

# Appendix B: 2018 Report of the Hugo Awards Study Committee

## Part I: Overview

The Hugo Awards Study Committee was formed pursuant to a motion at the 2017 WSFS Business Meeting. Faced with a substantial number of amendments to the Hugo Awards (including, but not limited to, the proposed creation of four new Hugo categories (please see either the Agenda or Part III of this report for the proposals) immediately following the creation of the new Young Adult Award and Best Series Hugo) and with these amendments not facing an imperative for rapid consideration that had accompanied the immediately previous round of changes, these changes were collectively referred to a committee to study possible changes to the Hugo Award categories. This committee was additionally given free rein to otherwise study and make recommendations on all portions of Section 3.2 and 3.3 of the WSFS Constitution. Section 3.2 governs the eligibility of works for the Hugo Awards while Section 3.3 governs the awards which are given.

The new awards that were proposed between 2015 and 2017 came from a variety of quarters, but most centered around one of two feelings: Either that one or more areas of achievement, either within fandom or within the larger science fiction community, were not being adequately honored; or that the existing categories in various ways did not accommodate current technology, economic and other resources, or developments in the science fiction community. However, concerns have also been raised that such a rapid expansion in awards would also potentially present logistical challenges for the Hugo administrators (who are still finishing digesting the changes that were passed in 2016 in response to award slating attempts), resulting in "nominator fatigue" or "voter fatigue" from the presence of too many categories, and/or diluting the prestige of the existing categories and/or the merit of the Awards.

It should be noted that the basic form and format of the Hugo Awards (being open to the participation of all members of WSFS rather than a juried award) was not within the mandate of the Committee, and as a result the Committee only weighed such considerations insofar as one or more proposals might have interacted with the nominating process. The primary questions that we used to guide us (indicated below) focused on preserving the existing fundamental nature of the awards while ensuring that, as a core function and prominent feature of Worldcon and WSFS the awards best represent and honor that which the community wishes to honor. Obviously, such questions are quite broad, and we did our best to balance addressing them while addressing the specific items referred to us in the time available.

=====

The Committee has focused its efforts on two broad questions:

First, how well do the existing categories work? Firstly, whether the specific categories properly cover what they are intended to cover. Secondly, whether there are gaps in what is honored. And thirdly, whether the definitions used in those categories are in line with existing industry practices and/or the generally-understood meaning of those terms. In general, failures here could be addressed through amending the existing categories.

Second, presuming that the existing categories work properly, how well do they honor what we, as a community, wish for them to honor? This question goes beyond the first, asking whether there are things that the current categories either do not cover by design or cover inadequately, either intentionally or unintentionally. In these cases, either the amendment of existing categories to cover new or different territory or the creation of new categories would be sought out.

Both of these questions were approached in their own right as well as in the context of the newly proposed categories. These two questions also brought about a third question, namely that of how many categories we should have in general: With too few categories, we arguably fail to honor everything that we wish to honor, but with too many categories logistical issues begin to arise regarding nominations/voting and the Hugo ceremonies. An “en masse” expansion proposal (or set of proposals) also risks jeopardizing support for individual proposals.

=====

While each topic that received focused attention from the Committee will be dealt with in its relevant subsection, an overview of the Committee's general answers to these three questions can be summarized as follows:

With the first question, 'How well do the existing categories work?', most categories appear to be working reasonably well on a technical level. In particular, the Committee found that relying on objective definitions for categories (e.g. word counts, running times, etc.) works well as it avoids placing the Hugo Administrator(s) in the position of having to referee disagreements among nominators and therefore having to make subjective calls that could be open to disputes. This concern, in particular, led to a good deal of discomfort with the proposed division of Best Novel into Best Science Fiction Novel and Best Fantasy Novel.

