

though necessary, injures his image of himself as supreme provider. His knowledge that an insecure world headed for God-knows-what disaster is beyond his ability to understand, let alone help, minimizes his feeling of power. The intrusion of women into his private world of clubs and bars and golfing and fishing cuts off his escape into these formerly ego-recharging sanctuaries.

Not least are the sexual problems. "The contemporary male faces sexual responsibilities far exceeding those of men in earlier times. He must gratify himself *and* his sexual partner. He has to make sure he's a better lover—or at least no worse—than other men. He has to cope with the sexually liberated woman, something that can require a considerable amount of coping. He has to put up with the bittersweet fact that while sex is fortunately no longer hidden away in the Victorian darkness, it has been pushed all the way to the other extreme, where every aspect is spotlighted for detailed examination—and himself along with it. Psychoanalyst Milton R. Sapirstein noted:

Modern man literally lives in a sexual goldfish bowl, where he is constantly up for reappraisal. His girlfriend has usually read the latest psychiatric book on sexual behavior, in which practically anything he does is called "infantile"; his friends openly discuss frequency and duration of sexual act; his family ridicules him if he escorts an unattractive female; and for years he has heard the older females mocking the sexual prowess of their husbands. There is a constant aura of jokes about male sexual inadequacy in the atmosphere.

Sex, the last area of male dominance, is now democratized. Not only has the male lost his dominance, but he is—or thinks he is—forced to prove himself while the woman sits in judgment.

That sex with their wives has become a duty, rather than a pleasure, is seen by the marked change in the reasons men give for going to prostitutes and call girls. Men once blamed unresponsive wives or wives unwilling to participate in a specific sexual technique. But these are the days of the sexual revolution, and increasingly, the men who require the services of prostitutes say that they have wives who are *too* responsive and demanding. In effect, the pressure of having to please has become too great; the men "cop out." They prefer a one-sided arrangement with themselves on the receiving end. "It burns them up not to be lords and masters in their own beds, and so they try to make believe they are in ours," a perceptive call girl is quoted as saying in a recent study on prostitution in New York. She observed that her sole task is to make her clients feel good, and that unlike their wives she's not concerned about getting anything but money in return. "Take this two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar baby comes to see me one or two times a week. Always says he enjoys being with me instead of his wife, because when he's with her he's so busy trying to please her he hardly has time to think about himself."

As one reads this well-organized and clearly written survey it becomes apparent that our rushing, shrinking world has removed many of the American male's illusions about himself—and the

American female, so assiduously overwhelmed with *her* problem, is no longer the illusion-preserver and ego-builder she used to be. She is a *person* rather than a *woman*, and her husband is less a man for a' that. Marriage for a man has become less a matter of convenience, as it was in the past, than one of image-building. When marriage destroys that image, then marriage itself is destroyed.

Today's male lives in an impious age that has lost its respect for authority, for the symbol of masculinity: for teacher, for



father, for boss, for law. Until we manage to raise a generation with respect for authority the American male is likely to find greater and greater frustration.

The American Male is not at all anti-feminine. It concerns itself with woman only as she concerns man. Both are victims of society, and in living according to society's rules they are losing each other to convention. In generations past, people solved the problems of living by "growing old"—by giving up and pretending not to care any more. But this is an era of *not* growing old.

Says Mr. Brenton:

The fundamental purpose of this book is not to encourage men to be women. It is to encourage men to be men. To this end it has a thesis, a point of view. At the present time in his history, the American male is subject to an unprecedented number of pressures and tensions. Their effect is needlessly deleterious, because he's still trapped by the beliefs and value systems of the past. To be sure, there are outward manifestations of equalitarianism, of role flexibility, of a relaxation of the rigid sexual double standard. But the American male hasn't really integrated these new ways into his personality . . .

No matter how much American males may yearn for the simpler, more clearly defined times gone by, their yearnings are futile. They have the choice of remaining what they are—a sex at bay—or of redefining themselves in the light of the changing culture. Historically, in the relationship between men and women and between men and men, this is a new approach. And it is the ultimate masculine challenge because it does away with stereotypes, guidelines and life plans. It simply requires a man to be more fully human, more fully responsive and more fully functioning than he has ever allowed himself to be. This is the freedom that equality of the sexes offers him.

If he's afraid to take this freedom, the American male will wind up enslaving

Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich and David M. Glixon

"IT WAS THE CAT!"

The cats referred to in the first column were created by the authors in the second. Ruth Berman of Minneapolis asks you to match them up (and, if you can, name the work in which each animal appears). She lets the cats out of the bag on page 64.

Foss ()
Tobermory ()
Pluto ()
Dinah ()
Graymalkin ()
Macavity ()
She was toujours gai ()
Servant of the Marquis
of Carabas ()
Minnaloushe ()
"Nenni," said the cat ()

1. Lewis Carroll
2. T. S. Eliot
3. Rudyard Kipling
4. Edward Lear
5. Don Marquis
6. Charles Perrault
7. Edgar Allan Poe
8. William Shakespeare
9. Saki
10. William Butler Yeats

himself all the more. If he grasps it, he may at last come to see that he's not really as fragile as his patriarchal concepts have made him out to be.



