

— Special Body Count Issue —

ARTICLES

- 2 *Winning The Hearts and Minds . . .*
ConFederation Program Statistics
- 6 *Dispatches From the Front*
ConFederation Room Manager Comments
- 8 Data Collection at Boskone 24
by Jim Hudson

COMMITTEE CHRONICLE

- 11 APA:89 / April 29, 1987
Progress Report 2. Managing Multiple Hotels.
Programming, Protofans (responses).
Lebensraum, Budgeting
- 13 MCFI Meeting / May 6, 1987
- 16 APA:89 / June 7, 1987
Managing Multiple Hotels.
Rowdiness and Staff Burnout

LETTERS

- 18 *Hotel Situation.*
- 19 *Whither the Worldcon, Worldcon Management.*
- 20 *Art Show, Food Functions.*
Rowdiness, Worldcon Bidding.
- 21 *ConFederation, Nolacon, Smofcon, Parodies*
Mad 3 Party

The Mad 3 Party — more than you ever wanted to know about running a Worldcon — is published by Noreascon 3, Box 46, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge MA 02139. Editor and source of all uncredited writing: Leslie Turek. Meeting summaries from minutes written by Jim Mann. Copying by Al Kent. Logo by Wendy Snow-Lang. Interior artwork (pages 4, 10, 15, and 22) by Giovanna Fregni. Charts on pages 5 and 9 courtesy of Fred Isaacs and 20/20.

The subscription price is \$1 per issue or \$6 per year (6 issues). The regular subscription price covers surface shipment outside North America; please add \$1 per issue for air mail. Free copies go to newszines, Worldcon bids and committees, the committee and staff of Noreascon 3, and significant contributors.

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In This Issue

The theme of this issue is convention attendance — where do the attendees really spend their time at a convention? This would be useful information to have, in order to plan schedules and assign rooms in a reasonable way. Unfortunately, there hasn't been much hard data collected on this subject, although there are various pieces of folk wisdom and rules of thumb that are used.

The first article in this issue is an analysis of some data collected by the ConFederation program department about attendance at ConFederation program items. "Dispatches From The Front" continues with comments taken from the ConFederation Room Manager data sheets. The third article gives the results of an exit poll and informal body count performed at this year's Boskone by Jim Hudson. We acknowledge that these data sets have large gaps, but they are the best of their kind we've seen.

Nolacon Bidding Expenses Update

In the Nolacon Progress Report 1, published in April, the Nolacon committee presented an "'88 Bid Budget" that was significantly different from the preliminary report which they gave me in November and we printed in *The Mad 3 Party #15*. The newer report showed a much lower total expenditure (\$22,671.80, vs. \$45,094 in the earlier report). This was possibly because the earlier report was hurriedly developed to meet our deadline. The newer report was less detailed than the earlier one, with three-quarters of the expenses (\$16,081.78) being listed as "Reimbursements" and not broken down into any expense categories (e.g., party costs, advertising, travel, etc.). I have requested an explanation of the differences between the two reports for publication.

Hotel News

In the last issue, we told you about the problem we are having with the Sheraton-Boston Hotel. Based on events at Boskone, the Sheraton-Boston management decided that they didn't want to participate in Noreascon 3. We tried to arrange a meeting, in order to discuss what we might be able to do to alleviate some of the problems they perceived, but they saw no point in meeting with us. Our attorney, Rick Katze, then sent them a formal 'lawyer letter' to try to set up a meeting. This produced no response, so a stronger letter was sent certified, return receipt requested. That also failed to get any response. We have now retained the Boston law firm of Riemer & Braunstein as our co-counsel with Rick Katze. Our attorneys have advised us against releasing at this time any further information on communications to or from the

. . . continued on page 21

Winning The Hearts and Minds . . . ConFederation Program Statistics

A number of Worldcons have attempted to collect information about the items on the program: how many people attended, how it went, etc. To my knowledge, these attempts have not provided any useful data, either because the room monitors failed to provide the information, or because the data was lost after the convention. (Or perhaps the data does exist out there someplace but no one has had the time to analyze or disseminate it.)

So when I heard that the ConFederation program department (headed by Peggy Rae Pavlat, assisted by Fred Isaacs and Debbie Notkin) was going to try again to do this, I requested (and received!) a copy of the resulting data.

Data Collection

Each program item had a room manager assigned to it. The room manager's task was to assemble the program participants, name signs, introductory material, etc., in the Green Room; escort them to the appropriate function room; make sure things get started on time; report any technical problems to the technical crew; make sure the participants knew about the continuation provisions (most items were scheduled so that nothing immediately followed them in the room and they could run over if there was interest); and fill out a data sheet after the item was over.

The data sheet asked questions relating to whether the program participants showed up on time, how many people attended, whether the continuation time was used, whether any new program ideas were generated, etc.

The packet we received contained 163 data sheets, representing over half of the scheduled program items. Since each program track was organized and run by a different track manager, the completeness of the data sheets tended to vary by track. We seemed to have data sheets for most items in the SF&F, Professional Showcase, Night Owl, and Fan tracks; many for the Behind the Scenes track; but very few for the Art, Science and Space, and Academic tracks.

The data sheets were filled out by 52 different room managers (so there might be some inconsistency as to how well attendance was estimated, etc.). Todd and Joni Dashoff, track managers of the Professional Showcase track, completed over 30 sheets between them. Other people who turned in more than two sheets included Doreen Webbert, Joanne Lawlor, Dick Lynch (Track Manager for Fan Programming), Victoria Seagren, Liz Gross, Bob Hillis, Ozzie Fontecchio, Janis Hoffing, Phoebe Davis, Jean Yarsawich, Ann McKnight, Sue Hammond, Dan Hoey, Janice Eisen, Cindy Gold, Mark Trebing, Andy Cowan, Margaret Phillips, Laura Spiess, Wendy Lindboe, and Trubie Turner. Our thanks to them and to the other 31 room managers who gathered the data for this analysis.

Program Participants

The sheets showed that most of the program participants actually did show up in the Green Room, as requested, in advance of their events. The categories listed

below are as they appeared on the sheets. In some cases, where the printed category did not seem quite right for the situation, the room manager wrote in a comment; these are noted.

438 (69%)	Arrived in Green Room and/or other locations as previously agreed.
95 (22%)	Arrived in time for program item participation but had you worried. (Included 3 "had another panel" and 3 "went directly to program room.")
32 (7%)	Late for program item. (This probably included some people who had program-related conflicts.)
41 (9%)	"No show." (Included 4 "Cancelled." Also included those people that did not make it to the convention.)
31 (7%)	Last minute fill in. (Included 1 "Invited himself.")

Use of Audio-Visual Equipment

The data sheets asked whether audio-visual equipment (in addition to standard microphones) was used by the program item. Although not directly relevant to the question of how people spend their time at conventions, these figures do give some idea of the extent of technical support needed by a Worldcon program. The usual type of technical equipment needed was a slide projector, but some presenters required tape recorders, film projectors, or video. The number of program items that used audio-visual equipment were as follows: (The "Miscellaneous" category includes the tracks for which we received only a few data sheets: Art, Science and Space, and Academic.)

Track	Total	Used A-V	
SF & F	48	7	15%
Prof. Showcase	39	7	18%
Fan	28	5	18%
Night Owl	20	6	30%
Behind Scenes	20	0	0%
Miscellaneous	8	2	25%
Over-All	163	27	17%

Because of the heavy need for audio-visual expertise, the program department had its own in-house tech crew, headed by Carolyn Sayer, which was kept quite busy. At ConFederation, many of the technical problems encountered were due to the fact that some program items were scheduled to be in divided rooms, sometimes with films in the other half of the room. The rooms were cleverly designed so that the lighting and sound systems could not be separately controlled in the two halves of the room! When this was discovered, it caused a number of last-minute room reassignments.

Popularity of Items and Tracks

Table 1, on page 3, shows program attendance by track. (The median attendance range for each track is indicated by a > sign.) It also shows the number of items that were "continued" for each track.

On the data sheets, the room managers were asked to estimate attendance at both the start and end of the program item; I used whichever was larger. I also noticed items for which the attendance might have been limited

by the room size (when the manager noted "SRO." for example). There were only 5 instances of that; each is indicated by a • in the table.

The table shows a large number of small items, and only a few items (8) with attendance over 200. Fully half of the items attracted 50 people or less. To some extent, this breakdown was due to a conscious programming decision. Since the space being used for programming was composed of many small rooms with only a few large rooms, and because there were a lot of pros interested in being on the ConFederation program, the program department decided to schedule many smaller items at one time, rather than fewer larger items. The program department also had the philosophy that if a small item really pleased its audience, they would consider it a success.

The SF&F track was the most popular, with a median attendance of 75-100 people per item, with the other tracks running with a median of 25-50 people. The Night Owl track also had a higher median of 75, but this may have been due to there being less competing programming during some parts of the evening. (The items opposite the Hugos and Masquerade did not do as well.)

About 26% of the program items were continued. That percentage was highest in the Professional Showcase (33%) and the Miscellaneous categories (although remember that the Miscellaneous source data is sparse).

Which items drew the largest audiences? Here are the attendance figures for the top-drawing program items:

- 800 Secular Humanist Revival Meeting (*Orson Scott Card*)
- 600 We Control the Vertical: SF on TV (*Harlan Ellison, et al.*)
- 400 How to Stop the Space Program: A Satire (*Snodgrass, Powers, Bova, Gilliland, Niven, Brin*)
- 400 He Came From Outer Space: Bradbury on Film (*Bradbury, et al.*)

- 400 Time Travel: The Genre's Most Delicious Cheat (*Silverberg, Benford, Haldeman, Niven*)
- 300 World Building 101A: Creating a Physical World (*Bova, Clement, Kube-McDowell, Killough, Chalker*)
- 300 Return to Kitty Hawk (*Martin Caidin*) [Night owl]
- 250 World Building 101B: Creating a Society (*Haldeman, Silverberg, de Camp, Kingsbury*)
- 200 Ray Bradbury Q&A Session
- 200 AIDS and Sex in SF Fandom
- 200 Gunderson Corp. Presentation [Night owl]
- 200 Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody (*Jay Kay Klein*)
- 180 How to Enjoy Your First Convention
- 180 Who's on Top — S&M in SF & F (*Fleisher, Claremont, John Ford, Asa Ford, Schulman, Yolen*)

Conclusions? Let's assume the Secular Humanist Revival Meeting is unique unto itself. I believe that this event drew people who do not normally attend programming items (myself, for example). The most obvious conclusion is that people come to see the big names, as represented by the Bradbury, Ellison, Space, Time Travel, and World Building panels. Second, in programming as well as books, sex sells (e.g., AIDS and Sex, S&M panels). Third, neofans tend to attend the program (Decline and Fall, and How to Enjoy Your First Convention). The remaining items in the list are both Night Owl items which may have drawn well because of lack of competing programming in the evening.

Over-All Program Attendance

The next question I tried to answer was how many people were attending programming at any given time of day, and were there any patterns one could discern. But we didn't have all of the data sheets for any given time of day. So I pieced together what I could with what we had. Surprisingly enough, it did show some patterns.

For each hour, I counted up how many sheets we had, and also counted how many items were scheduled for that hour. (I used the original schedule in the pocket program.

Table 1. ConFederation Program Attendance by Track

Attendance	Night Owl	Fan	SF&F	Professional Showcase	Behind the Scenes	Misc.	All Tracks
0-25	4	12	1	11	7	1	36 22%
26-50	2	> 12	11	> 11	> 6	> 4	> 46 28%
51-75	> 4	2	8	7	3	2	> 26 16%
76-100	> 2	1	> 9	5	2	1	20 12%
101-125			5	1			6 22%
126-150	2		• • 6	2	1		11 V
151-175	2		2				4
176-200	1	1	• 2	2			6
201-250	1						1
251-300	1		1				2
301-400			• 2		1		3
401-600			1				1
601-800	• 1						1
Continued	6	5	11	13	3	5	43 26%
Total	20	28	48	39	20	8	163

> indicates median attendance for that track.