Understanding that the overall operation of the categories works well, the Committee found several places for improvement:

The Committee found that the present definitions in the Fan Artist/Professional Artist category were potentially problematic. The Fan Artist category was initially designed in 1967, seeking to honor those offering their artistic talents to the broader community of fandom for little or no compensation. Such contributions were often in the form of illustrations for fanzines and convention programs. In the last fifty years, however, the form that fandom has taken has changed, and the result is that the definition of Fan Artist was found to be outdated. This was given an extensive examination. The Committee also acknowledges that some further examination of the other fan/professional categories may be in order, and has proposed to carry forward at least one further change in this area.

The Committee found the term “Graphic Story” problematic. Just as “comic book” has come to be taken as including work not literally comic, “graphic story” has come to be taken as excluding work appearing in comic books or comic strips. The Committee proposes re-titling to “Best Graphic Story or Comic.”

The Committee feels that altering "Best Fancast" into a "Best Podcast" category and removing the restriction on eligible productions receiving money is desirable. Many podcasts generate income from either limited advertisements, tip jars, or other small streams of income. While these are often not sufficient to support someone making a living, the income can still be substantial. As also discussed in the context of the Fan/Professional Artist categories, the use of fixed income thresholds was also found to be problematic.

In addition to the Artist categories, the Committee gave some consideration to cases of category overlap and/or gaps in categories in general, and would propose to continue examining this both in the context of current and proposed awards. This arose, in particular, in discussions surrounding the future of Best Novel and the proposed Best Translated category.

The Committee also briefly considered several other questions, including how well the Hugo Awards have handled the digital/print divide and differences between how terms are used in an “industry” context in non-industry discourse (e.g. by Worldcon attendees/WSFS members who are giving the awards) and in the Hugo Award definitions themselves. Consideration of various such questions fed into the discussions on specific proposals.

=====

The second question, 'How well do the categories honor what we wish to honor?', generated more questions for examination. Given the interaction of this question and the question of how many Hugo Awards should be awarded, most of these questions have been recommended for passage forward for further consideration in the next year. In particular:

A Best Translated category was proposed relatively late in the Committee's deliberations. As a result, the Committee did not have the time to study this potential award in sufficient depth alongside the rest of its workload, and there were multiple ideas as to what form this category should take (e.g. whether it should be limited to novels, cover all written works) and, if recommended, whether the award in question should be a Hugo or a non-Hugo award given by Worldcons. In particular, the Committee proposes to examine whether such an award is presently feasible.

A potential reorganization of the Best Dramatic Presentation categories was considered, and has been proposed to be passed forward should the committee be continued. Multiple alternatives, including a possible addition of one (or more) categories and redefining the Long/Short division into a TV/Movie division, would be given consideration if the committee is reauthorized.

A readjustment of the Best Semiprozine and Best Editor categories has been proposed and will be considered if the Committee is reauthorized. In particular, the Committee feels that the nature of the internet may have reduced the advantage that professional magazines have over non-professional productions, and that allowing professional publications to compete in a "Best Magazine" category would allow them to once again be honored. The Committee also noted various complications with the Best Editor categories; several proposals, including a possible realignment into "Best Anthology" and "Best Imprint," will be evaluated if we are authorized to do so.

=====

Finally, on the third question, there was not an absolute consensus on the Committee, with reasonably strong divisions between two camps. The committee therefore makes no formal recommendation, but instead presents the views of both groups for consideration by WSFS going forward:

A majority of the members of the Committee feel that a major expansion of the Hugo Awards would be undesirable. While the Committee as a whole does not feel a need to engage in a "Law of Hugo Conservation" in which one category is eliminated if another category is added, there was a substantial feeling by many members of the Committee that the addition of more than one or two categories would present various problems, both logistical and practical.

Logistically, adding awards would add to the workload of the Hugo Administrators. The last decade has seen the addition of three Hugo Awards (Best Graphic Story, Best Fancast, and Best Series) as well as the non-Hugo Young Adult Award. This is the most aggressive expansion of the Hugo Awards since the late 1960s (when Best Fan Artist, Best Fan Writer, and Best Novella were added), and the number of Hugo Awards has been generally trending upwards, increasing the workload required of the administration team on top of already having had to absorb the effort of changing the nomination method last year.

