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Please do jump into this exciting issue of *Uncommon Sense*. I think you will get a lot out of this issue.

The ***Self-Development*** column provides some content around gift-giving and gift-receiving.

The Elephant in the Room column illustrates yet another example of media malfeasance. This particular example is particularly galling.

The ***From Ara's Journal*** column finds me offering some thoughts about the differences between males and females.

The World of Words column serves up another colorful and interesting gem.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood



Self-Development

Gift Giving and Receiving

Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of my favorite thought-leaders from an earlier era, once waxed eloquent with this bit of prose:

“Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself.”

OK, so perhaps he was a bit over the top in some respects. However, I think his main thrust – that of seeing the

value of a friend higher than the value of tangible gifts is a reasonable proposition.



Still, unless a person holds true disdain for tangible gifts, receiving a gift from someone is often a charming moment. Therefore, I am a big believer in bestowing tangible gifts to people. I always feel a certain degree of warmth when I present someone with a gift that I went out of my way to obtain and present to them, especially when I see the look on the recipient's face that betrays their elation and joy at having received such a gift. It is with that ideal in mind that I offer a few thoughts about gift giving.

First, I enjoy giving gifts that are likely to last a long time: books, clothing, jewelry, often fit the bill.

Second, some gifts are of a nature that the “item” itself doesn't last a long time but the memory of the gift does. Once I received a pair of concert tickets from a corporate executive, AG, whom I knew only casually. She couldn't use them and gave them to me. I did use them and I have never forgotten that concert. Even more importantly, I have never forgotten AG for her kindness in thinking of me.

Third, I recommend you never give a gift with any sort of strings attached – not even the expectation of a simple “thank you.” I've heard many a lament by a gift-giver that the receiver never so much as said a single word of gratitude. While unfortunate, the gift wasn't bestowed with the understanding that the receiving party was now under some sort of obligation to be gracious about it. Expect nothing and you will never be disappointed. And don't try that ploy of reaching out to the recipient just to make sure they received the gift. That is phony and it spoils the dynamic. Better to say nothing than to expect something and be disappointed.

Finally, when it comes to being on the receiving end of a gift, as I was today, it is imperative that, regardless of what you think of the gift, you express grace and class. No matter the content of the gift, or its value, it is always proper to show gratitude and appreciation. As I mentioned, today a colleague presented me with a lovely gift – an expensive bottle of red wine. He evidently was unaware I do not drink alcoholic beverages of any kind. But that fact did not matter to me. Someone went out of his way to express his appreciation for me and for the value he has gleaned from our relationship. I was deeply moved. I still am. While I won't ever drink it, I will always remain mindful of his kindness in going out of his way on my behalf.

The Elephant in the Room

The Problem With The FAKE NEWS Media

The undeniable fact is that the Mainstream Media is supposed to publish the news without regard to the personal proclivities of the reporters and editors and anchors and producers who are involved in the



media. If a reporter personally hates Donald Trump, to name one random example, that reporter is expected to check his bias at the door as soon as he walks into his office building.

Yet this is rarely ever the case in today's climate of incivility and "gotcha" politics.

The latest example concerns a woman named Rebekah Jones. Ms. Jones was employed by the Florida Department of Health. Ms. Jones is a hard-core Democrat who also loathes Republicans. Thus, Ms. Jones is of a mind to try to destroy Republicans any way she can, including by [lying about them wantonly](#). So a couple of years ago, Rebekah Jones began claiming Florida's Governor, Ron DeSantis, had ordered her to doctor health records concerning Covid data in such a way as to hide the fact that the state was far more worse off than Governor DeSantis wanted to public to know so he could open up his state and reduce Covid-19 restrictions. If this were true, this would be a very serious charge against Governor DeSantis.

Only it wasn't true. Not even a little. It was all a complete and total fabrication invented by Rebekah Jones because she hated Governor DeSantis for no other reason than that he was a Republican Governor – and a highly successful one at that.

However, it is important to know that various mainstream media outlets swooned over Rebekah Jones for no other reason that she was attacking a Republican Governor. The mainstream media gets euphoric when that happens, and so the media pundits did not bother to vet the claims by Rebekah Jones. They just went with the story without doing a shred of due-diligence to ascertain the story's veracity.

But here is where it gets interesting.

The Inspector General of Florida conducted a thorough, non-partisan investigation and concluded that Rebekah Jones simply lied – lied repeatedly.

Now, once that became known, did CNN and MSNBC and the *Washington Post* and NBC News ever issue a retraction? An apology? An acknowledgement that they promoted a lie for over two years? Anything?

Not at all. And don't plan on it. The mainstream media is thoroughly Leftist, and truth is not a Left-wing value. The Left have no qualms about lying and they do it all the time. Winning at all costs is what matters to the Left, not truth-telling.

Keep that in mind when you go to the polls this November.

* * * * *

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

From Ara's Journal Male and Female Differences

The differences between men and women are myriad. The similarities are also vast, but the differences are more pronounced.