• indicates items which overflowed available space.

and did not try to use the daily newsletter to figure out whether items we didn't have sheets for had changed their times.) Then I figured out how many people in total attended the items for which we had sheets. Then I extrapolated to guess how many people attended all the items at that time. (In extrapolating, I first subtracted the attendance for the 6 top-drawing items, extrapolated the rest, and then added the large items back in.)

The results are shown in Table 2, below. For example, refer to 1 pm on Saturday. This was the time of the Space panel, which drew 400 people. The chart shows that we had 7 data sheets, but there were 11 program items at that time. The total attendance of the items we have records for was 846. I subtracted 400 (for the large panel), leaving 446 for the remaining 6 items. Extrapolating with this same ratio gives an estimate of 297 people at the other 4 items. Adding 297 to the original 846 gives an extrapolated total of 1143.

The data in Table 2 (for the daytime hours) is given in graphical form on page 5. The first graph gives the attendance broken down by day, and the second gives the average and standard deviation for the 3 fully-programmed days (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). (The big-draw items are indicated with the same code letters used in the table.)

The over-all shape is about what you'd expect. Attendance is low over-all on Thursday and Monday, the first and last days of the con. Attendance is low at 10 am

(people aren't up yet, or are eating breakfast), usually dips at 12 noon (lunchtime), is on a gradual downward trend throughout the afternoon, and really starts dropping around 6 or 7 pm (dinnertime). (People don't seem to have eaten lunch on Saturday, but then they seem to have started giving out sooner that afternoon (at 4 pm, rather than at 6 or 7).)

The peak on Sunday at 5 pm was due to Orson Scott Card's Secular Humanist Revival Meeting. At a time when people would be expected to be tired and starting to head out for dinner, Card held an overflow audience for nearly two hours.

I was a little surprised by the high attendance at 11 am on every full day of the convention. It seems that morning attendance was less influenced by the popularity of the specific items, although with this small a sample, it could just be coincidence.

The really interesting statistic is that if we look at the main days of the convention, excluding the three peak times and the mealtime dips, we find that a pretty consistent number of 600-900 people were attending the program at any given time. This was 10-15% of the people present at the convention. (On Monday and Thursday, the range was only 200-400, presumably due to the smaller number of people actively attending the convention on those days.)

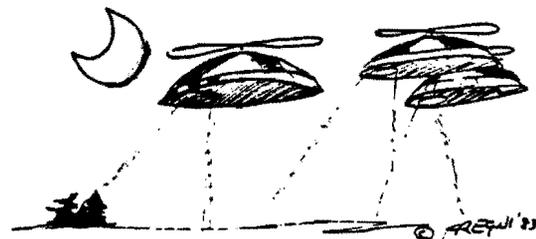
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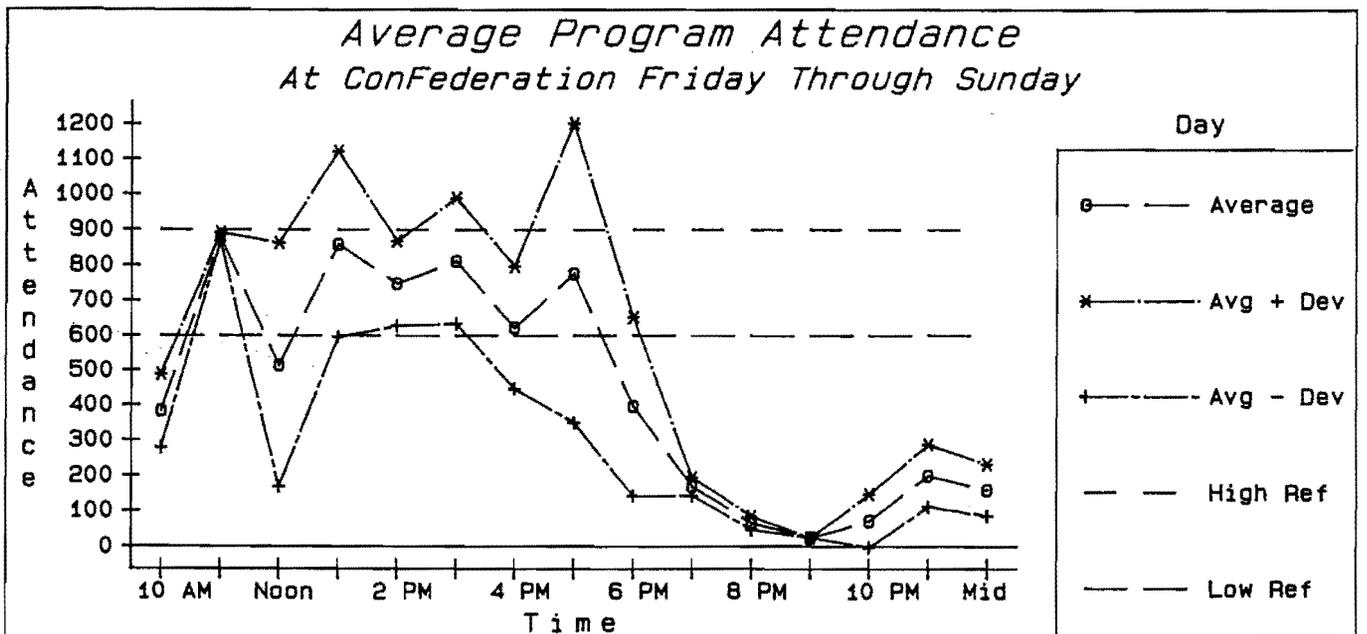
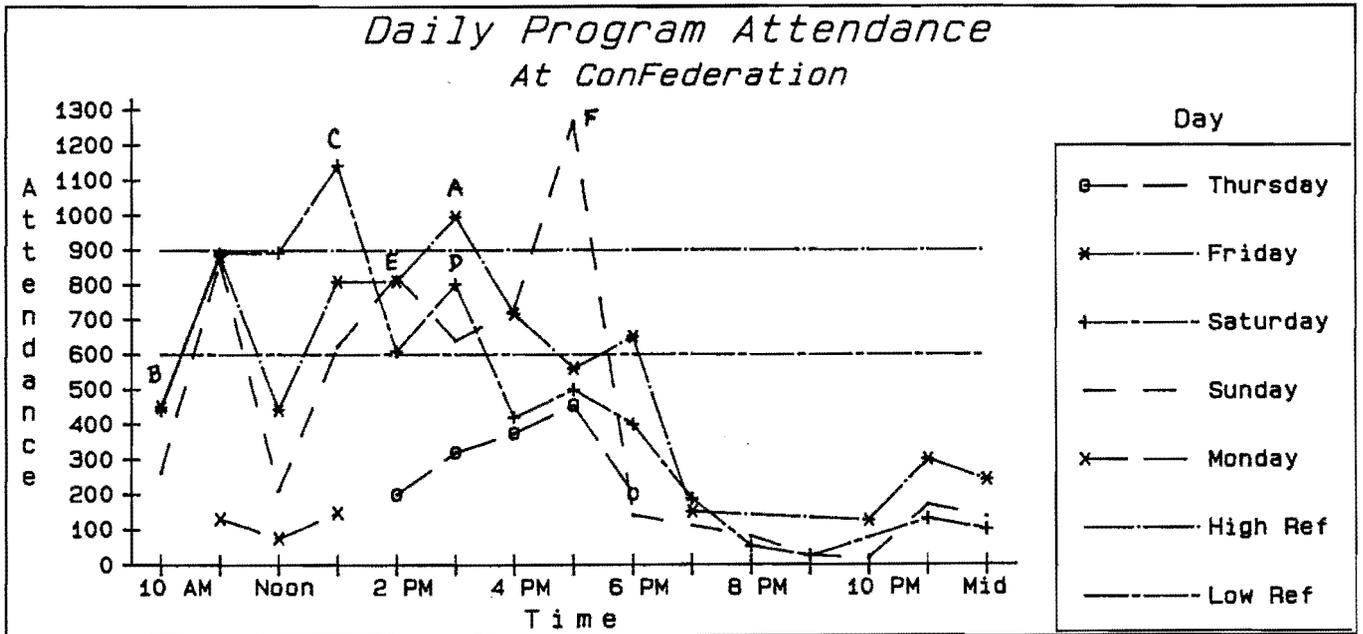
Table 2. ConFederation Program Attendance by Time of Day

Items with forms/Total items Attendance from forms/Estimated total

Time	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
10 am		5/8 280/ 450	2/9 320/ 440 B	4/7 150/ 262	0/1 ?
11 am		3/10 265/ 883	5/9 495/ 891	3/8 325/ 867	2/5 130/ 325
12 pm		5/7 316/ 442	3/8 335/ 893	3/7 90/ 210	2/5 75/ 187
1 pm		4/10 325/ 810	7/11 846/1143 C	6/11 340/ 623	4/7 148/ 260
2 pm	2/5 80/ 200	5/9 450/ 810	6/10 365/ 609	7/11 655/ 825 E	0/4 ?
3 pm	1/4 80/ 320	3/10 570/ 995 A	5/10 712/ 802 D	5/9 355/ 639	
4 pm	4/6 250/ 375	3/10 215/ 717	9/9 280/ 420	8/11 530/ 729	
5 pm	2/7 130/ 455	7/8 490/ 560	5/7 357/ 500	4/6 1080/1267 F	
6 pm	3/4 150/ 200	5/7 465/ 651	3/4 300/ 400	3/4 105/ 140	
7 pm		3/3 150/ 150	2/3 125/ 187	0/1 ?	
8 pm			1/1 52/ 52	1/1 80/ 80	
9 pm			1/1 25/ 25	1/1 25/ 25	
10 pm		2/2 125/ 125		1/1 18/ 18	
11 pm		1/1 300/ 300	1/1 130/ 130	1/1 170/ 170	
12 pm		2/2 242/ 242	1/2 50/ 100	1/1 136/ 136	

- A. Bradbury on Film (400)
- B. World Building 101A (300)
- C. How to Stop the Space Program (400)
- D. SF on TV (600)
- E. Time Travel (400)
- F. Secular Humanist Revival Meeting (800)





*Dispatches From the Front***ConFederation Room Manager Comments**

The following sections give comments on specific program items taken from the ConFederation room managers' program data sheets. This includes comments on how well actual program items went, ideas for new topics that came up during the program item, or suggestions for people in the audience that might do well on a similar item. (The numbers given after the program title were the number of people attending the item; "C" means that the item was continued past the initial hour.) The comments are organized by program track.

Science Fiction and Fantasy Programming*The Secret Vice of Creative Languages* (15-60 C)

Panelists did not seem to know *why* they were on "this" panel. Felt they hadn't done anything in the area. (Inter-discussion while waiting for stream of audience to slow — yes, each *had* done something.) Got very technical, and audience's questions/comments were very technical.

I Was Influenced by Ray Bradbury (100-110)

Audience response limited — perhaps a suggestion to have recounted earliest Bradbury memory or some such. Panel members all had a great time.

SF Horror and Fantasy: Why Are They One Genre? (110 C)

Generated idea: "Writing for the Supermarket Shelves: 2 Eggs and a Book, Please."

Mapping It Out: The Art of the Map in SF & F (90-100)

Vernor Vinge had some ideas about non-traditional maps — space habitats, etc.

Illustrating a Selected Story: A Simultaneous Demonstration (80-100 C)

Artists had *not* read story to be illustrated. (Some *had*, but years ago.) Story read aloud (?too late?). Colors given for illos didn't show. Panelist walked them around the audience while giving comment. Unable to "signal" time up. Last minute awareness of need for sketch pads.

Who's on Top: S&M in SF&F (180)

Very free-wheeling discussion — but, it might be nice to really focus a panel on S&M. Say use an artist, writer, critic. Generated ideas: Sexual suggestion on book covers — does the book deliver what the cover promises?: "Is John Norman right?"; "The Meese Commission and SF."

AIDS and Sex in SF Fandom (200 C)

Excellent panel. Lots of questions from audience; panel fielded well and had good answers. Condoms were distributed — big hit!

