This is a very funny book. Anthony Frewin is a regular *Lobster* contributor, novelist and screenwriter, and the book’s intentions are stated when Frewin’s preface is headed by a quotation allegedly from FBI taps on the phone of Chicago mobster Sam Giancana, in which he is discussing the new novel by Joan Didion.

‘Preface? What’s with these fucking prefices? They’re all at it. You know I don’t like the fucking things. I say what I’m gonna say and that’s it. I don’t tell you what I’m gonna say before I say it, you know? That’s a fucking preface. Fuck them and fuck their prefaces.’

The idea of Giancana reading Didion made me laugh out loud. If it doesn’t even make you smile, then this probably isn’t for you.

On the rear cover is a quotation apparently from a review in the *New York Review of Books*, which begins:

‘Exceptionally well researched and written, with all the unexpectedness of Joan Crawford having a heavy period.’

The book purports to be extracts from volumes in Armoulian’s library. Opening it at random for this review I found entries which begin thus:


**GENOCIDE; A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR MIDDLE RANKS OF THE NIGERIAN ARMY**

*Lagos, Nigeria: The University of Lagos Genocide Faculty for the Army Officers’ Association, 1969. Duodecimo. 128pps. Publisher’s waterproof nylon (matte green), with matt blocking.*

A fine copy of an exceedingly rare genocide title only slightly marred by flecked blood stains on the front and back covers. Among the contents:
FIRST STEPS IN GENOCIDE: WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM WHITEY......

[20] Bruce, Lenny
WATCH OUT, WHITEY! JEWBOY’S GONNA SLIP IT TO YOUR SISTER!
134pps. Printed card cover.
This is, I believe, the only volume of Bruce’s monologues to be printed during his lifetime......

[43] Erschatz, Maximillian
ALSO SPRACH JOSEPH GOEBBELS: LEADERSHIP SECRETS FROM THE THIRD REICH FOR THE MODERN MANAGER
Erschatz was bitterly disappointed with the book’s hostile reception and fled New York for Bavaria shortly after publication......

[63] Ickleford, Lenny [pseudonym of Mickey Morrance]
STEPHEN WARD BUGGERS A RANK STARLET IN DORSET SQUARE; THE BOOK OF THE STAG FILM WITH STILLS!
48pps. Printed card covers.
Dr. Stephen Ward was the sinister osteopath at the centre of the British Profumo sex scandal in 1963......

[82] Lovejoy, Bevis
WHAT WAS YOUR WIFE, GIRLFRIEND (OR, COME TO THAT, MOTHER) DOING IN THE 1960S? DID SHE APPEAR IN A SLEAZY PORNO FILM? AND HOW WOULD YOU KNOW IF SHE DID? A COMPLETE CASTING LIST OF THOSE WHO DID. (AND WHO MAY YET LIVE TO REGRET IT)

‘The years 1961-1973 were the Golden Age of British porno films.......’

Which is say: Frewin has created a format – an imaginary library containing imaginary volumes – in which he has let loose his imagination, his detailed knowledge of politics and parapolitics and his opinions. It is those opinions that readers of a delicate PC disposition should be wary of. If you think Bea Campbell OBE is to be taken seriously, this isn’t for you. But I think it is a hoot. Of course not all the entries work completely (or maybe I just don’t know enough to get the jokes); but there are layers of jokes in the best of them.

Robin Ramsay