

## the hairy ape

in *the hairy ape* o'neill deals with the misery of man, but that misery is not immediate and physical, not social but ultimate and metaphysical. yank, a stoker, is one of the insulted and injured. although for most of us the plight of such people immediately evokes the social forces that have insulted and injured them, for o'neill the social insult and injury are not so much facts in themselves as symbols of man's cosmic situation. yank is the embodiment of our modern pride of power.

the actual theme of *the hairy ape*, considered one of the two best serious american expressionistic plays, is one almost everyone experiences at one time or another - not belonging. this subject is the one that always was and always will be the subject of good drama. it is man and his struggle with his fate. to the greeks this struggle was with the gods, but is now with himself, his own past, his attempt to belong.