Cyberpunk vs. New Wave SF (150 C)

Lots of good comments and questions from audience. Panelists disagreed with each other a lot, which made for a very lively discussion. This seems to be a good topic.

Bradbury's Heritage: Short Story as a Form of Choice (150)

Generated idea: Choosing the proper length for a story idea: short? novelette? novel?

World Building 101A: Creating a Physical World (300)

Generated idea: modifying humans for alien environments.

World Building 101B: Creating a Society (150-250)

Generated idea: Relationship of expenses and availability of weapons to rise of democracy.

The 1990's: A Decade of Wackos? (130)

Excellent program. Good discussion generated. Enthusiastic audience.

DOA: Books That Died Despite Everything (50-100 C)

Very good panel mix. 2 book dealers on one side of table and 3 publishers on the other. Talk heated but not angry. Audience very interested in varied parts of topic discussed. The whole panel was very interesting and participated equally.

Good/Bad/Ugly: '85 SF & F Books in Review (55-80)

Generated idea: Bubble Gum Fiction for Teens (is there money in it?). Suggestion: Special Hugo winner ribbon for the day after, and for the authors' collections.

Feminist SF Novels: Feminist or Just Non-Sexist? (125)

Audience member Karen Sundstrom might be good on a similar panel in the future.

Writing TV Cartoons to Support Myself (20-40 C)

Diane Duane requested that Joe Straczynski be moderator: "He has the experience." Joe was willing. I assured panel (*after* checking) that they could continue if they wished. But at the end of the hour, another panel moved in on us. Too bad, because almost half the audience stayed, and things were going swimmingly. Generated idea: Union's support (or *non*-support).

Bradbury's Heritage: Small Town America in SF (50)

Generated ideas: Tupperware & SF (Mundanity & SF; SF in the Normal World), High technology in low-tech environments/locales.

Bradbury: Non-Campbellian SF & F (60)

All members of the panel spoke a great deal of the time on John W. Campbell as an editor and spent very little time discussing Ray Bradbury. Overall, an excellent discussion that rarely stayed on the topic of Bradbury.

Writing on a Common Image (20-30)

Authors would not discuss *at all*, even *with* prompting, the actual story ideas, outlines, stories that some of them provided. R. Feist said they would be available *after* panel — but there was no continuation — all authors left quickly. I thought the *point* was to show results. Watt-Evans had a printed version — gave one to Terri (?) — one to artist — would not discuss. Yolen had a paragraph — would not discuss. Zindell had an outline — *would not* discuss. Drove me crazy — I even raised my hand and asked them to tell us — just a hint! — of what story ideas they had. This did not work. Glen Cook said he could never find painting. There was some trouble getting the painting from the art show.

***The Latest in Horror: Loud, Literary, or Both?* (40-100)**

Audience members Ginger Buchanan, Susan Casper, Alan Rodgers, and Lou Aronica would be good on a similar panel in the future.

***Consensual Hallucination* (40)**

"Shared illusion and shared realities." None of the panelists understood the topic. It wound up very funny, but incoherent. Swanwick is very amusing but monopolizes the time.

***The Role of Catholicism in Fantasy* (30-55 C)**

Generated idea: Censorship — manipulating the value base of a culture.

***Fannish Fanzines: Are They Relevant Today?* (30-50)**

Generated idea: Media vs. Trufandom. Program really became a discussion of this subject.

Fan Programming***Fandom Down Under* (20-50)**

Generated idea: Australian SF Movies

***Secret Protocols of British Fandom* (40-65)**

This was a perfectly straightforward and reasonably successful fan panel. The idea was to have a *discussion* — not an anecdote-telling session — of British fandom's particular characteristics as opposed to ours. To an extent this was dealt with in terms of "what can Americans expect at the 1987 Worldcon, and how can they have a maximally good time." The other idea was to form the panel of people representing an entire *range* of relationships to British fandom — a Canadian who's visited there several times, a recent TAFF delegate to Britain, an American who emigrated there, and a full-fledged Brit. This allowed for a variety of perspectives.

***A Critical Look at American Fandom* (25-35)**

Panel was more laid back and less incisive than hoped for, but generated a lot of interesting discussion. Audience member Johannes Berg might be good on a similar panel in the future.

***A Personal View of Australian Fandom* (10)**

Generated idea: Building models for films.

***Canadian Fandom: The Fandom Next Door* (20-40)**

Audience almost all Canadian.

***Social Function of Fannish Myth* (20-40)**

Topic not well defined. I think panels of this sort could be retitled with some less forbidding or more attractive title for younger fen: "Secrets of Fan History: Now It Can be Told." We need to counteract the myth that older fen are "keeping out" neos. Much demand for "fan history" publication of some sort. Question period was lively with varied opinions expressed. Probably could have started sooner. Most who wanted to be heard, were, although "old-timers" in audience tended to dominate. There were none of the cobwebs that doom a First Fandom meeting. Audience members Joe Sanders, Ted White, G. Pickersgill, and Mike Glicksohn might be good on a similar panel in the future. Didn't know soon enough that we could continue.

***Creating a Masquerade Costume* (5-10)**

Generated ideas: 1) Novice costuming. 2) Ongoing costuming workshop where costumes are actually made.

***Legends of LASFS* (12-15 C)**

Panel was very low-key but good — chatty storytelling — entertaining — audience smallish but very interested.

***How To Survive in a Two-Fan Family* (25)**

Good discussion of parent/child fans.

***European Fandom* (15)**

Generated idea: Panel on Asian fandom.

***Legends of East Coast Fandom* (16-35)**

Delightful reminiscences.

Professional Showcase***Jacqueline Lichtenberg Tarot Workshop* (90 C)**

Beginners only, as advanced retreated to 5th floor lounge. Overfull room — repeat it!

***Selling and Designing Games* (30-75 C)**

I figured this for 20 people. We had about 75 and could have gone for another hour if the panelists were free. A great success!

***The Bunny-Eat-Bunny World of Cartoon Writing* (15-25 C)**

I didn't think *anyone* would go to this and we went 1 3/4 hours!

***Voyager Uranus Encounter* (100-130)**

Jonathan Post was an excellent moderator, but he was trying to give a great deal of info. We only had 1 hour due to room scheduling and he was forced to talk very quickly.

***The Stories Behind Len Wein's Comic Works* (30-40)**

Len went right from this panel to one next door with Marv Wolfman and Chris Claremont (*Editing and Writing Comics*). They had so many people that I opened the wall between State and Club and moved the chairs around facing into the other room. Comics panels really seem to draw!

Behind the Scenes***Fifty Million Monkeys: Word Processors* (30-60)**

Ashley Grayson took over as moderator with perhaps 1 1/2 minutes notice and did a *really good* job. He even brought a 2-page fanzine with him for the audience!

***Recycling the Product: Anthologies* (19-25 C)**

Generated idea: Breaking into Anthologies by making a reputation for yourself (attend conventions and introduce yourself to everyone to get known, or write a short story for your anthology idea; have it published to get visibility).

***Writing SF Poetry* (30-40)**

Jonathan Post performed again — stood, expounded, extolled. Contrary to past years, room was *packed*.

***Children's Programming at Conventions* (4-6)**

Congenial panel, good moderator, but few attendees. I suggest running this as a discussion group or workshop in the future.

***Upright and Rigid: SF Magazine Columns* (20-25)**

Betancourt did a nice job of leading discussion. It went better than panelists expected; they figured nobody would show up in the audience. Good panel.

Casting Pearls: Teaching SF (30–50)

A little slow (questions from some audience members rather lengthy) but pretty good in all. Lots of teachers in the audience.

How to Stop the Space Program: A Satire (400)

This was *not* a funny panel — it was *serious*, at least at first. Brin: great, monopolized somewhat (interesting though); Niven: made excellent analogies, harkening back to old SF space stories; Snodgrass: amusing, good speaker; Bova: great as usual; Blake Powers: quiet, succinct.

Managing an SF Library or Open Collection (40–55 C)

Panel seemed to lack focus — aimed at more theoretical, and/or “big,” university — neglected startup, small stuff, private-but-open collections. I think the idea of this panel is good, but the focus/topic should be made more clear to panelists beforehand. There’s a lot of interest, perhaps a 2-part panel — one theoretical, one practical?

My Name Is Legion: How to Become Asimov (50)

“There must be more than one Isaac.” Panel went well although no one was sure what the topic really was.

Science and Space Programming**Science Education I: The Classrooms (20–40 C)**

Generated idea: Science Journalism: Fact or Fantasy. A discussion of the state of science journalism and its impact on the public perception of science and technology.

Ecology in the Future (60–75 C)

Very popular topic. Filled the room.

Night Owl Programming**Return to Kitty Hawk (250–300 C)**

Excellent program! Audience thrilled to meet Caidin, who’s loud, vocal, right-wing, and interesting! Lots of anecdotes. Did some autographing afterwards and talked to people before and after scheduled times.

Violence in Science Fiction (55–90)

Room was too small. This seems to be a perennially popular item — schedule in larger room?

SF Hackers: Saving the World Interactively (42–55)

Basic problem was panel scheduled to end as Hugos began, and panelists and audience wanted to get seats. They told 45 minutes of hacking stories when audience attrition broke them up. A couple of good SF ideas popped out, but mostly reminiscences.

Secular Humanist Revival Meeting (800 C)

Excellent program item.

Space Opera Round-Robin (128–136)

Apparently Gay Haldeman gave the idea to Alan Huff, who overcondensed. This item needs more panelists (quite a few — 7?), and the moderator just switches them every 2 minutes. Tech: moderator switches their *mikes*: needs stopwatch. When we got it started, it was hilarious. Pournelle started with a spaceship on which “Kyle” had inflicted an “ennui” field, and so dropped into the sun — “Take it, Joe —” They never got really into a story, but tossed barbs at each other. They wound down once; started singing bawdy songs. Audience member provoked reminiscences of H. Beam Piper. A crowd-pleaser, see tape. But could be interesting given better moderator control and more panelists. Get Gay Haldeman to tell you how it should be run!

Data Collection at Boskone 24

by Jim Hudson

Back in December and January, MCFI decided that we’d like to do some data collection at large science fiction conventions. Our main interest for planning Noreascon 3 was people flow: where they are and when, and how they divide their time. The best data for Noreascon 3 would be collected at a Worldcon, but we had limited options. ConFederation was already over, Conspiracy was not considered a good candidate because we felt that non-U.S. Worldcons probably had different patterns, and we wanted to have the data sooner than Nolacon. So we decided to try some limited data collection at Boskone 24, recognizing that the patterns of a regional were likely to be different from those of a Worldcon, but feeling that the data might have some utility, nonetheless.

After discussing various expensive approaches (see previous *Mad 3 Parties*), we came up with a 3-part method, including:

1. Measurement of numbers of people and flows at various points, done by us.
2. Asking people on Sunday afternoon where they had spent their convention, using a structured survey. Done by at-con intercept to minimize nonresponse bias.
3. Sending out a mail survey to Boskone participants after the con, to get various other data.

Because of the potential changes in Boskone, we’ve shelved the mail survey — we don’t want to add any confusion to an already weird situation.

We’d originally hoped to get about 300 returns on the survey, and to have several people collecting counts and information on crowding. That didn’t happen. What we did get was:

1. Reasonable information on attendance at program items (thanks to Priscilla Pollner, Paula Lieberman, and Mark Olson);
2. 79 completed questionnaires (thanks to Pat Vandenberg, Peter Hudson, Al Kent, and some other helpers, plus all those who filled them out);
3. A few flow and crowding estimates at various times and places (my fault).

We might be able to do better at other conventions where the people doing the data collection aren’t already working on various other things. We have the instructions and tally counters ready to go (and anybody who wants the instructions or survey form can get them by writing me). But for now, we’ve got less data than we wanted, and more than I’ve ever seen from another convention. Here’s what we can say about the diurnal patterns and activities of the Boskone attendee.

