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Excerpts From The Book

CHAPTER 1: Preamble—general considerations
What’s a preamble? A bit like priming the pump, a pre-systolic accentuation in mitral stenosis perhaps. Fat Albert’s rocket-assisted takeoff (footnote: Fat Albert is the C-130 transport that supports the Blue Angels, and if you don’t know what a C-130 is or who the Blue Angels are, may your Dean have pity on your soul).

Point 1: Wine appreciation should be done in parallel, not in series.
Point 2: No matter what type of wine, no matter how good or bad it actually is, no matter how experienced a taster you may be (or think you may be), you must remember this (not the song): There are TWO parts to the appreciation of wines.
Point 3: Don’t be seduced by the label, or the price or (especially) the reputation of a particular wine.
Point 4: A closely parallel warning: Don’t be influenced by your fellow tasters, not even by me.

CHAPTER 2: The Process of Evaluation of a Wine—step by step
PART 1: Do you like the damn stuff or not?
PART 2: Why you like or hate the damn stuff. Science rules, sort of.

CHAPTER 3: The Most Common Grape and Wine Varieties—their features as wines
There are many styles of grapegrowing and winemaking that provide a wide array of attributes in the finished wine, even wines from the same grapes in adjacent regions. What follows describes the classical, expected, stereotypical features of each, especially as they apply to U.S. wines.

CHAPTER 4: The Conduct of a Wine-Tasting Session—how to run it
Remember, you do not need to know anything at all about wine or tasting to succeed here. All you need is courage, bravado, and a proficiency in public speaking (which you have all gotten anyway from years of teaching graduate and medical students). Remember—the more forcefully you speak, the more enobabble you use, the more your reputation grows even if you are flat out wrong in everything you say. It’s not what you say, it’s how you say it.
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