

intentional in order to be effective. And the main hindrance to partake in cosmic consciousness -to have the courage to achieve emptiness as constant being - is the wrong structure of the thinking brain, condemning man to a state of illusion, of Maya.

The opposite concept of Karma is Dharma. Sanatana Dharma is nothing but religion, living in tune with Power, as Don Juan terms the eternal presence. But everybody has his personal way to attain Sanatana Dharma through Swa-Dharma, by understanding and accepting his personal ways and tasks. The way to infinity leads through the door of the finite, man does not attain liberation as an infinite being, but through his limitations, by changing those into a tool of realisation.

Many traditions are negative towards rational thought, as it leads most people into false ego images. Attaining the limitless state for moment in meditation is always possible: but as a state, it will not change man, only give him orientation where to go to. In order to live out of Power, man has to transform his thinking into accordance with reality, he has to tune his mind, not only personally, but also collectively.

Transpersonal psychology has enlarged the field of conscious experience to such a degree that religious and philosophical systems are unable to cope with it; the world is much richer than any tradition has presumed. Therefore emerges a new philosophical task: to create a language, a conceptual frame which would be able to encompass all the new experiences, and furthermore to give to every individual the possibility to create out of those elements of consciousness his own personal synthesis, his own way of life. The time of collective philosophies and religions is over: only the individual centered in his creativity will be a partner to spiritual and natural evolution, a friend of God.

John Rowan

Men's Consciousness

Ever since the start of the Women's Liberation Movement, men have been wondering what to do about it. Recently I have been designing a research project to find out more about men's consciousness, and how it has changed in those men who have been most opposed to the Movement, and have been reading a number of books designed to enlighten men. This brief rundown is an attempt to review these books so as to make others' search a bit briefer than mine.

Five of the books are American, and three British. Unfortunately the British ones are uniformly poor, so we may dispose of them first. Andrew Tolson's *The Limits of Masculinity* is a semi-sociological book which lays a good deal of stress on the difference between middle-class and working men. But the vaguely Marxist bias of the book leads to a superficial discussion, dealing almost entirely with men's attitudes to work. The author's experience of two years in a men's group in Birmingham does not appear to have had

very much effect - certainly the whole area of personal relationship is neglected terribly.

Andrew Goodman and Patricia Walby's *A Book About Men* is very general and bitty and journalistic, with lots of snappy quotes and no index. Beata Bishop and Pat McNeill's *Below The Belt* is witty and pointed with some sharp insights, but it is even more journalistic, and doesn't even have the quotes to adorn it, never mind anything like an index.

And so we come to the American books. By far the weakest of these is Jack Nichols' *Men's Liberation*, a farrago of sermonising claptrap with not a single recommendable chapter. The good advice comes thick and fast in this one, and nausea threatens after the first few pages.

The other four books are all much better. The most personal is Jerry Rubin's *Growing (up) at 37*, which will no doubt attract some people and turn others off. Personally, I liked this a lot. It tells how Jerry Rubin, one of the best-known revolutionaries of the Igbo's, went inwards and started to revolutionise himself. Going through therapy, he discovered things like - "As long as you are still angry at your parents, you cannot feel love for them. If you stay angry at your mother, you will be angry at women all your life." But this is a personal statement rather than a general book.

Joe Peck and Jack Sawyer's *Men and Masculinity* is a really excellent book of readings, some personal, some scientific, covering a great deal of ground. The only pity of it is that it is so American - we could do with a British book like this. It would probably be possible to get one together, in fact, from materials which have appeared here and there in this country, some of which are quoted by Andrew Tolson in the first book mentioned above.

Michael Koda's *Male Chauvinism* is much better than it looks - it has been remaindered, so can be picked up quite cheap. It is all about American office life, and very much restricted to that, but it is quite devastating in its sharp analysis and acute observations. How about these?

The men thought that "freedom" could only be found away from women; the women knew that "freedom" was merely a synonym for rejection of women.

"Whatever ground woman manages to establish for herself, was abandoned, denying its importance."

A newspaper speaks with the voice of men.

"Feminine" can be defined quite simply by those qualities that men despise in other men and in themselves.

"Women get raped every day, a little bit at a time, and you don't need a knife to do it, and it doesn't have to happen in a dark hallway. It's happening right now . . ." "Rape is the ultimate expression of the existing relationship between men and women."

The sense of danger, the inexplicable insult, the sudden obscenity,

the feeling that one hasn't been understood and isn't going to be - how can men feel what it's like? And if we can't feel what it's like, how do we begin to treat women as equals?

"You work at this kind of thing long enough and you begin to think that maybe all men really hate women." But no, they don't as a rule hate them. They just don't want to know anything about them.

This book **is** journalistic, and it **doesn't** have an index, but it is of much higher quality than most of the other books on the list, and is well worth any man's perusal if he wants to understand a bit more of what is going on.

The final book on this list is the best - Warren Farrell's *The Liberated Man*. It is really well thought out and presented, and based on good research work as well as a lot of personal experience. It presents the whole case for women's liberation very clearly in terms which a man can understand, and shows how women's liberation is to the benefit of men. There is a very good chapter on child love, and how different working arrangements would make it easier for men to take an equal role in this area. It includes a discussion on "homemaker payments", in which he says things like -

Housework will always be the domain of an oppressed group (in our society women, blacks or chicanos) until payment for it is similar to any other labour.

