

Hanrahan

OR: SELECT READINGS IN CYANOMETRICS, COSMOTELLURIAN TERATOLOGY
AND THE TAXONOMY OF LOCALLY TRIVIAL BUNDLES

Published by John Bangund, PO Box 230, Kew 3101, Australia, for FLAP.
This issue will also probably find its way into ANZAPA.

NUMBER ONE: JANUARY 1980

How could I resist an invitation to join a brand-new apa that lists among its likely members that amiable globe-trotting bank clerk, the Gais of Faulconbridge and ghost of christmases past, Eric Lindsay? Quite easily. But then I saw Dave Piper's name on the list, and Dave Hulan's and David Emerson's and Dave Wilson's, and of course Dave Locke's, and that did it. This apa will be fun to watch, Dave. Also, with a little concentration, I might eventually learn to distinguish Gil Glycer from Mike Galer, and both of them from Arthur Hlavasy - fine fellows all, but the similarity of name still confuses me, Dave. Grennell (guns), Denton (owls), Tackott (tequila) and Mr Burbee (America's answer to Walt Willie). I have learnt to tell spart, Jackie Causgrove sent us a big-name-drinker four years ago and was so embarrassed about that incident that she changed her name (but your secret's safe with me, Dorothy). Don Fitch, I think, is the only person on the list I've actually met (apart from that wretched Lindsay fellow). I can tell Don from Eric without any trouble. Don is the one who doesn't send me fanzines every other week. It's possible that I've met Suzy Staff, too. Rotzler writes under so many names I can't keep up with him. My first memory of Bill Rotzler is seeing him pounce on a book on the stall at Adelaide Airport and exclaim 'That's an edition I haven't seen yet, the swine!' or something to that effect. The book was by someone called Mirzi Fausack. I'll be keeping an eye on you, Suzy. Your secret won't be safe with me for a second if you slip up. Becky Cartwright I don't believe I know, unless I've seen you on television. There used to be a show with lots of Cartwrights in it, called, um, 'Fairweather', was it? All about a big farm there in America, and problems they were having with it.

Jackie and Dave have promised me faithfully that they'll try to talk Ed Cagle into joining FLAP. I'll be awfully upset if he doesn't. Maybe we should all write to him and tell him to get his kwallhooqua out. (That's an American expression I picked up somewhere. I hope it doesn't mean anything rude.)

My fanzine production dropped off a bit when I moved back to Melbourne. Since June 78 I've only published about thirty fanzines, and most of them were called The Society of Editors Newsletter. You might think that a silly name for a fanzine, and so

do I, but the Society wouldn't let me change it to Logorhythm or Wordwangler. Djan or anything fancish like that, so I've had to content myself with Rotzler cartoons, letters from Eric Lindsay, Leanne Frahm and David Grigg (why wasn't David invited to join FLAP, Dave?), quotations from Thomas Love Peacock, anecdotes of Keats and Chapman, personal reminiscences of a fancish nature - in short, all the things I like to have in my fanzines. I could have done with fewer rubbishy articles about the book trade and more about Bert Chandler's sex life and what George Turner did on his holidays, but in many ways editors tend to be a bit stuffy and serious and not at all responsive to the classy sort of material I prefer to publish. But I put one past them in the October Newsletter. Hidden away in its 20 dreary pages about the publishing industry and the book-editing trade was a little fancish piece entitled

EXTRACT FROM A FREELANCER'S DIARY

2 August: A trying day. Sally has pharyngitis (it'll get worse before it gets better, the doctor told her), Dylan and Donovan have car-flu, and I'm not feeling too good myself. A publisher who shall be nameless said there'd be a cheque waiting for me if I cared to call on him. Great. My favourite finance company listened to my latest brilliant idea involving their money (a phone answering machine: desperately needed, money down the drain if I don't have one), then politely told me to get knotted. No they didn't, let's be fair. What they told me was that I hadn't been in Melbourne long enough (Thirty-four years, I said) lately (Uhuh, I said) and I was therefore a bit of a risk. They could not in all conscience let me have the machine for four years at \$35 a month; they were prepared, however, to lease it for eighteen months at \$75. I pondered the logic of this. 'What you are telling me, really, is that I should go somewhere else, isn't it?' I said. My favourite finance company said that that wasn't the case, it was a matter of policy. I had to admit surely, see our side of it, policy, see, right? 'I'll take my debts elsewhere!' I threatened. Policy, they said, see our side of it.