Overall Activity Counts

The graph on page 9 shows my version of the counts by program, similar to what Leslie did for ConFederation. The lowest line is the actual counts by time; we typically had counts for about 50% of the program items, and they ranged from actual numbers (42), to phony numbers (i.e., “about 50”) and percentages (“about 1/3 full”). I converted all these to numbers.

Activities

The questionnaire listed 15 activities, including:

Art Show	Con Suite
Discussion Groups	Dragonslair
Filksing	Films
Gaming	Hotel Bars
Hucksters	Meet VIP's Party
Program items	Room Parties
Trivia Contest	Workshops
Working on Boskone	

The "Meet VIP's" was the big Friday event with costumes, etc. "Dragonslair" is our area for the younger grades — typically 4–9 years old. We had some special workshops this year, and a trivia contest. So some of these are one-time, some continuing, some major, some small. We also asked whether they "visited" an area or "spent lots of time there."

Of the survey respondents, the average was 4+ areas just "visited" and 2.5 areas "spent lots of time there," totalling an average of under 7 active areas per respondent. Of the individual areas, over 90% of the respondents saw the Art Show and Hucksters' Room (and nearly half had these as lots-of-time areas). About 3/4 went to the con suite, program items, or room parties. In the middle, half went to one or more discussion groups, a third filked, and 40% went to the Friday party. At the low end, 5% were involved in the trivia contest, only 6% used Dragonslair, 20% gamed or attended workshops, 15% used the hotel bars, and 13% worked on the con.

Five areas had 50% or more of their attendees spending a lot of time there, as opposed to "just visiting": hucksters, gaming, program, trivia, and working. Another three (Art Show, room parties, and filking) were in the 40–50% range.

Obviously, these results should be viewed with some reservations: we did not pretest the questionnaire, we did not check whether people understood the terms we were using, and the sample (people around on Sunday afternoon who were willing to complete the questionnaire) is not guaranteed to be random of all attendees. Still, it's the best we've got and the results seem to make sense when compared to the counts and crowding data.

What's It All Mean?

First, I think we have somewhat more data about the active hours of SF fans and the fraction of the convention we should expect at programming. I think we have pretty good data on how to size the Art Show and Hucksters' rooms to fit the number of people — up to 5% of attendance at the Art Show and 15% at the Hucksters' at any one time. And I think we're beginning to get a feel for the time patterns: when we should, and should not, offer programming and arrange activities.

I'm also fascinated that, at most, only about 1/3 of the attendance is at *any* of the major items at the peak times. That leaves, for Boskone, 2500 bodies doing other things: working, partying, getting food, sleeping, etc., at the convention's peak times. I counted the corridors a few times, and got a few hundred there. So *The Case of the Disappearing Fans* becomes even more interesting.

Additional Data

The questionnaire also contained a set of questions asking whether or not the various convention information sources were used. Although not directly related to the physical movement of people, we thought it was interesting data and include it here. 70% claimed to use Helmuth (the daily newsletter), and almost 90% claimed to use the pocket program. On the other hand, only half claimed to use the film program and only 40% used the precon information sent out in the Progress Report. Less than 1/10 used the convention schedule on hotel video, and 40% used Information Desk. Nearly 2/3 used the Program Book (for what?). 1/3 used the Hucksters' Directory, and only 2 out of this sample used babysitting.

We also collected some information about the people responding, such as their home address, age, and previous SF conventions attended. ZIPs are less peaked towards the Boston area than I expected, by far. Nearly half of the respondents were from outside of New England.

No response	3	
Foreign	1	1%
Boston area (021)	22	29%
Other NE	18	24%
NJ	5	7%
1	19	25%
2	5	7%
3–5	3	4%
9	3	4%

Even with that ZIP distribution, the ages are fairly young.

No response	4	
Under 20	11	15%
20–24	19	25%
25–29	14	19%
30–39	23	30%
40+	8	11%

27% had attended no previous Boskones, and only 20% had been to Noreascon 2. Only 40% had been to any previous Worldcon other than Noreascon 2. About half of the respondents attend no other SF cons.

Excerpts from APA:89

April 26, 1987

(Please understand that these pieces were originally written for an internal committee newsletter and may not be as polished as work intended for broader publication. They are the personal opinions of the individual contributors, not official committee policy.)

Progress Report 2 (Greg Thokar)

As Mark [Olson] has reported, PR 2 will not go to press until we have concrete information on a main convention hotel. Since we still have over 2 years before N3, we can slip PR 2, if necessary. (It was originally scheduled for a July release.) PR 2 is in newsletter format, in the 8-12 page range. It will be a self-mailer.

In the meantime, let's look at articles for PR 2:

- A synopsis of the hotel problem **and** the solution.
- James Turner's article on contacting N3 via the computer nets.
- New rate information.
- It's too early for a true questionnaire, but we can do some background on the major convention issues (and request feedback?). Issues such as: Masquerade vs. Hugo night. Is the Worldcon getting too big?, etc.
- Our first treasury report.
- New and updated membership list and maps.
- U.K. Agent Colin Fine's new address.
- errata

Also possible are:

- Report on Smofcon. (Advertisement for *If I Ran the 7th . . . Con.*)
- Status report on Boskone 25.
- Preliminary budgeting.
- Report on other Worldcons, or Worldcon bids.

I'm looking for ideas (and volunteers to write). Please give me a call in the next month or so. It's about time to get started on this, even if we don't have anything on hotels yet.

[See also discussion of PR 2 in the minutes of the May 6 meeting. — LT]

Managing Multiple Hotels (Paula Lieberman)

The last time I wrote about "What is a Worldcon?" for APA:89, it was back in the days that we thought we had commitments for a lot more close-by hotel rooms. . . . Now we're in the situation where, if we hold the con in Boston as we still have convention space for, con attendees may be staying in hotels several miles away.

The biggest objection to having people spread out in hotels is inconvenience: Getting to and from the convention center, and getting to and from other hotels — to and from other hotels? Well, people at Worldcons party, or throw parties for other people to attend, and most of them are in hotel sleeping rooms and/or sleeping room area suites. Some of the larger, corporate-sponsored parties, such as the Baen dance, and some other of the publisher parties occasionally have been held in hotel function space, but most parties are held in other than official

function space.

Why do people throw parties/go to parties? On the throw end, reasons include publicity for prospective conventions, to repay hospitality of other people, to celebrate some occasion, to provide a place for people to sit down informally and talk, provide a place for people to exchange videotapes, drink, smoke, etc. People go to parties to get information, to talk with the people they think will be at the party, to drink booze, to swap things, etc. Oops, I forgot another reason for a party — to provide a refuge from you-name-it for the invitees.

Except for the last, there isn't much that goes on at parties that doesn't occur within the function areas of the convention. And at some conventions, there are hardly any private parties at all — and depending on the convention, they may not even be missed. Minicon is perhaps the best example of a fairly large convention which has most of the partying occurring in the convention suite. Minicon uses an enormous suite and most of that floor of the hotel also for the consuite. Other conventions have had big consuites and been quite unsuccessful, however, at having the consuite be the evening focal point of the convention. Possibly some of Minicon's success is due to the emphasis that Minicon places on ordinary convention members, and not-so-ordinary con members, serving as "badgers," bartenders, and other sorts of helpers-out with the consuite. Other conventions do not place anywhere near that kind of emphasis on consuite overview and oversight, nor on having present and past con guests being in the consuite at night.

Perhaps N3 could run in the Hynes, with an emphasis on more public than private events for the early- through mid-evening — a kind of preemption of most of the room party types of partying. At some cons, this is occurring anyway — programming running so late and so intensely that people don't get out to parties until after 11. Masquerade night, in particular, people who attend the masquerade are off the party wander scene until often midnight. If the function space at N3 were utilized for socializing at night in various sizes of groups, perhaps by interest areas, the people-spread-all-over-greater-Boston-hotels effect could be mitigated somewhat.

Didn't say anything on the topic of "What is a Worldcon." did I? Well, I note that WSFS is "an unincorporated literary society." (And I keep typing "Wordcon" for "Worldcon". . .)

I'd prefer to see N3 held in Boston, even with the prospect of people roomed miles around, than see N3 located 2, or 3, or 4 hours away — the alternative to holding N3 in Boston is a committee logistical nightmare. In Boston, we are fairly close to where we live and work, where our supply system is, where we can, within an hour to an hour and a half, go home or to the NESFA clubhouse or to work and back, for emergencies, conveniences, remembered things to go and do, etc. Also, moving stuff from point of origin to con and back is simpler, because we will have local staging areas. And we won't have to bring everything we think we might need to the con initially, cutting down on the pre- and post-con transportation/logistics crunch, and on the wear and tear on the committee. From the personal point of view, a local Worldcon means less time having to be taken off from work and from personal life — given that N3 is likely to be

a large chunk of vacation time for the year of any particular committee members (and local staff, also), and any time that can be kept for oneself will be valuable.

There are things that can be done to cut down the to-and-from-convention-center transportation program: Denver, for example, had a bus service. I think it cost about \$12,000, and it ran between the various hotels and the convention center.

We have a major advantage over Denver — all of our function space is under the same roof in the same building. Denver had events sprawled over 3 or 4 buildings and a mile of distance. The dealers weren't too happy — they and the art show were in an exhibition hall a mile from most of the programming. The Masquerade was in an auditorium near the exhibition hall. The parties were spread through hotels over a half dozen blocks — however, even at Atlanta there were parties in hotels blocks away. People managed to get to them anyway. As mentioned above, I think that we could use the Hynes to advantage for having parties in the function areas in some of the smaller rooms; it was done at the last couple of Boskones in the Park Plaza, where the bid parties used function space.

The questions of corkage and supplies comes up if the "parties" in the evening at the Hynes need supplies; there are a number of things that could be done — most expensive and obvious being catered affairs. The con could perhaps sponsor some munchies, or there could be pay-as-you-eat tables from the concessionaire set up. There could also be sparsely set to no-munchies rooms. . .

[We don't know yet what requirements on the use of concessionaires, if any, will be imposed by the Hynes. — LT]

Programming (Priscilla Pollner)

Something else that has struck me, and that people might want to pick up on, are what I'll call "Program Clusters." These differ from Program Tracks, which are sort of on broad topics, and are all the "same" sorts of things. A cluster is based on a smallish theme, and contains a number of items which support each other in some way or another (but could be seen independently, in some cases). For example, one thing I wanted to do at Boskone was "King Arthur" — show a few "Arthurian" films (*Camelot*, *Excalibur*, *The Sword in the Stone?*), have a panel on Merlin (which we did), one on Arthurian influences in modern fantasy, discussion groups on the films (before/after actual film?), part of Art Show on Camelot? filking re same, etc.? The whole program doesn't have to be set up that way, but I think it would be real neat to have clusters scattered through the whole show to provide a feeling of continuity within the mish-mash matrix.

[Priscilla continued in the June apa:]

One of the easiest ways to form a cluster would be to base it on a specific author (well, make that "professional" — I can see grouping a bunch of items around John Campbell, and many of them would be better built on his editorship than his writing . . .). Sorta like Balticon's (?) old "Ghost of Honor" idea — but done more seriously. For example, if we do Frank Herbert we could show the *Dune* movie, have discussion groups and/or full-scale panel items about his work, perhaps a mini-art exhibit dedicated to sandworms (or some such), have someone

(Poul Anderson?) talk about Herbert-as-a-personal-friend, etc. I can see the chairman (regional? vs. Worldcon?) choose the author to be so honored at a specific convention, or, leave that to the club? to the program head? So many possibilities here . . .

Is anyone (else) making files (computer or index card?) of nifty program/convention ideas? Is there an open place to put these, so we can build off each other, and where they won't get lost? I hope people are at least writing down ideas (swiped from other cons (i.e., "pre-tested") or otherwise . . .) (These "clusters" are another way to make a big con small . . . having a mini-"Frank Herbert" (or whoever) convention in the middle of the big one can't hurt . . . can it?)