He says that in Norway a person is, under the law, paid for housework. This is, of course, what the wages for housework group is struggling for in this country, usually against much opposition. How interesting that, as soon as it looks as though men might have to do a fair share of housework, wages for housework suddenly seem a much better idea!

Farrell has an interesting account of the stages through which men typically pass when exposed to the arguments of feminists.

During the first stage the men are turned off - even vehemently. . . During the second stage after exposure to radical supporters, feelings are more contradictory. . . When the effect (attitude change) does take place, the man takes credit for the thought himself or assumes it comes from an ambiguous non radical source. . . during the third stage they were generally unwilling to discuss this (increased awareness and support) publicly. . . If a man reaches the fourth stage (open support) it is generally because the people closest to him are supporters of women's liberation, allowing him to perceive a new reality.

So the sequence goes: rejection of women's liberation; rejection of the women putting the case, but acceptance of some of the ideas; increased support but unwillingness to talk about it; open support. In the light of this, it seems that it would be very much worth while for those men who do support women's liberation to talk about it more.

There are some very good accounts in this book of actual events in consciousness-raising groups, and I think any man could learn a great deal from reading this book. There is a good bibliography and an index.

What effect does all this have on the men who read it? Probably very little. In this area the important changes seem to take place when men are actually confronted by women, and challenged in their own homes and places of work in a direct and painful way.

What is interesting now is - what happens to those men who do accept the challenge and start to change in the direction of an increased awareness of the feminist position? A pamphlet has just come out which gives some answer to this. (Pauline Long and Mary Coghill. Is it worthwhile working in a mixed group?) It says that such men, when they find themselves in mixed groups with feminists:

Feel oppressed, guilty about sexism, do not speak out,
do not take any lead, do not wish to "offend" or appear
"patriarchal"

Do not defend themselves if wrongly accused.

Swallow their feelings.

Tend to ape females; openly envy the female processes
of birth and breast feeding; tend to devalue the female
who is doing these things.

Go into child care and community work, but often try
to work on female lines, denying a male role.

Do not offer common and equal solidarity and understanding
to women: Distance themselves emotionally although
usually ready to exploit sexual invitations.

This does not seem a very happy state of affairs, if it is true; and certainly there does seem to be some truth in this account.

How can we do better? There seems to be no alternative, really, to the painful process of meeting the criticisms of women, going back to the men's group to work out the feelings aroused by this, going back to the women, getting confronted on something else, going back to the men's group to come to terms with that, going back to the women again, getting challenged again, going back again, and so on. That way, everyone is going to learn something.

Ultimately men have to take responsibility for their way in the world, and stop regarding it as "just the way things are". This seems to be a simple thing to say, but a hard thing to do. At least these books - or the best of them - do clarify what this task is going to mean. Group work could actually do more to change the situation.

Books

- ***Beata Bishop** (with **Pat McNeill**). *Below the belt*, Coventure 1977
- Warren Farrell**. *The Liberated Man*, Random House 1975 and Bantam Books 1975.
- ***Andrew Goodman & Patricia Walby**. *A Book About Men*, Quartet 1975.
- ***Michael Korda**. *Male Chauvinism*, Barrie & Jenkins 1974 and Coronet Books 1975.
- ***Pauline Long & Mary Coghill**. *Is It Worthwhile Working in a Mixed Group?* Beyond Patriarchy Publications 1977
- Jack Nichols**. *Men's Liberation*, Penguin 1975.
- Joseph H. Peck & Jack Sawyer**. (eds) *Men and Masculinity*, Prentice-Hall Spectrum 1974.
- Jerry Rubins**. *Growing (up) at 37*, Warner Books 1977.
- Andrew Tolsen**. *The Limits of Masculinity*, Tavistock Publications 1977.

*These titles so marked are as much for women as for men, or even more for women than men.

Coming Events

January

- 3rd - 4th Guildford University. 2-day workshop for prof. counselling. James Kilty. Tel: Admin. Officer (KT) Guildford 71281-ex 877
- 4th - May 24th Weekly Wednesday evening courses on Groups and inter-group work. Hans Lobstein. Tel: 01 579 5589
- 5th - 6th Guildford University. 2-day workshop Facilitator Styles. John Heron. Tel: Admin. Officer (KT) Guildford 71281 ex 877
- 6th - 8th Creative Writing Group. Alix Pirani. N. London Tel: 01 794 6062
- 7th - 8th Kalptaru. Eclectic Encounter weekend group. 10a Belmont Street, N.W.1 Tel: 01 485 3216
- 9th - Feb. 27th Weekly evening course on Migraine, headaches etc. 8.0-9.30 p.m. Hans Lobstein, 7 Chesham Terrace, Ealing W13 Tel: 01 579 5589
- 9th Gestalt on-going evening group. Dolores Bate. At Quaesitor. Tel: 01 340 9982 evenings and weekends
- 11th Gestalt on-going daytime group in Highgate. Dolores Bate
- 13th - 15th Weekend Group on Migraine headaches etc. Hans Lobstein. See Jan. 9th