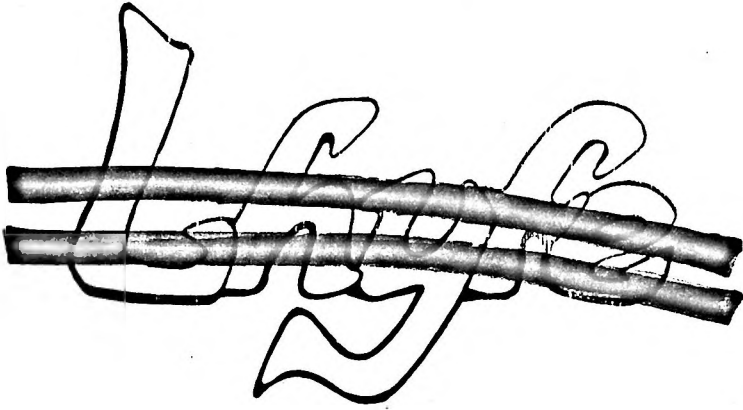


for the August mailing of ANZAPA, by Roger Weddall/P.O.Box 273/Fitzroy 3065/AUS



Standards? What standards... this is an apazine and we should talk about maintaining standards? Everyone knows that apas are the home of ill-considered first drafts that no thought is ever put into and which no-one reads, anyway. Everyone knows that. The very act of contributing to an apa is an act of pure...

### EXHYSTENTIALISM

#### 1. The Secret DUFF Newsletter?

Well, it's been (more than) four years since there has been a DUFF newsletter produced in Australia, and some people said they'd never heard of such a thing. Okay, so I'm being bitchy, and using that as my justification; being a fan fund administrator has to be good for *some* fun, I reckon.

Which brings me to the subject of the Down Under Fan Fund. For the first time in ANZAPA (for me), as much as an exercise in mental discipline as anything else, this is a first-draft effort. Yeah, so who would notice, anyway? [It probably had to happen at some stage... I've hit a cynical patch; maybe it's because I was just talking on the telephone to Terry Frost.] I wonder how many of you even bother to read the entire mailing, each time it comes in... or even any time it comes in. Well, so who cares? Why should we bother to read each other's mailings when we can spend the time doing something much more interesting... considering what we're going to put into our own contributions. Huh.

I have become comfortably numb. It's a Pink Floyd song (from 'The Wall'). As I decided that I would type this contribution first-draft and all, I thought I might as well put on the Wlkmn while I was typing, blast myself with music to even further distract me. Maybe that's why I'm feeling so cynical: I have become comfortably numb. What I've been through in the last two months... but it doesn't bear thinking about, has nothing to do with DUFF and why would you care about what I've been going through. You have your own troubles that mine couldn't possibly compare to. This whole, wide world is full of people with their heads full of troubles and little need or inclination to listen to anyone else. Not no-one not nuthin.

Which brings me to the subject of the Down Under Fan Fund. Because no-one wants to hear about other people's troubles... unless it's a secret. So you might be interested to read me talking about DUFF as I work out what the official press releases out to look like. You get, in ANZAPA, to hear about what's up with DUFF before most other people. As Bruce Gillespie once said, yippee shit. Or was that Richard Hryckiewicz?

#### 2. DUFF winner to visit Australasia!

As the current DUFF winner, I am about to head off to North America - practically as you read this - but as of right now, the next DUFF race is underway. The winner of that race will visit Australasia, including next year's NatCon, in Perth, and hopefully including New Zealand. So: do you have a preference as to whom you would like to see visit this region? Who would you like to see stand as a candidate, and maybe win? I shouldn't have to point out that ANZAPA is quite an influential body of people when sampled collectively, and when it comes to the fan funds, your opinion can be quite effective. The punchline is this: if there is someone you would like to see standing, why not either write to them to encourage them to stand, or write to me, nominating the person as a candidate for the next race. Nominations close on the 15th of September.

