

# SOME NOTES ON CONVENTIONS...

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Published by Andrew Porter, P.O.Box 367, New York 10028 USA, in response to the discussions and letters published by Ray D. Fisher of the WorldCon Site Selection Committee. Please do not reply to this, as I am leaving for the BayCon on August 24th.

I was most interested to see this letter, as I have expressed myself in regard to convention site voting several times in the past. I am expressly interested both as an individual and as American Representative of the Melbourne, Australia 1975 WorldCon Bid. I might mention I am also chairman of the 1974 WorldCon bid, AtlantiCon I.

## Reply to Brian Burley:

Brian states: "Fannish organizations in general are loosely structured and temporary in nature. The strain imposed on such a ~~structure~~ organization if it were to remain functional an additional year would be great."

Brian bases much of his reasoning on this point, which is highly inaccurate. The Committees bidding for the 1967 WorldCon were organized as early as 1963, in the case of New York and Baltimore; 1964-65, in Syracuse's case, and 1966, in Boston's case. Similarly, the groups planning to bid for 1972 (Los Angeles & Seattle), 1973 (New Orleans, Detroit, Chicago), and 1974 (New York, + the loser of the 1971 bid), and even 1975 (Melbourne, Australia) are all in advanced stages of organization and planning. In my case (a 1974 convention, operating on an optimistic assumption that the 5-year rotation plan will be passed in 1968 or 1969) we are actively looking for a hotel.

"...Con site selection be done on the Hugo final ballot...the electorate is smaller and more regionally weighted than it is in in-convention voting."

Figures I have for the beginning of August, 1967, as regards the breakdown by state of convention memberships (I was secretary of the NYCon 3) are: New York 318; New Jersey 96; Ohio 88; California 76; Pennsylvania 58; Massachusetts 43; Michigan 41; Illinois 39; Maryland 37; Virginia 22; D.C. 12; Texas 18; Indiana 18; Conn., Missouri, 17; Florida 13; Minnesota 10; all other states under 10; Canada 31; UK 13; Australia 10; all other countries under 10. Although New York maintains a high lead over the next largest state, please remember this was primarily due to publicity in IF, F&SF, and ANALOG. I would be very interested in figures for the BayCon. The number of members this breakdown was based on was 1145; at this time the BayCon has well over 1200 members, and I estimate a total attendance of at least 1300, and possibly 2000...

"...a post-convention vote would be more desirable..."

I feel I must utter a horrible a shrieky "NO!" on this point. As the conventions grow larger, the more advance notice hotels need to be able to tentatively book dates for the convention. The IEEE books hotels 7 years in advance; most large conventions are booked at least three years in advance. Given a vote by December, with the convention next August, I defy any convention committee to walk into a hotel and say, "Hey, we want to book your hotel for this August for a convention of 1500 people," without being thrown out by a disgusted sales department.

Science fiction conventions are the only conventions that are not planned years in advance, with the hotel tentatively booked years in advance, too. Does Brian expect the convention committee to find a hotel, sign a contract, bring out Progress Reports, and do all the associated business & connected with a major convention in six months?

"The results could be announced in the fan press."

The membership of the NYCon was 1700. Of these, perhaps 300 were fanzine fans. This means that the vast majority of the convention memberships will be reader-types, not fan-types. If Brian thinks that fandom controls the conventions, he thinks wrong. In reality, fandom is a very vocal minority which frequently gets out-voted at convention business sessions and consite voting sessions.

Reply to Robert Hillis:

"I do not expect an Asiatic World Con for some time..."

Melbourne, Australia, is bidding for 1975, under the presumption, again, that the rules will be changed to a five-year rotation plan.

"...the NYCon 3 people insisted on establishing the precedent that the World Science Fiction Association is the absolute property of the successful bid committee."

As the World SF Association exists only in the minds of hotel convention sales departments and as the WSFA, Uninc. rules of operation, it is impossible to have a committee "yielding control except on a Court order..."

Reply to Waldemar Kunning:

Waldemar seems to confuse the idea of the WorldCon with a nonexistent "AmeriCon." It has been generally assumed that there will be no American rump convention when the WorldCon is held in Europe or Asia, as this will give rise to so many animosities and problems that it is better undone.

Final Comments:

I will co-sign with Ray Fisher, if he is agreeable, an amendment to the rules of the World SF Association, Uninc., calling for a 5-year rotation plan. I will also call for a study committee for a Hugo-Ballot consite vote; and possibly call for the 2-year-in-advance consite vote, a vital necessity if the worldcon is to continue to be held in one hotels capable of holding all participants.

I believe that a ~~the~~ Hugo-ballot consite vote could be made for the 1969 convention, as an experiment, which would in no way effect the actual at-convention voting for the 1970 and, possibly, 1972 convention sites. Such a ballot could determine the feasibility of having a mail vote, wherein voters would judge the various competitors on the basis of the advertising they placed in the progress reports of that convention.

I will invite comment on this at the various drunken orgies at the BayCon, and at the BayCon business meeting. In addition to committee members, the members of the St. Louis, Columbus, and BayCon committees will receive this flyer.

Thank you for your attention.

Andrew Porter