This dovetails with the practical concern: Having added four awards in the last decade, it is unclear whether an effort to add another three or four awards (either under the Hugo Award banner or as non-Hugo Awards) in the next few years would meet with broad support. In some cases, the concern wasn't about the raw number of awards potentially being created but of the timing of them; in other cases, the raw number was the primary concern. For example, concerns were also expressed that if "too many" Hugo Awards were to be awarded that the prestige of the awards as a whole might be diminished, as well as some of the awards potentially not being given full standing at the awards ceremonies due to

time constraints, with awards deemed “less interesting” to the audience simply being announced separately.

As indicated above, this feeling was not held by all members of the Committee, and several members felt that many of the above concerns could be overcome given sufficient efforts and a set of strong proposals to present, and/or by handling multiple award proposals over time. In particular, these members felt that many of the logistical hurdles were partially a result of how the Hugo Award Ceremony's time has been allocated. Some items, such as the Retro Hugos, will by definition only affect a limited number of future Worldcons. Other "discretionary" awards could also be omitted so as to conserve ceremony time for what is, by definition, the focus of the ceremony.

=====

## **Methodology**

In general, the Committee followed a three-stage process in evaluating proposals:

To start with, the Committee generally took a broad view of the category, question, or proposal being looked at. Thus, in the case of the Fan Artist/Professional Artist adjustments, an extensive discussion was held on what form those categories should take, both as stand-alone entities as well as vis-à-vis one another.

Once the Committee had a general idea of where to go, draft proposals were invited, with at least one drawn up as a starting point, and then discussion was held.

If a consensus could not be reached, two (or more) opposing proposals were put to an informal straw vote and comparative discussion or debate between the ideas presented as well as a "something else" option.

The third stage could lead back into the second stage and, if necessary, be repeated.

The Committee is bringing to the 2018 Business Meeting only such proposals as gained a consensus. For next year, if approved to continue, the Committee anticipates that it will generally retain this process. However, as we move into additional controversial areas, it is likely that we will not be able to achieve a consensus on some proposals. In these cases, the above process will be carried out as much as is possible, with discussion on the options not selected to be included in the Committee's report.

=====

## **Proposal for Committee Continuation**

The Committee feels that, those relatively easy areas of broad consensus aside, it was unable to completely evaluate many ideas in the last year. As a result, the Committee asks for a renewed mandate for the next year. In addition to the broad mandate from last year, we request the following specific mandate:

We request a specific mandate to evaluate the proposed Best Translated award, with the understanding that we may recommend that such an award be a Hugo Award, a non-Hugo-award issued by Worldcons, or that we may recommend against such an award.

The Committee would anticipate at least three major subcommittees and/or working groups for a 2018-19 committee:

A dedicated subcommittee to analyze the Best Translated proposal. A subcommittee is necessary here in part because of the nature of this proposal. Given that we're taking a broad view as to what form this award might take, a dedicated group handling this would enable a thorough analysis of options while not dividing the main committee's attention too much.

A dedicated subcommittee to analyze options for Best Dramatic Presentation. Again, there are a number of ideas which have been put forward, as well as a significant group on the committee that is understandably hesitant to expand the number of categories. A good deal of attention is needed to properly analyze these options, so we feel that a dedicated group would be useful here as well.

A dedicated subcommittee to examine options around the editor/magazine changes that were proposed this year.

## **Part II: Specific Proposals**

Contents:

- (1) Proposed continuation of the Hugo Study Committee
- (2) Proposed Changes to the Fancast Hugo Category (with slight changes to the Semiprozine and Fanzine categories to maintain consistency)
- (3) Proposed Changes to the Professional Artist and Fan Artist Hugo Categories
- (4) Proposed Changes to the Best Graphic Story Hugo Category
- (5) Proposal Recommended for Further Study: Addition of a Best Translated Work Hugo Category
- (6) Proposal Recommended for Further Study: Replacement of Semiprozine and Best Editor Hugo Categories with Professional Magazine, Anthology/Collection, and Publisher/Imprint
- (7) Proposal Recommended for Further Study: Potential Alterations to Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo Categories
- (8) Proposal Recommended for Further Study: Best Art Book and Alterations to Best Related Work
- (9) Proposal Not Recommended for Further Consideration: Best Novel Split