How are men and women similar? For starters, both are *homo sapiens* – part of the human species. The word *homo* is Latin for *human*. The word *sapien* suggests things like *wise* or *astute*. I heard one biologist translate the term to mean *thinking man at the top*.



The similarities continue: both males and females have the ability to stand upright, to walk, run, climb, squat, sit, lie down, etc. Their hands appear to be similar in terms of structure, as do their feet, although there is usually a pronounced difference in size. Men are generally larger than women.

Men are physically stronger than women also. Men possess more raw power than do women, based on the type of muscles found in men (Type II muscles) while women, who have a greater abundance of Type I muscles, tend to recover faster than men. Men also have greater speed when running than women for this same reason.

But that doesn't mean all men are faster, larger, and stronger than all women. If one were to put me, a 63-year-old male with various physical maladies, up against, say, the most powerful female power lifters, shot putters, and MMA fighters of the day, it is a certainty I would look quite frail up against them. But an apples-to-apples comparison of putting me up against the average 63-year-old female with her own physical maladies, I'd probably out-run her, out-throw her, and out-play her in most contests. There may be occasional exceptions (example, I'm hopelessly inept at tennis) but that would be the typical outcome.

Yet when we look closer at men and women some clear distinctions come into view. First, there are certain masculine characteristics that are absent in women, just as there are certain feminine characteristics that are absent in men. There's no other way to say it: women simply look feminine; men look masculine. 997 times out of 1000, I will be able to tell, at a glance, whether a person is male or female by their facial looks alone. I won't need to know their preferred pronouns.

Women have breasts that are capable of lactation. Men do not.

Women have female genitalia; men do not.

Women have very distinctive features that make up their reproductive system, including a vagina, a uterus, fallopian tubes, and the ovaries which produce eggs. Men do not possess any of these. In fact, for the most part, the apparatus constituting the male reproductive organs (penis, scrotum, testicles, etc) are found outside of the body, whereas the female's reproductive ensemble mostly is found inside the body.

Another key difference between males and females concerns their genetic composition. Men have one X chromosome and one Y chromosome. Women, by contrast, do not have a Y chromosome. Instead, women sport two X chromosomes. (Quick biology lesson: the human genome consists of 23 pairs of chromosomes. The first 22 pairs, called autosomes, determine all of the genetic characteristics you inherit from your parents except your gender. The final, 23rd pair of chromosomes are the sex chromosomes which determine whether you are male or female. Every person will inherit one X chromosome from their mother. The other half of that 23rd pair comes from the father: if it is an X chromosome from the father, the baby will be a female, having two X chromosomes. But if the father bequeaths a Y chromosome, giving that baby an XY set for that 23rd pair of chromosomes, it will produce a baby boy.)

Women and men have other characteristics as well. These tend to fall in the realm of social science (or, what I often sardonically refer to as bad science) – which explains why I won't take the time here to describe what the "experts" claim because I don't see their work as either scientific or credible.

But I will offer it as my opinion that men and women need each other and have much to learn from each other. I believe those out there who try to paint men (or women) in a bad light and suggest that one is "better" or "superior" than the other are being silly and unenlightened. I need women in my life as much as I need men in my life. I have learned so much from wonderful women of all ages, all cultures, all educational levels, and all temperaments and personality types. And I would say the same about the men who have cross paths with me. I have enjoyed very warm relationships with all sorts of women (KT, VW, DQ, MM, DH, RB, MF, CM, LB, CS, LR, MP-H, DB, SB, DG, GC, RE, AZ) and while some of them have been very close to me, others have been on the periphery of my life, but still profoundly influential. I have learned much about feelings, strength, honesty, prudence, manners, self-control, and spirituality from the many women I have known. Likewise, the men in my life (LM, BY, MS, GH,

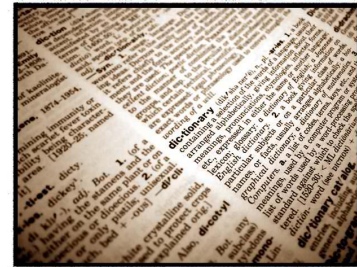
JM, DB, DY, CD, RB, JW, RFS, JS, DP, and JB have taught me about leadership, decency, self-sufficiency, friendship, loyalty, courage, determination, and the value of hard work. I have profited greatly from these choice women and noble men whom have enriched my life repeatedly.

We need men and women in our lives. They bring different perspectives, different gifts, different approaches.

The World of Words

Gnawed

Building Your Power of Expression



Gnawed, v. past participle

Pronunciation: naad

Meaning: The word *gnaw* refers to biting or chewing repeatedly at something, causing it to be worn down. But the word can also refer to the process of afflicting someone in some way. I tend to use it in that last sense, especially in past tense.

Usage:

- *The dog gnawed at the bone with gusto.*
- *I am gnawed at the realization I may have been wasting my time this entire year.*
- *Hunger gnawed at the prisoners during the entire journey.*

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