Protofans

(replies to Jim Hudson's comments in last issue)

By Don Eastlake:

I agree with your comments on energy. For some years I have been saying that people arrive with tremendous energy at an SF convention, and that it tends to decrease monotonically during the con. The obvious thing to do is to run a strong 24-hour program of films and whatever, especially the first night or two. The problem with this for Boskones is that it would tend to attract more people that are just interested in that. I don't see quite so much problem with a Worldcon doing this, since it is essentially a one-shot event.

Your points about self-sustaining critical mass are also very good. People talk a lot about new blood and getting them into fandom, but there is a problem that, as cons get bigger, the new energetic teenagers tend to form critical masses that become much harder to assimilate. It may be that as conventions become bigger, the percentage of certain types of attendees that can generally be tolerated goes down. Thus their attendance must grow more slowly than that of the overall con or you are headed for disaster.

By Mark Olson:

To start with, your title begs the entire question. If I accepted your belief that "protofans" is a good description of the youngsters at Boskone, I'd probably agree with the rest of your thesis. Instead, I've come to believe that we are plagued by a fraction (how big, I don't know, but I'm certain it's more than just a few) of kids who have no interest in SF or fandom beyond what's endemic in the culture at large.

On the other hand, I quite agree with you that, by and large, the kids stopped whatever antisocial activities they were engaged in when they were asked, that they had nothing else to do Friday evening, that there was very little maliciousness involved, and that it's just youthful high spirits. I believe that all of these are true. So what?

The question that both Boskone and N3 have to deal with is not "why?" so much as "what can we do about it?" I pretty much agree with you on the "why" and disagree on how to fix it.

The basic issue appears to me to be what happens next year if NESFA puts your policies into effect this year. (Parenthetical aside: I realize that N3 is a one-shot, but I believe that (a) we have some obligation to future Worldcons and (b) anything we do at N3 will have a strong effect on Boskones to follow. I think it is irrespon-

sible for us to consider N3 in isolation.)

"Providing useful channels for all that youthful energy, particularly early in the convention" — There's the rub. Setting up "dances, parties or equivalent" to 1 am and running major films for 11 pm to 3 am might draw away non-fan kids, but since it is designed specifically to attract the non-fan kids, I question whether it's the right direction to go. I think that that's precisely the mistake NESFA made with Boskone — the committee spoke of "people sinks" and built up some quite classy services such as the 24-hour high-budget Con Suite. They soaked up people all right, but brought in even more the next year and led to ultimate collapse. It addressed the immediate problem, but did it turn out to be a wise policy?

Furthermore, I don't think that your solution would necessarily help all that much: as I understand it, one of the Sheraton's biggest complaints was the number of people moving between parties all night — would your plan help or would it just keep the kids up later?

Lebensraum (Mark Olson)

I've gathered what information I could about sizes and populations at recent Boskonos and Noreascons. They're very interesting. The numbers I'm using (all sizes are in thousands of square feet):

- 37 Sheraton excluding Constitution, Const. Foyer, and Exhibit Hall
- 6 Constitution and Const. Foyer
- 40 Exhibit Hall (rated at 55, but Boskone didn't really use it all)
- 70 Marriott Copley Place
- 38 Park Plaza
- 120 Hynes as used by N2 (very rough guess)
- 185 New Hynes floors 2 and 3
- 102 New Hynes floor 1

Convention	Size	Pop.	Ratio
Boskone 18	43	1700	25
Boskone 19	38	2200	17
Boskone 20	38	2450	15
Boskone 21	38	2700	14
Boskone 22	70	3300	21
Boskone 23	83	3650	23
Boskone 24	77	4200	18
N2	163	5250	31
N3 (Sheraton, H2 & H3)	228	?	
N3 (Full Hynes)	287	?	

The population figure is intended to be peak day attending. The ratio is the number of square feet per person at peak. I'd be real interested in hearing some more numbers (Ben?). I am well aware that adding up the space in the rooms and ignoring the corridors is a rather crude approximation, but it appears to give consistent results. It would be interesting to come up with some other comparative figures like people/elevator and sq. ft./person excluding Art Show and Hucksters.

It would appear that a Boskone starts to feel crowded when we get below around 20 sq. ft./person. N2 appears to have been comfortably above this. To keep N3 at N2's level, we could handle attendances of 6850 (with the Sheraton/Hynes configuration) and 8600 (!) (with the all-Hynes configuration).

Budgeting (Mark Olson)

I've gotten a moderate response to my request for budgets.

Area	Who	Status
Art Show	Pam Fremon	Promised
Art Show	Mike DiGenio	Promised
Art Show	Ben Yalow	Promised
Den	Paula Lieberman	Done
Films (in hotel)	Rick Katze	Promised
Hucksters	Mark Olson	Done
Logistics	Laurie Mann	Promised
Newsletter	Pam Fremon	Promised
Press relations	Peggy Rae Pavlat	Done
Program	Leslie Turek	Done
Program	Priscilla Pollner	Done
Program	Peggy Rae Pavlat	Done

I'd be particularly interested in seeing budgets for: Registration; Services; Baby Sitting; Films (using the Cheri); Masquerade; Hugos; Exhibits; and GoH. I'd be perfectly happy to get additional budgets on any area at all. I've already seen some really dramatic differences amongst the three Program budgets — the differences do an excellent job of pointing out what we need to examine closely and the different styles we could use to implement Program. Please! Get inspired! Do a budget!!!

MCFI Meeting

Wednesday, May 6, 1987, at the NESFA Clubhouse, Somerville, Mass.

Mark Olson called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm. Jim Mann was not there, so Laurie Mann took the minutes.

Announcements: Mark reported that NESFA and MCFI have mutually abrogated the agreement for rental of the clubhouse, since renting the property might make complications for NESFA in trying to get exempted from Somerville property tax as a non-profit organization. MCFI intends to make voluntary contributions to NESFA for use of the space. Similarly, NESFA will make contributions to MCFI in lieu of paying equipment rentals.

MCFI expressed condolences to Alan Rachlin on the death of his wife, Gail Kaufman.

Treasurer's Report: Ann Broomhead reported that we made lots of money until our membership rates went up.

Ann filed form 990 with the IRS, because MCFI made over \$25,000 last year. She got another 990 for 1985, even though she'd explained to them that MCFI didn't make any money that year. She hasn't heard anything further. Mark wasn't overly concerned about the forms since they are computer-generated — NESFA gets about one random IRS form a year.

Preregistration: Sharon Sbarsky noted we also had an increase in memberships in February, until the rates went up. The number is now 2203. We've received about 100 at the higher rate.

Memory Book George Flynn reported that when he went to get his passport, they wouldn't accept as ID a Massachusetts ID card (which is issued to non-drivers in lieu of a driver's license for just this type of situation).

He went home, got his Memory Book, and presented that to the anonymous bureaucrat. His Memory Book photos were accepted as sufficient ID!

The Mad 3 Party: Leslie Turek reported that subscriptions and LOCs have slowed down since the February rush. The April issue is done and mostly sent out. It is the "Boskone Fallout" issue and discusses the hotel situation. The June issue is half done. It is the "Body Count" issue and has articles about program attendance and people flow at ConFederation and Boskone.

She has written to Nolacon to see if they will explain the discrepancy between the Bid Budget figures they gave us and the figures that appear in their PR 1. Next issue will be out in August and she would like your ideas for that.

Progress Report 2: Mark suggested deferring PR 2 until we have concrete hotel info or until it gets too late. Greg Thokar said articles planned for PR 2 include discussion of the hotel situation, computer networks to access N3 people, and future con rates. Mark doesn't want to set rates until we know what's up with the hotels. Chip Hitchcock felt we should at least say why we aren't setting rates in a press release.

Greg also wanted a treasury report for PR 2. Mark said the report should have enough detail so people will know what we're doing but not so much that people won't read it. Greg will also print the usual membership lists, agents, etc. He's considering a questionnaire, and an article on Worldcon "controversies" (which night the Hugos are presented, are Worldcons too big, etc.).

Greg asked about doing a "Best of *TM3P*," and Leslie was agreeable. Paula Lieberman pointed out we may want to make PRs thinner to save money. Tony Lewis concurred, saying people who were interested in *TM3P* ought to subscribe to it. Greg suggested putting an ad in PR 2 for *TM3P*.

Greg wanted something short on Smofcon.

A series of suggestions were made for PR 2 articles, including preliminary N3 budgets, lists of future conventions, listing past Worldcons and listing regional clubs. Tony said that PRs can't be all things to all people. Jim Hudson said PRs should be the member newsletter and *TM3P* should be the member fanzine. Ben Yalow believed we should figure out what people *need* to know, and put that info in the PR.

There was some discussion on whether or not PR 2 should be delayed, and how long we should wait if there isn't early resolution of the hotel problems. The consensus reached was to delay the PR by up to a month, but to print it at that point even if the hotel situation isn't cleared up.

Smofcon Game: Mark reported the Smofcon game has been transferred to NESFA for distribution. There are only 20 copies left. NESFA will give us 50% of the gross sales. We should turn over rights to the game to NESFA, and NESFA should be willing to sell copies back to us at cost. There were no objections to this scheme.

Norton Bibliography: Mark would like to budget \$500-\$1000 to compile a Norton Bibliography. Three sources for this would be Mark Owings' version, Priscilla Pollner's version, and the bibliography from *Lan's Lantern*. Chip wanted to know why this couldn't just go into the program book. Mark said it would be MCFI's way of pro-

moting fan publications.

Conspiracy: Mark wanted to know if the club wanted to have a suite in England. Greg thought the British publishers may have them all by now. Rick Katze proposed that we talk directly to the committee about getting a suite. It would be a good way for British fans to meet us. Ellen Franklin said after Atlanta, there was a lot of good feeling about how well the party suite worked there. Sharon noted with many people staying outside of the main hotel, having a suite at the con would be very helpful to MCFI members.

Greg wanted to know if any plans had been made to have a membership table in England. Mark said Jim M. had written a letter to Conspiracy, but we hadn't heard anything yet.

Mark suggested since we don't even know if we can get a room near the convention, we shouldn't bother trying to budget for parties that week. He observed that almost no one had gotten rooms in their first or second choice hotels. Over half the people in the room hadn't heard *anything* from the British hotels. Mark said if anyone got a hotel room and decided not to go, to try to give that hotel room to another MCFI member. If you have any British contacts, like Tony's friends in the Prime British office, try to get hotel info from them.

Budgeting: Leslie said she was appalled by the small number of people who had volunteered to do preliminary budgets and had actually turned them in. Andi Shechter said she'd had little experience working with convention budgets and thought budget workshops would help. [A budget workshop was later scheduled for May 27.]

Hotels: Mark said there has been no forward progress with the Sheraton. Rick said that we had asked the Sheraton to reply to our letter by 5/13, so we should give them another week to respond. Our other attorneys have all the info and should get back to us in about a week.

Greg asked what happens if the Sheraton doesn't respond to us? Rick said there are three options:

1. If we have a strong case, we sue.
2. If we have a weak case, we look for other arrangements.
3. If we have a medium case, we sue and we look for other arrangements.

Greg wanted to know when we'd bring suit, and Mark said in about four weeks. Greg asked what we'd sue them for, and Rick responded, for the right to hold the con **and** damages.

Mark said Don Eastlake had done an incredible amount of spade work lining up rooms at other hotels. Don presented the current status of our hotel room commitments. [His report, updated for changes since the meeting, is given on page 21.]

Priscilla Pollner asked what would happen to the other hotel rooms if we got our block back from the Sheraton. Don said even if we get our original block from the Sheraton, we could probably use all of the rooms we currently have committed. Pam Fremon asked when did we have to sign contracts with these hotels. Don replied some hotels don't have contracts or penalty clauses, and none of them go into effect until the last year preceding the convention. It's unclear what backlash may happen if we sue the Sheraton.