#### 3. Don't Send Flowers...

because they'll be dead by the time I get to see them, even though I won't be away from Australia, initially, for as long as I'd originally planned. What was going to be an almost open-ended trip of approximately six months' duration has now been altered to become a trip of only about a month - a bit less. The longer holiday will have to wait until much later in the year, or until early next year. The change in plans is somewhat disappointing, but because it's only (I hope) a post-

ponement, I can live with the fact. Huh, it has occurred to me that I will effectively be doing what most other recent fan fund winners have done; that is, spend less than a month on the trip. Visiting only a fraction of the people and places that, as a DUFF winner, I think I should be visiting. In other words (by my own standards) not really doing a very good job of being a representative. Damn.

I tell you what, though: if I have any say in the matter, I will be back there very soon, doing that longer trip. Within the year - at the very least.

### 3½. Don't Cry For Me, Argentina.

I meant what I said about not sending flowers. Instead, make my job as a DUFF administrator easier, and send money. This end of the fan fund is going to have to pay for more in the way of internal airfares etc. than usual, given that next year's NatCon is in Perth. Actually... did I mention Argentina? I'd love to be able to meet with Mae Strelkov - an American fan who went to live in Argentina. Alan, you were wondering if I'd broken the record for the number of fan funds stood for or won... do you think I could convince people to raise money to send (someone) over to Argentina to say hello to Mae? Long-overdue Australia Argentina Fan Fund? It'd be a real LAFFF!

### 4. Now Let's See...

What have I been reading lately? The Travels of Marco Polo, which was wordy but interesting; The Day of Creation, by J.G. Ballard, which was eerie and satisfying; Greg Bear's Strength of Stones, which was quite silly and lacklustre; Eric Frank Russell's Dreadful Sanctuary which kept me up all night but which, upon reflection, didn't quite cut the mustard (but which was a lot of fun); Rosaleen Love's If Atoms Could Talk; and The Ark of Creation by Peter Schouten - a sort of palaeontological adventure mystery.

Jenny Glover's list of books that people *ought* to read - sf, that is - had me thinking... what five books would I recommend?

Hothouse - Brian Aldiss  
Roadside Picnic - Strugatsky Brothers  
The Cyberiad - Stanislaw Lem  
Cosmicomics - Italo Calvino  
Mindswap - Robert Sheckley

although if I could sneak another five books in and make it a top ten...

The Futurological Congress - Stanislaw Lem  
Options - Robert Sheckley  
Way Station - Clifford Simak  
The Müller Fokker Effect - John Sladek  
Roderick - John Sladek

ah... but The Man in the High Castle, and Return From the Stars (Lem), and 1984, and The Involution Ocean (Stirling), and Out of the Silent Planet, and The Falling Woman, and... well I suppose there is quite a bit of worthy science fiction out there.

### 5. Kindergarten Fandom.

I forget now who it was - Bruce? - who told me of Harry Warner Jr's remark in FAPA about how Australian fandom was similar to people in kindergarten... squabbling, presumably, like upset children. I haven't seen the remark itself, but it's too good a chance to pass up, considering the way that American fandom regularly wars against itself with such rabid ferocity.

I was reminded of this, Jenny, by your observation that perhaps Aus fandom 'seems to have a siege mentality with little clusters huddled together'. You guess correctly: Australian geography is a bit like that. The last time I visited Adelaide it felt a little as though I was exploring a (small) rock pool... full of strange creatures, somewhat inward-looking. Certainly West Australians in general see themselves as quite isolated from the rest of Australia; there's just the slightest hint of defensiveness about people's reactions there to this fact. A sort of "well

they're not really very important people to be in contact with, anyway." I should be clear that I'm talking about West Australians in general here, not WA fandom specifically.

Given the physical distance between different centres in Australia, however, it's probably not surprising that different (fannish) sub-cultures exist. I wouldn't say that we were exactly 'huddled', however; for the most part the different centres seem to operate blissfully unaware of the preoccupations of the other groupings - and yet there is a common good will that a-lows, even encourages friendly contact between individuals and groups that are widely separated.

