

A Consumer's Report

By Peter Porter

The name of the product I tested is *Life*, I have completed the form you sent me and understand that my answers are confidential.

I had it as a gift,
I didn't feel much while using it,
in fact I think I'd have liked to be more excited.

It seemed gentle on the hands
but left an embarrassing deposit behind.

It was not economical
and I have used much more than I thought
(I suppose I have about half left
but it's difficult to tell) –

although the instructions are fairly large
there are so many of them
I don't know which to follow, especially
as they seem to contradict each other.

I'm not sure such a thing
should be put in the way of children –
it's difficult to think of a purpose
for it. One of my friends says
it's just to keep its maker in a job.

Also the price is much too high.

Things are piling up so fast,
after all, the world got by
for a thousand million years
without this, do we need it now?
(Incidentally, please ask your man
to stop calling me 'the respondent',
I don't like the sound of it.)

There seems to be a lot of different labels,
sizes and colours should be uniform,
the shape is awkward, it's waterproof
but not heat resistant, it doesn't keep
yet it's very difficult to get rid of:

Whenever they make it cheaper they seem
to put less in – if you say you don't
want it, then it's delivered anyway.

I'd agree it's a popular product,
it's even got into the language; people
even say they're on the side of it.

Personally I think it's overdone,
a small thing people are ready
to behave badly about. I think
we should take it for granted. If its
experts are called philosophers or market
researchers or historians, we shouldn't
care. We are the consumers and the last
law makers. So finally, I'd buy it.

But the question of a 'best buy'
I'd like to leave until I get
the competitive product you said you'd send.

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