Ben noted that if we didn't count tentative commitments, commitments at the more expensive hotels (Lafayette and Parker House), and didn't get any additional rooms, we would have only 1500 rooms, which is not enough. Don felt this was too pessimistic. He believed we will eventually get rooms at either the Park Plaza or the Sheraton, and that some of the smaller hotels may give more rooms. We can get more function space at the Hynes, and we don't have to pay the Hynes anything until late 1988. Some people will probably stay at the Marriott or Westin, even if we don't get a convention block there. Joe Rico asked why he thought we'd get rooms at the Sheraton. Don said that one of his conversations with the Sheraton General Manager led him to believe they might accept a small block there, even if we can't get them to honor our original agreement. The Marriott said it may view N3 differently if Boskone 25 works out well. It's possible we'd get no additional rooms, but he doubted it.

Paula asked if there were going to be any new hotels in Boston in the next two years and Don said at least one. It is on the harbor and is likely to be quite expensive.

Ellen said that large trade shows *always* have people staying away from the convention area. Now that sf conventions are getting larger, we have to expect this to happen more often. George observed that a successful Worldcon was not a trade show, but was a social gestalt. Ben agreed that sf conventions are not typical, but believed commuting would really change the flavor of the Worldcon. We shouldn't give up looking outside of Boston. Don noted he had talked to Miami.

Mark said we have three main points to consider:

1. How bad does it have to get before we consider moving to another city?
2. What distances are acceptable to commuting fans?
3. Don't forget about budgeting — there's little additional money and most of it goes to the Hynes.

Joe said he preferred to hold the convention in Boston since we are a Boston bid. Leslie thought holding the con outside of Boston would cost more and take more time. Even in Miami, we'd have to use scattered hotels. It's true that the character of the convention will be different. We have to develop new ways of holding cons so that late functions don't disturb people who are sleeping.

Rick thought in any case N3 will be a messy convention to run. He said Leslie made some interesting comments, but a good convention is one where people can get to the con with a minimum amount of moving around.

Tony said that being in Boston is very important to some people, and some of the committee may not be able to work on a non-local N3. There's no way N3 can be in one hotel anyway. The Hynes *is* the focus of our convention, not a hotel.

Andi said running a con outside of Boston is ludicrous. The costs would be fantastic. We will have to do extra work to hold it in Boston, but we already know what some of those things are — transportation, hotel room coordination, etc.

Joe made two points. 1) No matter where we'd go, we'd have to work with local fans in other cities. 2) In Boston, at least we have the Hynes. We have *nothing* in any other city.

Several people pointed out that some past Worldcons have been spread out, such as Denver, Conspiracy, plus the Austin NASFiC. We would have an advantage over them by having all our events centered in one facility. Chip pointed out that this was not the type of convention we presented to the bidders. Everyone agreed, but there may not be any help for it. Ben felt that many people would stay home if they couldn't get rooms close to the Hynes. Jim H. made some off-the-cuff estimates for frequent 24-hour shuttle bus service to all the outlying hotels.

Pam believed we do have an obligation to be helpful to the attendees. We should offer some support, like warning people about parking problems and supplying check rooms at the Hynes for their stuff.

Leslie doesn't think that Conspiracy is handling their multiple-hotel situation very well so far and thinks that we can do more. Laurie suggested making each hotel a special interest area (e.g., Trekkies at The 57, Filkers at the Lenox, etc.) so you'd have "mini cons within a con."

We have lots of options, but most of them cost lots of money. The Hynes could cost \$200,000 and the shuttles could cost as much as \$50,000.

George said if the con moves out of Boston, we may need to refund memberships. Tony disagreed, since Suncon didn't when it moved from Orlando to Miami.

Suford Lewis said we should look at what people think is important about a Worldcon. Worldcons are centered around "stuff" and also around people meeting people. We can make it feel like a Worldcon if we pay attention to the rhythm of the convention. We need to help provide a social mechanism — that was missing in Atlanta.

Mark suggested that people mull over this discussion. Location is a strategic question. Write about it in the apa. On the Sheraton, if no satisfaction is reached, we will file for a preliminary injunction in late May, probably the week of the 25th. A special meeting might be called if necessary. After some discussion, it was decided to hold the next regular meeting June 17th, with a budget work-session on May 27.

Andi wanted to know if there should be any parties at cons this summer. Chip said we shouldn't do anything like that until the hotel is straightened out.

The meeting ended somewhere around 10:00.



Excerpts from APA:89

June 7, 1987

(Please understand that these pieces were originally written for an internal committee newsletter and may not be as polished as work intended for broader publication. They are the personal opinions of the individual contributors, not official committee policy.)

[The June APA:89 contained many pages of results from the Budgeting Workshop held on May 27. Rather than try to run these early versions of the area budgets, I intend to wait until they get shaken down a bit, unless I get indications from my readers that they really want to see them now. — LT]

Managing Multiple Hotels

By Leslie Turek:

Ben [Yalow] and others are certainly correct when they point out the problems we are facing with a multiple-hotel situation. I would like to discuss some of the problems, and then some ideas that I and others have had for solutions. I hope others can add to this, and that we can find a way to make a multiple-hotel Worldcon work well. To use an old phrase, we have to "consider it a challenge."

Ben is right in pointing out that the financial situation is going to be poor. We will be spending more money in the following ways:

- We will be renting more of the Hynes.
- Services that would be free or not very expensive in the hotel are likely to cost more in the Hynes.
- We are spending money on legal fees.
- We will probably be spending money on shuttle buses and other services.

At the same time, we are running the risk of getting fewer members because of the hotel problems. We need to put together a strawman budget fairly shortly, and we need to be careful in our financial expenditures. We probably need to increase our membership rates somewhat more steeply than we had planned. Depending on how things look closer to the convention, we may have to consider local advertising to draw in some of the walk-in crowd.

The hotel situation is also going to be a drain on committee resources. It will take more time to interact with each of the hotels, to set up whatever support services we decide on, and to handle the room assignments in a way calculated to make people as happy as we possibly can. This is too bad, but is unavoidable. This is something that will have to be done primarily by local people and cannot be easily farmed out.

However, this is an area that will have a large impact on people's enjoyment of the convention, and therefore should get a large part of our attention. Probably the committee structure should be set up to reflect this.

One thing that we should do to make people more comfortable with the hotel situation is to put some effort into making it possible for interest groups or regional groups to be grouped into the same hotels. Perhaps we should ask people to identify to us, well in advance of hotel information going out, what groups would like this

service and approximately how many people might be involved. Then when we publish the hotel information, we could include these designations as part of the hotel description. Obvious examples of such blocks include the Noreascon 3 committee, professionals, bidding committees, clubs, etc.

As we did with Noreascon 2, we should publish very complete information about each of the participating hotels. This should include everything that might enter into someone's decision as to which hotel(s) to request: parking, provisions for children, pool or other facilities, handicapped rooms, presence of an atrium, etc. We should be very explicit about distance from the Hynes, public transportation available, and what plans we have to provide transportation assistance, if any.

We should try to get the hotels to set convention rates early, so that we can get the information out earlier than usual — perhaps as early as August, 1988. This would mean that reservations might come in a bit more spread-out, rather than having a lot of compressed demand all hitting us at once. It would also allow us to show the hotels how serious the demand was, and perhaps allow us to increase our blocks fairly early on.

Don [Eastlake] has suggested that we require a \$100 deposit with the initial reservation. This also would show that people are serious, and would cut down on people randomly reserving rooms that they don't intend to use. Don has also suggested that if we require deposits so far in advance, perhaps the hotels would agree to give a \$100 credit for a \$90 deposit, for example. The only problem I see with this is that we would have to convince *all* the hotels to agree to this, which might be tricky. We should certainly accept hotel reservations only from convention members.

Room allocation is likely to be tricky. For the first batch that we get in after the initial information goes out, I think we should give priority to people with the lowest membership numbers. (With some juggling to support the special-interest blocks.) After that, it could be in order of receipt.

One problem is how or whether to handle waiting lists. If people cancel slots in the preferred hotels, do we try to "promote" people who reserved early and got assigned to less-desirable hotels (this is likely to be *very* tricky, and probably not appreciated by the hotels to whom these people were originally assigned), or do we just fill the slot with the next person to come along (easier, but obviously not as fair)?

Another problem is how to handle the least-desirable hotels? They clearly want to be assured that their blocks will be filled. On the other hand, our members want to get assigned to the most desirable hotels available at the time they send in their reservation. There are several options:

- We don't commit ourselves to the least-desirable hotels (that is, we sign up blocks for *fewer* rooms than we really expect to need), and figure that we will pick up rooms wherever we can for the people who reserve late. (This will include increasing blocks at participating hotels as well as searching for other, further-away hotels.)

- We do commit to the least-desirable hotels and accept the financial risk if they find themselves without a filled block. This is obviously a gamble. This gamble could be alleviated by trying to make the distant hotels more attractive in one way or another, so that the natural selection will not favor any one group over another. Ways of doing this include: negotiating lower rates (possibly by giving up comp rooms), choosing hotels that offer features unavailable elsewhere (such as suites, family rates, pools, shuttle buses, etc.), or distributing the special-interest blocks among such hotels.
- We do commit to the least-desirable hotels and manipulate the reservations to essentially assign a certain quota of people to these hotels. I regard this option as extremely undesirable, and probably unacceptable to the fannish community. However, I can imagine situations where we might be forced into this if we're not careful.

In regard to services we can provide, we've briefly discussed the shuttle buses. The rough estimate of \$50,000 - \$60,000 mentioned at the meeting seems more than we want to spend. Let's put this in perspective. If we end up with 2000 rooms in the "second tier" or beyond (a pessimistic assumption), this works out to \$30 per room! At that rate it would be cheaper to give people cab fare vouchers to get to and from the Hynes. Obviously, we need to explore this further. We can probably get by without buses to hotels that are quite near the T, for example, except perhaps after the T closing hours.

There are other services that might not cost much that would be appreciated. Grouping special interests means that it will be easier for people to team up for cabs or walking. We need to provide checking services so that people don't need to carry around books or raincoats. (Sue Hammond wondered if self-service lockers can be rented and moved in for the weekend.) A nice touch would be to have handouts at each hotel giving directions and options for getting to the Hynes. This should include walking directions, T directions, shuttle bus schedules, and cabfare. What else can we think of that would help?

We need to find ways that people can have social interaction in the Hynes itself. We need comfortable lounge areas, places people can sit near the crowd flow to look for their friends, and ways to hold open parties in the Hynes. This is an area that will require a lot of creativity to get working right.

By Jill Eastlake:

The physical problem of member service at many disjointed locations has been on my mind for several months. It was even more so at the meeting the other night. Let us assume that we will actually end up having 15 hotels in approximately 5 locations (this assumes that there are approximately 3 hotels reasonably close to each other, on average, in clumps), to be figured out later with aid of a map. This means that approximately 400 rooms are in each clump, or cluster (2000 rooms divided by 15 hotels, times 3 per cluster), serving about 1200 convention members each (the standard ratio is 3 people per room on the average). I have just defined 5 clusters of hotels, probably physically separate from the other clusters. Therefore, we can assume that services from the committee could be usefully delivered at these 5 sites. These services could be many:

- communication to the rest of the convention
- "has my friend registered yet?" assistance
- member location — what hotel are others in?
- coordination for program
- coordination for staff
- coordination for gophers
- information on services at the con
- information about the city

These services will obviously be refined later, by whoever delivers them. Also, if the clusters are compact enough, there can be one bus stop for each. There would be a room or area in a designated hotel in each cluster to provide said services. I feel each should have a computer with relevant information installed on it, or be networked (you can tell I work at DEC) with a central machine.

Let's examine the hotel assignment problem. We have 15 hotels, approximately. They have different available numbers of rooms, room rates, parking capacity, personality, possibility of blocking, amenities like pools and health clubs, and handicap facilities. We have 6000 members that need to be assigned to these hotels.

There is a programming language known as Prolog which I have access to, and which can help solve this problem. Given a large number of parameters, people will be able to indicate their preferences and needs around those parameters, and an application written in Prolog will be able to search through our database of hotels and other people's room assignments, and conclude which hotel or hotels that person's room should be in. I think it is safe to say that the technical part of the problem is solved.

