

KEY TO WHOLE QUESTION IS FACT YOU SHOULD HAVE ONE PRECISELY BECAUSE

"LIFEITSELFMANSHIP" by Decca Truehaft, illustrated by Pele, published by the author (in mimeographed form), 50 cents.

Reviewed by **AL RICHMOND**
SAN FRANCISCO. — Precisely because the left wing movement finds itself in a period of intense and self-critical ideological discussion, the objective conditions are ripe for this contribution in the struggle for more popular agitation and propaganda that will concretize the burning issues of the day before the toiling masses.

Author Decca Truehaft, following the correct policy projected by a prominent working class leader some years back, has grasped the weapon of culture; indeed has grasped it boldly and firmly.

As is well known, the science of linguistics projects in sharp form the basic issue of the relationship between basis and superstructure, but it cannot be said that the author, having invaded the linguistic sphere, solves the problem of that relationship—indeed, it cannot even be said that she grapples with it at all.

Some will attribute this theoretical omission to opportunism, while others will pin the responsibility on astigmatism, and the very emergence of such a contradiction crystallizes the need for

fresh ideas and a deeper probing for the roots of the American tradition.

The problem is, of course, to arrive at a balanced estimate and a well-rounded evaluation before conclusions are finalized, which is, as is well known, another way of saying that both right opportunism and left sectarianism are to be avoided.

Thus, on the other hand . . .

If you have read this far and winced, then you should read Mrs. Truehaft's booklet as a delightful pleasure. If you haven't winced, then you should read it as penance.

The full title gives the drift: **"Lifeitselfmanship, or How to Become a Precisely Because Man; An Investigation into Current L (or Left-Wing) Usage."**

This satirical study was inspired by the recent appearance of the book "Noblesse Oblige," by Nancy Mitford (the present author's sister) and others, which in a light vein develops the theme that "it is solely by its language that the upper class is marked off from the others," and offers as illustration "non-U" (non-Upper Class) and "U" (Upper Class) language usages.

It was a short step (structurally, at least) to arrive at L (Left-Wing) and non-L usage (or utilization) (to

be precisely L) of the English language.

Some samples will afford an idea of the method.

Q. What is Wall Street drunk with?

A. Temporary but illusory success (correct answer); Old Granddad (incorrect answer).

A good many L cliches are listed under sections. Under the Gastro-Intestinal Section, for example, there are such old standbys as "assimilate (working class theory); purging (of disruptive elements); only through struggle will anything come to pass."

Under the heading of "Cheesecake" there are "broadly based, well rounded points (made in discussion), well developed cadres and fresh approaches."

Any one who has been exposed to left wing jargon can take it from there, and it's fun, just how much fun can be gleaned from Mrs. Truehaft's booklet and Pele's illustrations, which are in the good old L-spirit.

The booklet should be distributed with discretion. Some of my best friends (and possibly some of yours) might become so self-conscious of their speech that, like the Indian mystic who recently came through San Francisco, they

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will not utter a word for the next 15 years.

Naturally, neither you nor I ever talk or write like that, so we can have a good self-critical laugh at the expense of the other fellow's sectarianism. Speaking of expense, the price of the booklet is 50 cents, the proceeds go to The Daily People's World, and you may get a copy by writing to Decca Truehaft, 574-61st Street, Oakland, Calif., enclosing the price plus a dime for postage.