## Proposed Continuation of the Hugo Awards Study Committee

The Hugo Awards Study Committee moves that the Committee be continued for a year, with the mandate to

- (1) Study revisions to Article 3 (Hugo Awards) of the WSFS Constitution, including any such proposals for amending Sections 3.2 and 3.3 as may be referred to it by the Business Meeting or suggested by others;
- (2) Make recommendations, which may include proposing constitutional amendments, to the 2019 Business Meeting; and
- (3) Authorize the Chair of the Committee to appoint other persons to serve on the committee at the Chair's discretion.

### Commentary

The Committee feels that, those relatively easy areas of broad consensus aside, it was unable to completely evaluate many ideas in the last year. As a result, the Committee asks for a renewed mandate for the next year. In addition to the broad mandate from last year, we request the following specific mandate:

We request a specific mandate to evaluate the proposed Best Translated Work award, with the understanding that we may recommend that such an award be a Hugo Award, a non-Hugo-award issued by Worldcons, or that we may recommend against such an award.

The Committee would anticipate at least three major subcommittees and/or working groups for a 2018-19 committee:

A dedicated subcommittee to analyze the Best Translated Work proposal. A subcommittee is necessary here in part because of the nature of this proposal. Given that we're taking a broad view as to what form this award might take, a dedicated group handling this would enable a thorough analysis of options while not dividing the main committee's attention too much.

A dedicated subcommittee to analyze options for Best Dramatic Presentation. Again, there are a number of ideas which have been put forward, as well as a significant group on the committee that is understandably hesitant to expand the number of categories. A good deal of attention is needed to properly analyze these options, so we feel that a dedicated group would be useful here as well.

A dedicated subcommittee to examine options around the editor/magazine changes that were proposed this year.

### Commentary by current chair (Vincent Docherty):

I have been honoured to chair the committee this year, and despite the late start (entirely due to my other personal commitments and distractions), I commend the committee members for their great work.

Given my likely continued commitments, especially for Dublin in 2019, I cannot chair next year's committee, although I would be happy to participate. I believe that Cliff Dunn ([gray.anderson@gmail.com](mailto:gray.anderson@gmail.com)) would make an excellent chair and recommend him for consideration.

## Proposed Changes to the Fancast Hugo Category

(with slight changes to the Semiprozine and Fanzine categories to maintain consistency)

### Historical Context for the Best Fancast Hugo

Originally, this category was intended chiefly to exclude professional podcasts or broadcasts such as those done by the BBC or other professional profit-making studios. However, it has also technically excluded genre podcasts by people or entities that generate income from their podcast works. With the advent of funding venues such as iTunes, Kickstarter, Patreon, virtual “tip jars,” and other subscription models, the line between “professional” and “fan” podcasts has become very ambiguous. The category definition should be modified to include genre podcasts across all but the professional studio range.

With these things in mind, the Hugo Awards Study Committee moves to change sections 3.3.13, 3.3.14, and 3.3.15 of the WSFS Constitution as follows:

**3.3.13: Best Semiprozine.** Any generally available non-professional periodical publication devoted to science fiction or ~~fantasy~~, fantasy, or related subjects which by the close of the previous calendar year has published four (4) or more issues (or the equivalent in other media), at least one (1) of which appeared in the previous calendar year, which does not qualify as a ~~fancast~~ podcast, and which in the previous calendar year met at least one (1) of the following criteria:

- (1) paid its contributors and/or staff monetarily in other than copies of the publication,
- (2) was generally available only for paid purchase.

**3.3.14: Best Fanzine.** Any generally available non-professional periodical publication devoted to science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects that by the close of the previous calendar year has published four (4) or more issues (or the equivalent in other media), at least one (1) of which appeared in the previous calendar year, that does not qualify as a semiprozine or a ~~fancast~~ podcast, and that in the previous calendar year met neither of the following criteria:

- (1) paid its contributors and/or staff monetarily in other than copies of the publication,
- (2) was generally available only for paid purchase.