What remains is to ask the right questions. This is, in fact, the hard part for us. I think some of the questions are:

- Name(s) in the reservation
- Physical handicaps
- Designation of group (i.e., committee, publisher, Boxboro fan, etc. Note that people should be able to make up their own group designation, perhaps by selecting a group member's name for each member of the group to write on their reservation form.)
- Available money
- Need for parking
- Probable use of amenities (i.e., pool, sauna, health club, hairdresser, need for a function room, requirement for a suite, etc.)
- Personal preference (some people just plain prefer one place over another)
- Having or not having a party
- Wanting to be near or far from parties
- Get sick on bus rides

I think the list could go on forever, so we'd have to be careful to ask the right questions, and to have people put some priority on their answers if they so choose. Also, we will have to make sure that the hotels don't undermine our efforts in some way, like not blocking properly, quoting numbers of types of rooms incorrectly, or some such. I will probably come up with a proposed rooming questionnaire soon, for review and chopping.

By Mark Olson:

I thought that the somewhat unfocused discussion at the last meeting of options for N3 was quite useful. I was surprised at that strength of support that the choice for staying in Boston had versus moving to another city. I hope that we can resolve things with the Sheraton, but if we can't, then I think that we're going to have to have a real serious and detailed discussion.

The difficulties of moving to another city are substantial and are probably clear to everybody. I'm not sure how many people realize the problems we'll have staying in Boston without the Sheraton. We get hit three ways:

- 1) We have to spend about \$60K-\$100K more for Hynes function space to replace the Sheraton's space. (80K sq. ft. at perhaps \$0.40/sq. ft. with substantially greater charges before we're done.)
- 2) We need to coordinate between many, many hotels and provide a shuttle bus service. Mucho money and even more headaches.
- 3) We will be able to handle far fewer fans, and far fewer fans will come. Instead of looking at 8000 people, I'll be surprised if we get 5500. That means a shortfall of 2500 people at an average of \$60-\$70/person, or an income shortfall of from \$150,000 to \$200,000.

Losing the Sheraton could mean a decrease in our net (compared with what we expected) of as much as \$200K-\$300K. This worries me.

Rowdiness and Staff Burnout (Priscilla Pollner)

This is the middle of Spring Rush [at the New England Science Center, where Priscilla is Area Head for Education], and Mark suggested that I write something up about that, as it applies to big conventions and staff burnout . . . which is what we're dealing with when facing 1000+ off-the-wall, undersupervised kids (our problems are generally lower elementary school, as opposed to convention teenagers, but the analogy holds) every day (for about 2 months . . . arrrgh) . . . with dinosaurs roaring in the background (an initially facetious idea at last Wednesday's budgeting session: let's rent one of these dinosaur robots for the con, and set it up as an exhibit at-con . . . maybe even run a photography concession for souvenir you+dinosaur snapshots?). How can we deal with the hordes? How do we (i.e., museum) deal with the hordes? (Unfortunately, I suspect "not well" might be the final answer, in both cases . . .)

Well, we "orient" our school groups (Leslie Turek has mentioned this possibility in APA:NESFA). It doesn't seem to work well — no one listens. We provide lots of activities to keep them interested (in a 3-hour visit, the kids are getting a half-hour classroom or omnisphere program, a 15-minute train ride, an outside/inside zoo, time to eat lunch, lots of hands-on exhibits, etc. It doesn't seem to stop them from bouncing off of walls. In fact, the more (leeway, activities, etc.) we give them, the more hyped-up and crazed many of them get. I am in strong disagreement with Jim Hudson's plans of trying to fill up the wandering (teenage) horde's time with lots of activities to keep them busy . . . Maybe they're expecting to be taken care of full-time (after all, you've built up that expectation, and they haven't any practice in planning (constructive) activities for themselves)? maybe they're angry at being abandoned (weaning trauma!)? maybe the

exciting things that are being given to them over-excite them? I dunno.

Burnout happens because of frustration. When you are working your ass off, and getting "good" feedback, it's exhilarating. When you're working hard and getting either no response or (worse) negative responses (read "antisocial" con behavior, perhaps?), then you (start to?) lose your will to continue working (hard, or otherwise). The problem is (very rapidly) worsened when people around you (staff, +) that you expect and need to help you don't do so (perhaps because they're burning out, too? — but that doesn't matter when you're falling apart . . .). Some Science Center people have been hiding in their offices (and even removing any "Staff" insignia when going out on the floor) — this also leads to a lot of anger atop the burnout. It doesn't help. Rotating among a variety of jobs, working on shifts, communicating the problems — these seem to work. More next month?

Letters

Hotel Situation

• Dennis Virzi, Duncanville TX:

With the Sheraton's upper management against you, you have a very difficult fight. At best you will have to compromise on the use and functions you intend for the hotel; at worst, you're out a substantial amount of money in lawyer's fees should you lose. No matter what happens the flavor of the convention will be changed from what we were expecting (that is, a transparent environment).

[The words, "Consider it a challenge," are being heard around here a lot. — LT]

From what I've read, the Sheraton doesn't sound like a fun hotel anyway — I don't want to stay in a place (for a week yet!) that routinely has false fire alarms.

I'm puzzled about the Marriott's position. The Atlanta Marriott liked us, after all. I'm getting the feeling that Boston hotels are somewhat snobbish. All I can say is make a good argument to the chamber pointing out all the money the area will lose if the hotels refuse us service.

Any chance of using the Marriott only for sleeping, or do they normally fill up over Labor Day (not to mention the medical convention — any nurses?) so that they aren't interested in giving us a rate break?

[The Marriott claims that their sleeping rooms are completely committed to other business for that period. We weren't even asking them for function space. — LT]

Now about using the Hynes; bleh. I sure hope it isn't like the convention centers I'm familiar with: the noisy, ugly, and huge ambiance they offer is awful. Those convention centers are only suitable for Dealers' Room and Art Show and not much else. Concrete floors are hard on the feet, the high ceilings tend to echo, and there's no place to sit down. If you plan on holding panels in the MPR's better check the acoustics. (Hopefully the remodel includes carpeting and good sound?)

[We expect the new Hynes to be significantly better than the standard convention center. To quote from Joe Rico's article in TM3P #12:

"Let me say something about the lobbies and the exhibit halls. They are going to have a whole new look. Let's face it, the old Hynes had all the ambience of a church basement. The new Hynes is going to have wall-to-wall carpeting in many areas, marbled walls and floors, wood paneling in the Ballroom, and a large glass foyer on Boylston Street. The whole effect is going to be an attempt to give the Hynes interior the same feel as that of a quality hotel. . . . The Multi-Purpose Room, Hall C, and the two escalator wells are partially lit by skylights. . . . A new state-of-the-art sound system is being installed, replacing the previous units that at Noreascon II worked imperfectly when they worked at all. Cables for a video hookup are being installed throughout the Auditorium."

• Mike Rogers, Atlanta GA:

Also scary are the reports concerning Noreascon 3's hotel problems. You have my sympathies for what good they can do; any advice I could offer would be superfluous as y'all have already given the problems your undivided attention and know the local situation better than any of us outside Boston. If there's anything Worldcon fans can do to help, let us know. (You may think the above is said with sarcasm, given the disagreements between Boston fans and Atlanta fans. It's not. Any serious problem for one Worldcon can become a serious problem for all Worldcons.)

[Thanks for the vote of confidence, Mike. At the moment, we can't think of anything fans can do to help, except send money for the lawyers' fees (just joking). — LT]

• Lloyd Penney, Toronto Ontario:

I've heard about the hotel problems from many sources, and they all say the same thing, which is what you say in these pages. The message about the hotel and the conventional problems has remained intact through the grape-vine. It certainly appears that you would have legal advantage over the Sheraton-Boston should they stick to their guns over this situation, and abandon the Worldcon. As you say, they helped you campaign to get the Worldcon, and they issued a letter of intention, or letter of agreement to you. I'd be very interested to find out what your corporate lawyer (I believe that's Rick Katze) sees as your legal standing in this matter. It would make an excellent article in a future *TM3P*.

I see you plan to offer refunds should your convention plans differ radically from the plans you presented. I would think that a vote for a particular Worldcon bid reflects not the particular plan, or the city involved, but the competence of the people behind the bid. There have not been any changes in your staff, so my vote and membership stand where they are.

Re View from Boskone Services: Reading this article reinforces what I've thought since I'd heard about the Boskone incident . . . it wasn't Boskone's fault. Outside of the normal pranks or mild vandalism a hotel normally suffers during a convention of any kind, the con had to put up with punks from outside, overly sensitive fire and smoke detectors, and incompetent front desk and booking staff, and the stupidity of a few con members. If I was to write to the Sheraton-Boston, I would ask them that if they could not handle a convention that they could house within the convention rooms and function space, they

should revise their hiring practices, add to their staff and uprate their logistic capabilities so they could handle anything the hotel could contain. (When all appeals to the Sheraton-Boston are exhausted, send a letter to the Shriners recommending the S-B to them. (evil grin)) Certainly, large conventions are difficult to handle, but a large hotel should be able to handle a con of 4000-plus, as Boskone was. The Metro Toronto Convention Bureau reports that the largest convention scheduled for the Toronto area is one of 10,000 (plumbers and heating contractors, I believe) at the Royal York Hotel and the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (which includes a small but ritzy hotel called L'Hotel). Many will recall that the Royal York was the site of the 1973 Worldcon, Torcon II. If the Royal York can hold about 7500 out of that 10,000, why can't the S-B hold a 4000-member Boskone? A good portion of the layable blame goes to the hotel and the way it is run, I much think.

Re Boston Hotel Overview: An excellent idea, to tell us where the closer hotels are. In a future issue, could you print a map to show us exactly how close these hotels are? This would be of great service to the handicapped and to those of us who like to stay in the main con hotel.

[Absolutely. I'm just holding off until the hotel situation stabilizes somewhat, since making good maps can be time-consuming. I'd also like to show where the "T" stops are, since some of the hotels are quite easily accessible via subway. — LT]

Whither the Worldcon

• Neil Rest, Chicago IL:

[ritual abasement at sluggishness at loccing, grovel, grovel]

I'm overwhelmed by the speed by which I've been overtaken by events. The cartoon on page 4 of the April issue is exactly the sort of thing I was getting heavy flak for a year ago. The literacy-test-for-admission idea enjoyed at SMOFcon was one of my own more hostile ideas. (ownership claim non-exclusive)

For better or worse, the question no longer seems to be limiting the size and growth of cons, but how to do it.

Originally, we were defined externally, consumers of a clear sales category. Now that that category has had so much more added to it, it is necessary to take more control of our definition. After all, why not include RV accessorizing at cons? I've seem some swell barbarians and castles airbrushed on the sides of vans. . .

One of the most critical design elements of a successful con hotel was mentioned only in passing. If there's a place you have to go through between any other spaces, the con will be successful. If there's nowhere you can sit and seine traffic for friends, it won't be as good. Unfortunately, it's one of the most intangible design elements of a facility, but it's one of the most vital.

[We agree. — LT]

Worldcon Management

• Lloyd Penney, Toronto Ontario:

Re Radios and Rovers: Radios have always worked well at Ad Astras, and we have supplemented our radio network this year with two compact units and a base station. This is in an area that is fairly small (I mean our

function space). I usually lose about 10 pounds every Ad Astra I work; I could make it 15 without a radio, but who needs the running around, trying to get hold of people and find answers to questions? Some people feel this adds to the jackboot/minifascist military convention feeling they felt Ad Astra had in its early years, but those radios are oh so handy.

Re letter from Andi Shechter: I've probably said it before . . . people who feel they can compliment others without feeling they've put themselves down, or raised others above them, are few and far between, and they seem to be even fewer in fandom. Every con needs people confident enough in themselves to be able to make others feel good about what they do, and about themselves in the positions they hold. Fans, most of them, anyway, don't seem able to even say, "Way to go!" to boost confidence in others. I wish I knew why.

Art Show

- Dennis Virzi, Duncanville TX:

I may not know Art, but I know what I don't like. I don't like glare, long aisles, repetitious material, and inconvenient locations. Lots of luck satisfying the diverse concerns in a Worldcon Art Show. (Established pros showing for popularity; up-and-comers hoping to catch the eye of editors; whimsey-art buyers; drek artists; 3-D artisans and ~~shoppers/browsers~~ browsers.)