Sometimes you will see whole 'groups' of people from different states make contact, and being in the middle of this it can seem like one is at a wedding, or an orgy. An example? The great Sydney-Perth "cross-fertilisation" that occurred in the late seventies.

The reason I am so amused by Harry's comment (whether or not he made it) is that when any really important issue arises. the good will I spoke of and which I suspect is an innate part of the Australian culture (and of the nature of Australians, as they currently are) gives rise to a certain forbearance that is not seen in other fannish cultures (well, not in North America) that tends to allow the more troublesome wrinkles be ironed out without the spilling of too much blood.

That's a terrible generalisation, or series of generalisations, but I can call many examples to mind... typically involving fan funds or fannish awards, but also concerning such matters as slander, fraud, libel.

So, I'm not sure the 'siege mentality' observation is spot-on, although the un-connectedness of Aus fandom cannot be argued... especially when there is so much activity that currently goes on in Melbourne or Perth, for instance, but so little obvious linking between the two lots of people.

Okay, so now it's your turn, Jenny, to explain British fandom. From an Australian point of view, Brit fandom seems to have vanished up its collective arsehole. Where, not too many years ago, there was plenty of contact, nowadays Brit fandom is as much of a mystery to Australians as New Zealand fandom is. Probably more of a one. Bruce Gillespie sends his fanzines to about 20 Brits, which I'd bet would be an Australian record (for right now), and personally I'm in irregular contact with maybe ten. Very irregular contact. As opposed, incidentally, to regular contact with double that number of Europeans of the continental variety. British fandom seems very inward-looking to me, as it has done for the last five years.

On a completely different note, and regarding the coldness of the climate here, I must say that I am extremely puzzled by the fact that here we are, Winter nearly over, and the frangipani has yet to lose its leaves, even though it didn't flower much last Summer. Hmmm, do you think there's a connection?

#### 6. Syncon follies.

Gerald, I liked your convention report very much. I was surprised that you were able to give such a full report, given the fact that you were one of the organisers. Perhaps the fact that Syncon was so low-key meant you had the time to observe as well as organise. Anyway, it was a good report. If Thyme ever comes out you'll see my official response. I enjoyed the con but missed the fact that there weren't really any room parties, or any funky music to jive to. (I'm thinking to myself: "surely Thyme will be out by the time this mailing goes out." But then, it was due to come out a month before Syncon, five months ago.)

By the way, did you get to see a copy of DownThyme, the anonymously-produced two-page send up of Thyme. I guessed it was Alan Stewart's work, even before he confessed to the deed (sigh). I mean, it wasn't done by me, and Mark Loney didn't do it, and not many other people knew about some of the information contained in the parody (such as the fact that Greg Hills has been busy these last few months playing a computer game called Civilisation. Alan, what I thought gave you away was the line 'didn't bother to meet Eva Hauser' - that was the one line in the thing that was a

bit nasty, and given the recent camaraderie between you and Greg.... Still, I must admit I did have a heap of fun "playing ignorant" when questioned by Marc Ortlieb at K&M's on the Friday night after it appeared.

7. Welcome back, Marc!

So, "it's all Bruce Gillespie's fault" will be the new fannish by-word for the 90s... sounds good to me, especially as Bruce will, in turn, always have someone else to blame, or should I say someone else: the 17 cats he & Elaine attend upon.

8. A Capital Show

Alan, reading your account of watching a DAAS Kapital episode being produced made me sorry we missed the taping. By a curious coincidence, I read your account only a short while after seeing the episode you described. While the programme does wander terribly in places, some of the writing is *so* sharp, and it's for those moments that I'll continue to watch. It's a tonic to see such quick-witted interplay, even if the dialogue has been worked and reworked to get that edge.