**3.3.15: Best ~~Fancast~~ Podcast.** Any generally available non-professional audio or video periodical devoted to science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects that by the close of the previous calendar year has released four (4) or more episodes, at least one (1) of which appeared in the previous calendar year, was originally released as a podcast, and ~~that~~ does not qualify as a dramatic presentation.



# Proposed Changes to the Professional Artist and Fan Artist Hugo Categories

## Historical Context for the Fan Artist Hugo

Fan Artist originally meant people who had their art published in fanzines and/or convention publications. Sometimes the originals of that art may also have been sold (typically in convention art shows), and some of it was produced by people who made their living selling SF/Fantasy art professionally but who also donated the right to use art to fannish causes – but only the donated artwork, and not the sold artwork, was considered for the eligibility of the fan artwork.

A person can be both a professional artist (for work being sold), and a fan artist (for work for which the right to reproduce is donated elsewhere for free). In past history, Jack Gaughan won both of the art Hugo Awards in the same year, for work in a year in which he both did a great deal of professional art (magazine and book covers and interior art) and fan art (many dozens of sketches that he donated to fanzines for them to use as interior art).

In recent years, Fan Artist nominations have spread to include artists whose material is visible on the web without direct payment to view. This has been welcomed by some as an expansion of the field but decried by others as not meeting the historical expectations of fan art – that the right to reproduce the art (and often, but not necessarily, the physical artwork) be donated for free to someone else, for use in the other person's fan publications (including websites).

## Philosophical Context for the Hugo Artist Categories

Hugo voters want to recognize artists who create speculative art which mirrors, complements, and inspires the stories we read and watch.

Hugo voters want to recognize artists who make special charitable contributions of art for the furtherance of fannish activities such as fanzines and conventions.

Hugo voters have decided that these are two distinct forms of art, and have created two categories to recognize those forms of art.

With these things in mind, the Hugo Awards Study Committee moves to change sections 3.3.12 and 3.3.17 of the WSFS Constitution as follows:

**3.3.12: Best Professional Artist.** ~~An illustrator whose work has appeared in a professional publication in the field of science fiction or fantasy during the previous calendar year.~~ An artist who has produced work related to science fiction or fantasy which has been published or publicly displayed for the first time during the previous calendar year, and which does not qualify as Fan Art under the Best Fan Artist category definition.

**3.3.17: Best Fan Artist.** ~~An artist or cartoonist whose work has appeared through publication in semiprozines or fanzines or through other public, non-professional, display (including at a convention or conventions), during the previous calendar year.~~ An artist who has produced work related to science fiction or fantasy which has appeared in fanzines or other public, non-professional display for the first time during the previous calendar year, and for which the rights to reproduce that artwork have been given without direct compensation to one or more non-commercial publications or for use at or by non-profit science fiction or fantasy conventions. Art which has been made available for reproduction only for the purpose of advertising the artist or their work, including art provided to a convention by a Guest of Honor, is not eligible as fan art.

## Commentary

These two artist categories are not mutually exclusive, and it is possible for one artist to be eligible for both Professional and Fan categories in any given year.

No attempt will be made to define “professional artist” as opposed to “non-professional artist”. If works do not meet the eligibility requirements for Fan Art, then they are considered to be Professional Art.

Eligible work includes art in physical or digital form, including illustration, painting, book and magazine covers, photography, three-dimensional work such as sculpture, jewelry, mixed media work, and costumes, and other visual artwork such as website graphics, animated gifs, and game art.

“Public display” includes art shows, dealer tables, panel presentations, other convention display, websites, and any other type of display that is generally available to the public.

“Without direct compensation” means that the artist has not been compensated for the art in question, but does not disqualify them on the basis of compensation otherwise received (such as a discounted or free membership at the convention given on the basis of having served on multiple panels in line with standard policy for that convention).

