

for m.s.

The Virtues of Chauvinism

Thank you for all the opinions I received from my article. However, there are two arguments that I feel I must clear up. The first is that I have generalized too much. Many people feel that my opinions do not hold for all girls on campus. Personally I feel that I wasn't generalizing because there are few females that do not dress, and act to please the males. An example of this is the time spent primping in the girl's washroom before going up to the second floor of the Barn to face the men. Very few girls can pass by a washroom or even a mirror without checking to see if their "face" is still O.K., not smudged and every hair in place. Are they really worried about their face and hair from a health point of view or are they trying to please others? Don't we all try to beautify what we have for the pleasure of others instead of being content with ourselves?

I also realize that many males on campus spend a certain time in the washrooms. They are also not content with what they have, but try and change their physical appearance so they can meet the set standards.

However the males are not as conspicuous as the females since they are unable to find very little wrong with their bodies. The most that some do is have their hair styled but they don't go as far as plucking eye brows, thickening eye lashes, coloring eyelids to bring out their eyes, rouge on their cheeks and coloring of the lips to make them more sensuous.

For these reasons I don't feel I have generalized because I think these matters affect us all, on one level or another.

Another argument put forward was the idea that the "courtesies" I questioned were very minor and of no great importance. I must agree with you but I feel that the motives behind these courtesies are not minor or unimportant. Why do men light a girl's cigarette? Is it because he actually wants to be courteous or does he feel she is incapable of doing it herself? If a man is so full of courtesy why doesn't he light a man's cigarette? Why doesn't he help him with his coat? Why doesn't he help him sit down and so on?? My only

reasoning for this is that the male thinks that the females are the weaker sex (?) and we need their superior help in order to do such simple tasks. Isn't he really saying, "I know you can't survive without my help" and don't we females begin to feel this way after a time. I think

GREER ON WOMEN

Women are so brainwashed about the physical image that they should have that, despite popular fiction on the point, they rarely undress with éclat. They are often apologetic about their bodies, considered in relation to that plastic object of desire whose image is radiated throughout the media. Their breast and buttocks are always too large or too small, the wrong shape, or too soft, their arms too hairy, too muscular or too thin, their legs too hefty, too short and so forth. Not all the apology is fishing for compliments. They are actually apologizing. The compliment is actually necessary reassurance that inadequacies do not exist, not merely reassurance that these inadequacies do not matter. The woman that complains because her behind is droopy does not want to be told "I don't care, because I love you," but "Silly girl, it's a perfect shape, you can't see it like I can." It is a commonplace observation that women are forever trying to straighten their hair if it is curly and curl it if it is straight, bind their breasts if they are large and pad them if they are small, darken their hair if it is light and lighten it if it is dark. Not all these measures are dictated by the phantom of fashion. They all reflect dissatisfaction with the body as it is, and an insistent desire that it be otherwise, not natural but controlled, fabricated. Many of the devices adopted by women are not cosmetic or

the males just like to have us under their thumbs by making us unable ever to turn around without their help.

If you personally think I am wrong in this respect, please show me how these so called "courtesies" are not oppressive.

Gil Brammer

ornamental, but disguise of the actual, arising from fear and distaste. Soft lighting, frilly underwear, drinks and music, might help to get away with palming off an inferior bill of goods, which under harsh light and quite naked could too easily be disgusting. The universal sway of the feminine stereotype is the single most important factor in male and female woman-hatred. Until woman as she is can drive this plastic spectre out of her own and her man's imagination she will continue to apologize and disguise herself, while accepting her male's pot-belly, wattles, bad breath, farting, stubble, baldness and other ugliness without complaint. Man demands in his arrogance to be loved as he is, and refuses even to prevent the development of the sadder distortions of the human body which might offend the aesthetic sensibilities of his woman. Woman, on the other hand, cannot be content with health and agility: she must make exorbitant efforts to appear something that never could exist without a diligent perversion of nature. Is it too much to ask that women be spared the daily struggle for superhuman beauty in order to offer it to the caresses of a sub-humanly ugly mate? Women are reputed never to be disgusted. The sad fact is that they often are, but not with men; following the lead of men, they are most often disgusted with themselves.

From The Female Eunuch by Germaine Greer