By contrast, yesterday (as I write this) I had an abominable experience involving television. I was at a friend's place but said friend was often on the telephone during the time I was there, and he had the telly running -- on shows he wanted to watch -- and I was "lucky" enough to catch parts of Neighbours, Home and Away, Empty Nest and finally Roseanne.

9. Shit.

Neighbours consisted of such highlights as:- a middle-aged couple are caught kissing, by the woman's husband. The husband asked his wife to "be nice" to the other man, a business customer of his. Instead of slapping her husband's face on the spot, she went along with the request but went further than the husband intended. The husband was furious, and blamed the wife for being in such a situation. Later, she says that she's "a one man woman" and she was only doing what he wanted her to. She actually means this (i.e. she's not playing up on her husband). She then asks his forgiveness for getting into that situation. During the initial confrontation, husband & wife talk about how it was just a set up so the other man would agree to a business deal with the husband - they talk about this in front of the man. He says, shocked, that this behaviour is outrageous and there will be no business deal. Later, he approaches the wife and asks her if she really found him attractive, and will he ever be able to get a girlfriend (the man is middle-aged). She assures him that he will be able to. Husband finally forgives wife for playing around.

10. What a heap of Shit.

Home and Away consisted of such shit as:- a woman, crossing the road, drops a parcel. Picking it up, she is nearly run over by someone travelling at such a high speed (on a small suburban) road that in order to avoid her the driver has to run the car off the road and into a tree. The road is straight. She apologises for causing him to have an accident. She has fallen in love with him. He forgives her for popping out onto the road in front of him. One of her friends is a motor mechanic and he can help the fellow repair his car cheaply.

11. Twisted, Neurotic, Unhealthy, Sexist Shit.

Empty Nest (one can tell by the dubbed-in laughter track) is a comedy, a sit-com. Dad & two daughters live in same house. Daughter 1 (:D1) finds man who's a bit thick. She has to tell him to make a move on her. He goes to bedroom of Daughter 2. D2 is in bed, doesn't know who this could be, whips out gun from beneath pillow and says who is this, go away. Man says I like it when you're aggressive; doesn't leave. She shoots him in the leg. Later, after D1 has accidentally broken man's nose, she wishes to break up with him. Says to Dad, "I can't do it, can you do it for me?" D1 & D2 are in mid-late twenties. Dad says do it yourself. She says that's okay as long as her daddy doesn't mind seeing her die. Dad agrees to talk to man. He doesn't get around to it in 10 minutes, she comes back and says she'll do it but can he hold her hand while she's talking to man.

12. Roseanne.

I'd never seen this show before; Susan Hryckiewicz had recommended it to me but, you know how it is: this is television we're talking about, and lots of people would recommend Neighbours or Home and Away or Empty Nest, right? Anyway, Roseanne wasn't bad. Lots of sass; not exactly what I'd call challenging viewing but funny all the same, and of course by comparison to everything else I saw that evening it was - it was brilliant.

The question, as far as I am concerned, is why people would voluntarily watch Neighbours, Empty Nest or Home and Away. In case you were thinking of answering that question, please don't bother. Consider the page above a Report From The Front Line, and leave it at that. If you actually watch material like that, of your own choice, and you feel honour bound to defend your viewing habits, please don't - at least, not to me. Let that be your own little secret. I have no real desire to have my opinion of anyone lowered. Furthermore, one and all, excuse this cathartic outburst.

13. So This Is What A First-Draft Contribution Is Like?

Apparently.

14. All the Grunge and Psychic Muck That Comes to Mind.

Terry, you must be quite used to revisiting old haunts by now, the way you have moved from city to city - but it can be quite strange to go back to somewhere you have known, even after a comparatively short absence. I couldn't be sure that you were having a good time at Syncon itself (you seemed a little, well, I don't know if 'bitter' is the right word... 'saturnine', perhaps.) so I'm glad to hear that the rest of Sydney, at least, was enjoyable.