Food Functions

- Dennis Virzi, Duncanville TX:

I don't know about a *communal food function*, I'd rather see a banquet at the Hugos. Eating dinner at a round with friends in a semiformal atmosphere watching the awards appeals to me. (Of course it's expensive, so what. It only happens once a year, let's do at least one thing in style.) Besides, we get to sit close without having to bully our way up front with "Don't you know who I am?" stares at the overworked ushers. But please, no scrod.

[Were you at Noreascon I, Dennis? — LT]

- Lloyd Penney, Toronto Ontario:

Re Brainstorming Sessions at Boskone: Good to see that people care enough to discuss future conventions. Before the Noreascon 3 Hugo Banquet is planned, I'm sure discussions with the people who did that at ConStellation are required. I've heard that the Baltimore Worldcon lost a bundle catering crab, chicken, hotdogs and hamburgers for 1000.

[ConStellation did have a crab feast, for sure, but I don't believe they lost any money on it. — LT]

Rowdiness

- Maxy T. Pertuit, Arabi LA:

As a lifelong resident of New Orleans (and the surrounding suburbs), an Associate Member ("Saint") and part of the NolaCon II Publicity Staff, I am **highly** offended by Paula Lieberman's comments about "rowdiness."

Yes, New Orleans is a "party town," but also a city very rich in Southern traditions, mainly our famed "Southern Hospitality." Our city is not as open as it used to be, mainly due to a raise in the legal drinking age (from 18 to 21) that is strictly enforced! Our bidding party in Atlanta

was a wide-open 24-hour affair in the true tradition of Southern Hospitality — **not to promote booze and rowdiness!** I know for a fact, that MCFI spent more on their bid than NolaCon did on booze. (What an absurd statement to make.)

There will be the usual bid parties at NolaCon, as I assume there will be in Boston. **You** may expect a party atmosphere in New Orleans, but also an encouragement of good behavior. Our attendees will be given chances to tour our great city and enjoy themselves, whether at the con or away from it. Nudity in the hotels will not be tolerated! (People in New Orleans do not go nude in the streets.) Extreme trouble makers will be thrown out of the con and/or escorted to the nearest police station. **We** expect all our attendees to have a great time, isn't that why you go to cons in the first place? I do not plan to "drink in the streets" either at NolaCon or Boston. Please give Worldcon attendees the common sense to know the difference between our two cities and to act accordingly. I look forward to attending Noreascon 3 as much as I look forward to NolaCon II.

To say that NolaCon II campaigned on **just** party and booze is a direct insult to the hardest working bid committee ever! New Orleans is a traditional Southern city and we extend our brand of hospitality to **everyone** who visits The Crescent City. Whether they accept it or not is **their** problem. I plan on having a **great** time at every Worldcon I attend, don't you?

Thankx for allowing me to express my views as did Paula.

[I printed Paula's speculations, not as an attack on NolaCon, but to stir up some thought about how conventions can have an impact on each other. Noreascon 3 is not the only convention that has run into hotel problems caused by rowdy fans, and the problem cannot be solved by Noreascon 3 alone. I, too, would like to feel that Worldcon attendees have the common sense to act appropriately. — LT]

Worldcon Bidding

- Dennis Virzi, Duncanville TX:

I'm glad to read about Cleveland's fundraising efforts for their Worldcon '94 bid. It's about time someone got innovative! Raffles are a wonderful idea; you can sell 'em at the office, too. (Get back for all that school candy you bought during the year!)

- Mike Rogers, Atlanta GA:

I have been meaning to write you a loc for some time now, but the press of ConFed wrap-up work and general sloth have gotten in the way. You are to be highly complimented for for the fine job you're doing with *TM3P*. You deserve special credit for the analysis of bidding costs you published a few issues ago. It must have taken a lot of digging and number-crunching to come up with that report. Those numbers are awfully scary — one might say even obscene. Yet with the modern Worldcon being such a Cecil B. de Mille production, I don't see any way those costs will come down anytime soon. Hotel room rates won't come down, food costs won't come down much if at all, program book advertising won't come down. It raises a whole slew of questions about today's convention fandom that are too numerous to go into here. But the discussion needs to start. This ain't Amateur Night

anymore.

ConFederation

- Mike Rogers, Atlanta GA:

Glad to read that you enjoyed our videotapes. It sure as hell took us long enough to get them done. It was a classic case of underestimating the size of the job. I don't think anyone threatened legal action against us for non-delivery, but toward the end we were getting a lot of "where are my ****ing videotapes?" letters. Speaking of which, we ended up losing a couple of thousand on them. We could afford it, but we should have had a slightly higher price. Also, we have enough material on hand to prepare a second "best of" tape, including interviews with the division directors and some (ahem) R-rated material shot by our camera crews as they wandered around the con. We may do it if there's enough interest.

[Crashing after running a Worldcon is a long-standing fannish tradition. We've seen post-con publications coming out as much as five years after the convention (e.g., Noreascon I's Proceedings), and some never make it at all. You should be proud to have done it in less than a year. While I was waiting I noticed that my check hadn't been cashed; I assumed that you were waiting until the tapes had been sent out.]

In view of the other things which have been happening lately, it might be prudent to forgo making a tape of R-rated material. — LT]

In an earlier issue, someone (Robert Sacks?) commented on the small number of areas reporting directly to the chairs at ConFed. Actually, the number of direct reports was smaller than he realized. Only two areas reported directly to the chairs — Hotel Liaison (Wilho Suominen) and Technical Services (Rick Albertson). **Everything** else reported to one of the five division directors. This does not mean the chairs lounged around the entire con. For example, they ended up doing their share of the pre-con and post-con setup and teardown.

Nolacon

- Lloyd Penney, Toronto Ontario:

Re my own letter: I have received PR 1 from Nolacon. I am still puzzled, though, by the almost complete lack of communications from New Orleans. I have written, but nothing has arrived from them (letters, postcards, etc.). I think I'll write again. . . .

Smofcon

- Lloyd Penney, Toronto Ontario:

Very much looking forward to the Smofcon 3 notes in zine form RSN. Anybody going to Smofcon 4? Yvonne and I will be there, and we'll see if we can drag a boatload of Canadians there. I know there's a contingent coming from Winnipeg, so we really hope not to be the token Canadians there. I hope this is a sign of Canadian fandom once again taking part in fandom in general and American fandom in particular.

[I'm planning to go, and I'm sure that there will be a large contingent from the Boston area. I hope that this year's more central location will allow fans from all parts of the country to participate. I think much of the benefit of Smofcon is just being able to meet and talk to fans with different approaches to convention-running. For

those who would like more information, write to Liz Gross, 376 Colonial Ave., Worthington OH 43085. As for the Smofcon 3 notes, well, "RSN" seems to be the operative word. — LT]

Parodies

- Mike Rogers, Atlanta GA:

When I received a copy of *The Bad Brie Party*, I almost choked when I read the postmark. Upper East Tennessee has never had a reputation as a fannish publishing center. However, Irvin Koch (probably the most knowledgeable person anywhere concerning Southern fandom) says there is a person who lives in that part of the country who has the knowledge of fandom and the publishing skill to do such a parody. I've never heard of the guy, but Irvin usually knows what he's talking about. So the chances are pretty good the zine did emanate from Bristol, Tennessee.

- Neil Rest, Chicago IL:

If there are any of the 'returned' copies of *The Bad Brie Party* still around, I'd love to have one.

[I'll see if I can find one for you. — LT]

The Mad 3 Party

- Dennis Virzi, Duncanville TX:

Dear ~~Phi~~ Leslie,

M3P #18 was provocative, as usual. You seem to have the frequency perfect: about the time I start thinking, "Hmm, haven't seen a *Mad 3 Party* in a while," one shows up. I even read it.

[The frequency's easy to get right. About the time I start thinking, "Gee, I've got that one mailed out," it's time to start working on the next one. — LT]

- Lloyd Penney, Toronto Ontario:

This steady flow of green paper into my mailbox is greatly appreciated.

Hotel News (continued from page 1)

Sheraton, or any information on our plans or tactics. Suffice it to say that we have been putting a lot of time and effort into this problem. We would like to thank Craig Miller and Bruce Pelz (L.A.con II), Carey Handfield (AusieCon II), Mike Rogers (ConFederation), and Bruce Farr and Sam Stubbs (CactusCon) for their prompt and generous assistance when we asked for their help. I expect that I will be able to say a great deal more in the next issue.

In the meantime, we have continued increasing our blocks at other hotels, and now have firm room commitments for 1980 rooms, up from 1330 as of the last issue. If we succeed in getting back our 1000 rooms at the Sheraton, we would have a total of over 2900 rooms, which should be sufficient for the convention. If we do not get the Sheraton, we will continue to try to increase our blocks and to reserve rooms at other local hotels. (There are still a few that we have not yet contacted.) In any case we will try to get more rooms close in to the Hynes and may, at some point, be able to drop some of our outlying blocks. Below, we give the current status of

each hotel, in the same format as we used last time.

We have increased our blocks at two of the hotels: The 57 went from 100 to 150 and the Midtown went from 50 to 75. However, the Hyatt's tentative commitment for 250 rooms in the last issue has turned out to be 150 rooms and the tentative block of 300 rooms at the Copley Plaza has been lost to a prior commitment.

We have new blocks at several additional hotels. The Colonnade is currently under renovation, which will decrease their total number of rooms. However, they have promised us a block of at least 50 rooms, and quite possibly more. The Lafayette surprised us by offering a block of 375 rooms, and the Parker House has come through with 125 rooms. Both of these hotels are relatively expensive, although we hope we can convince them to set rates in line with the other hotels we will be using. (Most of the hotels do not wish to set definite rates until closer to the convention.) The Bradford, listed last time, is being totally renovated into a Quality Inn and has committed 150 rooms. We have also picked up 200 rooms at the Royal Sonesta in Cambridge, 50 rooms at the Holiday Inn at Government Center, and 25 rooms at the Best Western Homestead Inn in Cambridge. The latter hotel is some distance away, but is close to a subway station and is relatively inexpensive.

Noreascon 3 Hotel Update
16 June 1987

Nearby Hotels:

Sheraton-Boston (N2)	1400	0	Negotiating
Back Bay Hilton	335	275	
Lenox (N2)	220	100	
Copley Square (N2)	153	30	
Midtown (N2)	160	75	
Colonnade	294	50+	May be more
Marriott Copley	1139	0	Declined
Westin	800	0	Upscale
Copley Plaza (N2)	393	0	Not available
Total nearby:	4894	530	

Second Tier Hotels:

Eliot	100	-	Residence hotel
Park Plaza (N2)	977	0	Declined
The 57	360	150	
Ritz-Carlton	277	-	Upscale
Four Seasons	288	-	Upscale
Quality Inn	284	150	Under renovation
Ho Jo's Commonwealth	180	50	
Ho Jo's Fenway	94	25	
Lafayette	499	375	
Parker House	540	125	
Second tier:	3599	875	

Third Tier Hotels:

Meridien	326	-	Upscale
Bostonian	153	-	Upscale
Holiday Inn (Gov Cent)	301	50	
Inn at Children's	160	100	
Hyatt Cambridge	471	150	
Marriott Cambridge	431	-	
Sonesta Cambridge	400	200	
Holiday Inn (Brookline)	208	-	
Boston Harbor	230	-	Upscale
Marriott Long Wharf	400	-	
Ho Jo's Cambridge	204	50	
Embassy Suites	310	-	
Best Western Cambridge	70	25	
Third tier:	3667	575	
Grand total:	12,160	1980	

Attention: Friends of Boston in '89

We are looking for a volunteer to take Noreascon 3 memberships at Cactuscon. (All of the committee members who are attending have other commitments there.) This would require only a few hours throughout the convention. For more details, please write to the Noreascon 3 address on page 1. Thank you!

The Mad 3 Party #19

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