Shock of the Primal Scene: Reviewing *Hope for Man*, by Rabbi Joshua Loth Liebman (Simon & Schuster, \$4.95), has posed some problems, not the least formidable being the necessity of reading it. Were it not for the fact that its predecessor, *Peace of Mind*, was a prodigious best-seller and that, like it, *Hope for Man* bears the colophon of a highly respected publishing house, the whole matter might best be passed over in silence. It would, I believe, be faintly comical to take this posthumously published book seriously for what it pretends to be, and is not—a learned venture into philosophy, including a critical appraisal of what is held to be the devilishly subversive influence of certain existentialist writers and (at no extra cost) a prescription for salvation.

A good deal of the diagnosis and treatment of this ailment, here called pessimism, is in the name of modern psychiatry, if not exactly in its terms. The rhetoric is frequently crude, its devices more those of the debater (I almost said demagogue) than of the scholar: build them up before knocking them down and/or question their motives. For example, Kierkegaard ("the essential motif in his whole thought . . . his contempt for human relatedness") is the target of some quite extravagant praise, both before and after his condemnation as "the greatest source of pessimism in our age." The bill of particulars against him includes, *inter alia*, the idea that he was authoritarian (which, as everyone knows, is dreadful) and further that there is "no doubt that he was exceedingly vain and arrogant in daring to pit his intellectual conclusions against all the doctrines and dogmas of his day" (which is, I suppose, even worse). Sartre is "perhaps the greatest spokesman for darkness" and "all who follow in his footsteps are tarred with the black brush of negation."

In his efforts to exorcise these devils, the late Dr. Liebman looks to psychoanalysis and as his major weapon points to the shock of the primal scene. At any rate, the philosophies of Berkeley, Hume, and "in some respects, Kant" (though not exactly existentialists, they too, in their own ways, promoted evil) are so explained. The work of Bertrand Russell (I'm sorry to say that I have forgotten his qualifications for inclusion here) is no longer a mystery if one knows that Russell was an orphan. I can't wait to get back to the *Principia Mathematica*, but suppose that I'll have to wait until I know something of Whitehead's infancy.

—LESLIE SCHAFER.

In Groups Within Groups

The Last Jew in America, by Leslie A. Fiedler (Stein & Day, 191 pp. \$4.95), is a trio of wild tales dealing with ethnic isolates in our modern wasteland. Samuel I. Bellman is the editor of "Survey and Forecast."

By SAMUEL I. BELLMAN

MUCH of the action of Leslie Fiedler's new fiction collection takes place in "Lewis and Clark City," which is supposed to be across the border from Montana but seems more like a thinly disguised Missoula, Montana, which Fiedler has now left for good. The three ethnic isolates Fiedler depicts are "The Last Jew in America," "The Last WASP in the World," and "The First Spade in the West." Surrounded by goggle-eyed in-groups, the alien Jew, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant, and Negro are riven by misery, confusion, and a desperate urge to do something to end their uniqueness. But, in Fiedler's book, there's really not much they can do, and this is the peg on which he hangs his three tales.

Two statements by Fiedler throw a great deal of light on *The Last Jew in America*, the last two novellas of which are possibly the worst fictions he has ever made up. In his famous essay, "No! in Thunder" (the introduction to his 1960 essay collection of that name) he pointed out, "In the realm of fiction, to be inept, whether unwittingly or on purpose, is the single unforgivable sin. To be inept is to lie; and for this, time and the critics grant no pardon."

Two-thirds of his current work represent a fantastic degree of ineptness and literary falsity. His stereotypes of white gentile, Indian, and Negro, for example, are utterly unreal and hence meaningless. The hysteria and frenzy that in true Fiedler-fashion underlie these stories indicate clearly not that his message is urgent or that the time is sadly out of joint, but simply that he is one of the outstanding Spasmodic prose-poets of our time. As with the Victorian Spasmodic poets or the nineteenth-century American Spasmodic fictionist John Neal, Fiedler's imaginative writing represents a series of emotional fits. And as with early American film comedies, *The Last Jew in America* and much of Fiedler's other fiction also depend heavily on the wild melee, the uninhibited free-for-all that releases a lot of pent-up tension but otherwise doesn't make much sense.



—Jim Tuttle.

Leslie Fiedler—"Spasmodic prose-poet."

This is not to say that Fiedler does not have a serious aim in writing fiction. Which leads us to his second statement, taken from his 1951 introduction to Simone Weil's *Waiting for God*. To what does Weil bear witness, Fiedler asked himself? "To the uses of exile and suffering, to the glory of annihilation and absurdity, to the unforeseen miracle of love." These uses, this glory, and this miracle Fiedler has been attempting to convey in his stories and novels.

The Last Jew in America is full of suffering exiles: elderly, anachronistic Jews trying vainly to retain a vestige of Judaism while the town's ex-Jews look on bewilderedly; an anti-Semitic Pulitzer poet suffocated by the only people he can relate to: Jews, particularly Jewish women, who have always thrown themselves at his feet; a Negro night-club operator in Lewis and Clark City, descendant of the slave who accompanied Lewis and Clark, ironically reduced to being the town's showcase Negro and part-time scapegoat.

The fate of these exiles? Annihilation and absurdity, as indicated above, annihilation and absurdity in a kind of oblique glory. Louie Himmelfarb is dying of cancer in a Catholic hospital; his aged friend Jacob Moskowitz, a sort of Jewish town-clown, has trouble rounding up ten even-nominal Jewish males for Yom Kippur rites at Louie's bedside. Poet Vincent Hazelbaker, childless like Louie and Jacob, attends an indescribably vulgar Jewish wedding in New Jersey, fails miserably in his rela-