Hey, Shintaro used to be one of my favourite shows on telly when I was a kiddy, too. I loved watching all the things the ninjas did. Dad was a builder and so I got to go to lots of building sites, and I & friends would collect sharp pieces of tin guttering left over, and use them as star knives. Jumping down from great heights was okay, too, but the up-into-the-trees bit was a movement I never perfected either.

Ho, I see you suggest that the soap opera Chances has something going for it. Ah, yes, how to be cheated out of 23 billion dollars. Do you think that the producers might have noticed the huge following that Twin Peaks got, and decided to go for the inclusion of heaps of weird detail? Your description of it makes it sound unusual enough... but I still think I'll pass. Keep us informed, however.

15. It Has Been A Long Time.

Not that I can remember back that far, but welcome back, Leanne. You can handle non-venomous snakes and faxes? I'm impressed. I'm not sure I've ever seen a fax but I know that if I did I wouldn't have a clue how to handle it. How to fill up a few pages of ANZAPA, you wonder... but I think you will regain the knack before long. I can't see you doing this, but there's always the 'random-thought-word-association-first-draft-mailing-comments' school of ANZAPA membership. Personally, I'll just be happy to hear how you're doing, what you've been up to.

Please don't tell me I've gone 'upmarket'; I've been using this same tripewriter since I started Serious Fanac (editing *Thyme*, October 1982), and putting things together by cut-and-paste, like-wise. I was reading *Mimosa* the other day and sighed when I came to Dick Lynch musing on how prehistoric those days were when he used to type and cut and paste. Whatever else they are, word processors are so much quicker to work with. But, to have one in the house I'd have to have a computer in the house, and I know what would happen if I had a computer in the house... I'd play computer games.

Anyway, it's lovely to see you about the place again.

16. In All The Old, Familiar Places

Lyn, here's hoping to see you in Orlando, very soon, so we can gang up on Janice Murray and force her to stand for DUFF, against her will. Typing this, I can only imagine how this might sound to some people. Here I am, a DUFF administrator, talking about helping convince someone to stand. For the record, I am proceeding on the basis that I am assumed to be honest (when it comes to recording people's fan fund votes and that sort of thing) even though I have an opinion as to whom I'd like to see stand as candidates for the fan fund. (Actually, I'd quite like to see all the people whose names I've heard recently mentioned as candidates for DUFF get out over here....) Of course, I also intend to vote while I'm an administrator - although I'll make a point of being the first person to vote, in case it happens (as it has a couple of times recently) that one vote could alter the result. Does all that sound fair enough?

Linette, hi, when I was over in <sup>(N.Z.)</sup> Aotearoa in '86 I flew from Wellington to Picton because there was a ferry strike at the time. I'm glad I caught the plane because the flight was extraordinarily scenic - the memory of it will live with me always - but I do rather enjoy travel by boat or ship, and wondered what the journey would be like. You live in a very beautiful country, you know.

17. Well Bless My Soul...

Weller, it will be a thrill to see you again... and I want you to promise me something. When you see me at MagiCon, it doesn't matter what I'm doing at the time (unless I'm running a programme item), I want you to forcibly - if necessary - take me aside so we can have a good natter, then and there. I hope that offer of a roof to shelter under is still good, but it now turns out that we won't be taking you up on that offer until much later than originally thought... possibly early next year. So, the long, relaxed conversations will have to wait for a bit - but in the meantime, let's have an intense WorldCon experience.

18. Sing, Sing a Song...

Weller, your lyrics have (sort of) inspired me to make up my own nonsense rhymes. Oh, all right, I'll tell the truth: I'm forever making up nonsense rhymes - to sing to the cat, to myself... does anyone know Stephen Sondheim's 'Into The Woods'?

Off to the States

It's time to go

I hate to leave

My cat, Typo.

Off to the the States-

It's time and so

I must begin my journey

Off to the States

To meet the fans

To where I am

Expected, ma'am,

Off to the States

To Ma-a-gi-Con

["You're certain of your way?"]

