からない)」much 以下は 1.10 のlearned の目的語になる。また、1.10の  
 not から続いて、not much 「あまり～ではない」
- 13 **almost always** 「殆んどいつも」
- 13 **reiterate** = to say over again
- 15 **They close with a kiss.** 「手紙の結びには、キスを送ります、とあ  
 る」
- 17 **one-way correspondence** 「一方通行の手紙のやりとり」
- 18 **tour of duty** 「勤務(期間)」
- 19 **track down** = to pursue until caught, as by following tracks  
 「追い詰める」
- 21 **exasperated** = angry ; irritated
- 22 **the person she thought I was** 「彼女が、私がおその人と思込んで  
 いた人物」
- 24 **“Why do you insist that I am?”** = “Why do you insist that I  
 am he?”
- 3 2 **Times Magazine** *The New York Times Magazine* のこと。こ  
 の新聞の日曜版の一部として発行される。
- 3 **run** = [U.S.] to print ; esp., to publish (an advertisement,  
 story, etc.) in a newspaper or magazine
- 7 **badly enough** 「本気で」badly[*Colloq.*] = very much
- 8 **will do** = to serve the purpose
- 11 **Manhattan** New York 市の中心をなす一区で繁華街や金融街な  
 どがある。
- 11 **looked myself up** 「自分の名前を探した」look up = to search for  
 and find, as in a reference book
- 15 **There are 20 entries under my name** 「私と同じ名前が20人も載  
 っている」entry = the recording of an item, note, etc. in a list,  
 journal, etc.