

Germaine Greer — author, feminist, groupie and anarchist

By MARILYN SMITH

Germaine Greer carries a mixed bag. Author, feminist, university lecturer, super-groupie and anarchist, the charismatic Greer has been much noticed since her book, *The Female Eunuch* made her Britain's number one female voice.

Greer says "I wrote the book to do one simple job, to point out to the woman who is not convinced, to show her that she is oppressed." One woman reading Greer said "she's not as far out as Kate Millet and Ti-Grace Atkinson. I can relate to her views better."

In *The Female Eunuch*, Greer takes the individual female and traces her personal subjection to cultural conditions and viewpoints of women. It's the kind of book to read alone, a book to reinforce the internal turmoil of getting it together about women's liberation.

Greer is an English lecturer at Warwick University in England. "I shall go on teaching forever, I think. It's the place where I'm probably the most useful." Known as a champion of students, Greer carries her philosophy to the classroom in stressing the inter-discipline approach.

"The aim is to short-circuit the cultural set-up. Nearly all great art offers a critique of the social system as it exists. No single artist strongly endorses the culture out of which he writes." Shakespeare's early comedies was her thesis subject. He was, she maintains, a



photo by HARRIET KIDECKEL

popular culturist, deliberately poisoning the popular culture against the snob or court culture.

She compared York to Warwick University. "It's the same thing they've done at Warwick, created an artificial environment, stuck out in the middle of nowhere. They expect a magic kind of

creativity to appear. At Warwick the students are tearing the place apart."

"I'm not liberated, I've just been privileged all my life," she says. Australian born Greer says she has a dream of a life in the country, "but it would be the most errant abuse of privilege." Her moral commitment to women's rights began during her Cambridge student days.

"I remember I was free as air, accumulating distinctions, when I heard of the horrible death of a friend, a butcher abortion job. And I remember I went quite hysterical, because I felt in some way responsible. I felt I had a responsibility to this girl."

She believes it's easier to influence the government than the culture and that the abortion laws, even as they now exist, are more liberal than the attitudes to abortion. She calls the agitation over abortion a regressive retreat, although she favors repeal of the laws. The obvious thing is to develop chemical contraceptives that do not cause imbalance in the female metabolism, she says.

"The medical information is available, but the drug companies are not interested in developing it because this would cut down the enormous sales of oral contraceptives. There is something political involved. An abortion is still a put-down experience for a woman."

Greer has been called a super-groupie

by various media sources. She is a pop music and pop culture expert, a training begun in her teens when she was a musician's old lady. But the media rip-off is mutual, she adds, explaining that she effectively makes her case with tactics of subtlety.

That, she says, is the essential approach for all radicals right now. "Ordinary spontaneous violence is one thing, but violence is not ours to administer. To provoke violence when the national guard for example, has all the advantages — M16 weapons and all — is irresponsible murder of our own people. We're undisciplined, we have no political know-how."

In her book she writes, "Women who adopt the attitudes of war in their search for liberation condemn themselves to acting out the last perversion of dehumanized manhood, which has only one foreseeable outcome, the specially masculine end of suicide."

If the book is to be criticized, it's that it does not take a scientific objectivity in refuting the Freudian instigated female stigma of the popular culture. But although the approach is subjective, the bountiful evidence drawn from all facets of the culture, is convincing enough. Add that to the personal experience of every female from adolescence on and it's understandable that Greer's book should rival the furor begun by Betty Friedan and *The Feminine Mystique*.

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Abortion group calls women to Ottawa march

By BRENDA GRAY

"Women have to struggle, fight, and force doctors to give them legal abortions," said Iva Stanley volunteer worker for the Toronto Coordinating Committee on the Ontario Women's Abortion Law Repeal Coalition.

At York's second Women's Liberation meeting last Thursday, Iva Stanley and Gwen Taylor said campus women are needed for the Nov. 20 march on Ottawa because "they are the most active women and least burdened by nine-to-five jobs and children."

She said supporters are needed to work on committees, sell buttons, and go on the demonstration. "Abortion is an issue women on campus and everywhere else will take very seriously," said Stanley. She said, "Day care, abortion and birth control are women's issues. Men don't have babies."

Grace MacInnis, the only woman MP will speak to the Ottawa marchers.

Men are welcome to participate on the demonstration but not in the organization, she said. "The most interested men will understand that women have to build a movement on their own that will convince other men," said Stanley.

The Ontario Women's Abortion Law Repeal Coalition was formally established at an October conference in Toronto as a sister group to the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition in the United States. Two hundred women attended formulating planning committees and movement organization.

Wendy Johnston, a paid staff member of the Toronto Coordinating Committee will speak Friday at an open meeting in Ross S 203.

Thursday's participants voted to expel men from the meeting because it was organizational not educational.

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