The way is clear

The fare is good

I have no fear,

Nor no-one should.

The planes are quite safe... and so on.

17. What? I'm less than half way through the mailing?

Mike... I've been meaning to have a quiet word with you about what you've been printing in ANZAPA. Instead, I might avoid commenting on LynC's contribution, which I couldn't bring myself to read because it has to do with her work and was a series of memoranda - one of the sorts of thing I have not yet redeveloped an appetite for, and may never do so. I hope. David, on the other hand... I bet you could make an interdepartmental memo look interesting reading. Okay, so that sort of thing is practically your job. Still.... Speaking of cooking, and of pterodactyls, I have this persistent image occur to me - call it a daydream, if you will. It is that scientists have somehow managed to de-re-un-ex-encode the DNA remnants of dinosaurs, from studying the makeup of their fossilised bones, and they manage to recreate dinosaurs, so some parts of the world (including, for some reason, the outback North of Adelaide, South or West of the Flinders Ranges) become stocked with such things as live stegosauri, or dimetrodons... and the like. Now wouldn't that be an extraordinarily wonderful thing to see in the Australian bush. I'm sure there are a million reasons why people would object to such a thing happening, even if it could be done. Meanwhile, when it comes to miraculous events and or sensations, yes, the smell of new-baked bread is one of them. If Leah remains in ANZAPA, you should ask her to send you a copy of her fanzine, Stat, issue #2, which included her Thanksgiving Day recipes. Mmmmm, talk about mouth-watering. Ah, I see that you are another fan of Geoff Slattery; you and Geoff Roderick should get together and mutually enthuse about G.S.'s recipes and attitude to food. Hmmn, I didn't know that Mr Slattery had been appearing on radio... but then, it must be a good ten years since I regularly listened to the radio, any radio. It seems strange to me, to consider this, given how much time I spent listening to the radio (and even being on the radio) up until then. Perhaps the first year I spent overseas cured me of the tuning-in habit; I think it more likely that I simply found other, more diverting pasttimes or pursuits. (I'll have to have a think about that.)

18. Read Rubbish.

Now, David, you're going to have to stop this. You're reading altogether too many interesting books. I'll become envious if this goes on for too long. On another subject your comment to Jane about doing spreadsheets for convention-running reminded me of my wish/plan to write a short little spiel on fan funds, similarly to inform people in general as to how easily to look after such things. I know, I'm setting myself up here; but you're only young once. Oh, and speaking of different ways of doing things, thanks everyone who explained to me the way that American street Nos. are organised. Bruce, you are right - I have been to America before - I was in Los Angeles for four days - but I never thought about the matter at the time, and never thought to ask anyone over there. Huh - what a strange - but logical - way of numbering one's streets.

On the matter of violence on the streets, I don't know that people want to believe that it's so dangerous out there. I suspect (but don't know) that, because it is sensational, the "bad" news is thoughtlessly, widely reported. I'm not advocating censorship here, but some simple thought. Do we, in Melbourne, really have even the vaguest interest in the fact that a warehouse in Houston, Texas, has burnt to the ground, or that a woman was shot dead in a house in the suburbs of Brisbane? Really? Commonsense, I would say, would argue: hardly. But the papers and the telly need to be filled with something, and the grisly and gruesome and spectacular are better entertainment (which is what, I would submit, the media is all about) than factual presentation of issues or whatever. It's a thoughtless process.

19. Um, er - last words.

Cath, I wish I had time to comment at greater length on what you had to say - your mailings are always thoughtful and interesting. You're certainly one of the people I'm in ANZAPA because of! Bruce, likewise. Oh: another American address query: when you have the number '217', how do people tell whether you are on the second block, number 17 on that block, or on the 21st block, number 7 on that one? Ho, I liked your comment re Gone With The Wind - but look, I'm out of wind and out of space to Hryckiewicz; Mealyyi - alas, I have no room in which to comment. seeya all, love,