Fuming somewhat, I drove to my favourite post

office for something to cheer me up. Phone Bill. Car registration renewal bill. Letters from freelance editors telling me their troubles. Fanzines from Marc Ortlieb, Andrew Brown, National Trust (Vic.). I drove on, to see a publisher who shall be nameless. He wasn't in. Out to lunch with one of my authors. I have never yet been out to lunch with one of my authors. Thinking of some of my authors, I have probably been lucky. The accountant, then, may I...? Out to lunch. Every one was out to lunch, apparently, except the receptionist. "Care to lunch with me?" I was about to say, then remembered I had no money. So I sat in the car (I'd found a parking meter quite close by: I can't accuse myself of having no luck at all) and waited for someone to come back from lunch and give me a cheque, or even a kind word, and while I was waiting I looked at those fanzines.

Lovely bit in the National Trust (Vic.) newsletter about how they'd saved some pretty old buildings in town that someone wanted to pull down for a car park. Great. What spoilt my enjoyment of this news a little was that I was pretty sure I'd read in the papers that those buildings are coming down to make room for a car park. But who knows? -- a hundred years from now, should we live so long, the Trust might have a classification on that car park. I looked at Marc's fanzine and decided I'd read it somewhere before. Maybe I have. Maybe Marc is just recycling his preoccupations, as I do. Good training for a newspaper column. Maybe Marc and I will get a classification in time, too, if the car-park interests don't get to us first. Andrew Brown -- a brand-new fanzine called Grundeeen, and on the title page he'd written "Right of reply, p. 19". I turned to p. 19, and there I saw my good friend Valma accusing me of being sexist or something. It's a transcript of a panel discussion at a convention I missed last Easter.

VALMA: ... I've had a male sort of say to me, "Oh, you really liked that book. But it was so sexist!" And I said "Huhhhhh..."

CHRISTINE: Who was he?

VALMA: John Paganini, actually. (The panel erupts into laughter. Ah) And I just sat there across the dinner table and went "Huhhhhh..."

And he said "Of course you'd like it because you're a woman."

Isn't that awful? An editor I know came out of the building and I waved to him and he came over and I said "Did you know I'm a sexist?" He said yes, isn't everyone? and asked what I was doing there. "Waiting for a bloody cheque," I said. "Wish I could help," he said, "but I'm just off to lunch. See yer 'round." "Probably," I said.

"The panel erupts into laughter." Great! I listened to the news on the car radio. Malcolm Fraser

mouthng platitudes in chrome-plate attitudes in Lusaka. Not yet assassinated by southern Africans. Her Gracious Majesty survives yet, too. Boring stuff. No one back from lunch yet. Sexist? Am I really? Valma would know; she's up on that sort of thing. I haven't learnt all the labels yet. Too long in the bush. But it is true that Valma has said "Huhhhhh..." to me over the dinner table on several occasions since I've been back in Melbourne, and I have no ready answer to her argument. She has also said that if I want to smoke I can go outside. A lot of people have said that to me since I've been back in Melbourne. Among those who haven't, oddly, are several friends who suffer miserably from cigarette smoke. The people who ask me to go outside tend to be doctrinaire anti-smokers, not people who actually suffer, assuring them that their discomfort is as nothing compared with my disease doesn't help a bit. I've found: Lighting up my third for the day (packet, that is), I wondered all over again how long lunch lasts when you're employed.

A senior publishing person came out to the car and said god he was sorry, there was a god-awful mix-up, I was waiting for a cheque, wasn't it, and god, there wasn't a goddam thing he could do except say god he was sorry and he would make sure it was in the mail to me tomorrow. Fuming somewhat, I drove home. I rang my bank and said god I was sorry. I rang the president of the Society of Editors and said "I felt like resigning from the goddam committee, and he asked why, and I told him, at length, and that checked me up a bit. Then I talked a bit to Phillip Adams and Alison Forber and Geoff Gold about the rotten day I was having, and they were all marvellously sympathetic and I felt better still. Sally came home and we swapped rotten-day stories and there we were, relaxed and happy, dining moderately in the privacy of our own home. We turned the TV news on, just the picture, not the sound. "Abel Muzorewa," I said, practicing. "Eloke walked in front of this car deliberately," she said. "Joshua Nkhomo," I said. "Wonder we haven't got claims from at least half a dozen people," she said. "Ndsabasingi Sithole," I said, sympathetically. "Bloody hell!" she said. "You keep going off at a tangent!" "I must ask you", I said, "not to refer to our African brothers as tan genta." And my wife laughed, and all was well with the world.

This apathic was going to be called Cheshenge. I won't explain why. I thought it was a good title. I explained why to John Poynter, and he looked at me with that sad you'll-never-understand look he has, and he said I should choose a title that reflects the purpose or character of the publication. So I called it Harrahan. In the next issue, unless you ask me not to, I'll probably explain why.