

The New York Times

Young Iranians

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To the Editor:

Nicholas D. Kristof's May 8 column, "Those Sexy Iranians," goes to show that young Iranians, born and raised after the 1979 Islamic revolution and exposed to systematic fundamentalist indoctrination, have rejected the lifestyle promoted by the ruling clerics.

They are using every opportunity to express their disgust with the mullahs. Soccer matches, religious processions, national celebrations and academic grievances in the universities provide the opportunity to wage antigovernment protests.

But the young generation demands much more than embroidered jeans and high slits.

Ahmad Batebi was only 21 when he was jailed after his picture, holding a bloody T-shirt, appeared in the Western media. Now, five years later, he remains incarcerated.

Iranian youths want freedom and democracy and a referendum on regime change. Mr. Kristof was exactly right when he wrote, "Ayatollahs, look out."

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Washington, May 9, 2004