- Artwork which has been “given for free to one or more non-commercial publications” includes artwork which has been made freely available for use via a Creative Commons (or similar) license: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative\\_Commons\\_license](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_Commons_license)

## Alternatives Considered

The Committee preferred the above proposal. However, one of the Committee members strongly preferred the following proposal instead:

**3.3.12: Best Professional Artist.** An ~~illustrator~~ [artist](#) whose work has appeared in a professional publication in the field of science fiction or fantasy during the previous calendar year, [or who has received more than one quarter of their income from the sale of artwork or right to reproduce their artwork.](#)

The following reason was given for supporting this proposal:

This leaves the primary intent of "Professional Artist" to the original meaning, but adds, as professionals, people who make significant income from the sale of artwork or artwork rights, which will allow people such as sculptors or other artistic works creators to be eligible in this category.

The following reasons were given by other committee members for not supporting this proposal:

If the definition of Fan Artist is to be made very narrow, then all other genre artists should be eligible for Professional Artist; there should not be a group of genre artists who are not eligible for at least one of the two Artist categories.

No income threshold is currently required for the creators in any other category – for authors, podcasters, editors, or publishers – with the exception of Best Semiprozine, where the income threshold was compromise verbiage inserted to rule out major professional publications, rather than ruling them in.

With the exception of Fan Art, which is gifted to fannish endeavors, all other genre artwork should be considered "professional". It is insulting to artists, as well as an exercise in futility, to attempt to draw a line between "professional-quality" art and "amateur" or "non-professional-quality" art when we have a

pre-existing measure for that in “were there enough people who liked it well enough to nominate it for a Hugo?”

This proposal is inconsistent with the idea of creating category definitions which best serve Hugo voters' capability to recognize worthy works, without adding unnecessary complications (either for Hugo nominators or for Hugo Administrators).

## Proposed Changes to the Best Graphic Story Hugo Category

The Hugo Awards Study Committee moves to change section 3.3.7 of the WSFS Constitution as follows:

**3.3.7: Best Graphic Story or Comic.** Any science fiction or fantasy story told in graphic form appearing for the first time in the previous calendar year.

### Commentary

The title of “Best Graphic Story” was felt, by several members of the Committee, to “nudge” Hugo nominators and voters away from nominating comic-format stories (as opposed to “graphic novels”) for this award due to the exclusion of the word “Comics” from the title. Discussions were held as to the best way to phrase the title to achieve the desired result (“Best Comic or Graphic Story” was considered, but the Committee felt that the phrasing would be ambiguous and lead to voter confusion as the word order would seem to imply that it was for “Comic Stories” (as in, comedies) and/or “Graphic Stories” (with multiple interpretations possible thereof)).

There was a suggestion to change the title simply to “Best Comic,” but a supermajority of the committee members felt that this was too limiting, and that there are graphic stories which would not be considered comics but should nevertheless be eligible in this category.

In a sense, this change is strictly cosmetic insofar as it does not alter what is eligible in the category. However, the Committee feels that this change better captures the intended spirit of the underlying award category.

# Proposals Recommended for Further Study

## Addition of a Best Translated Work Hugo Category

### Summary

The committee discussed whether to recommend establishing a "Best Translation" category. It became apparent that this was too complex an issue, as explained below, to discuss fully in the time available to the committee.

No conclusion was reached on what the form of such an award might be: whether the committee would recommend a special award analogous to the YA or Campbell awards, whether it would recommend a new Hugo category, or whether a new category would actually be viable. Likewise, the committee reached no agreed position as to whether any potential award would be limited to fiction novels, or would be a wider best translated work award. Also discussed was the alternative of giving an award to an individual translator for a body of work in a calendar year.

The reasons offered in favor of establishing a translation award of some kind were threefold:

1. It would welcome in a group of authors and creators who are marginal within English-language fandom, and who readers would be excited to learn about.
2. It would give recognition to translators, who serve an important part of the community by making stories and ideas available to people who do not speak the original language of the work.
3. It would acknowledge the international character of the Worldcon community, which has a large minority of people who come from non-English speaking cultures.

### Background:

In recent years, as noted below, translated works have become more prevalent in the fiction categories. In committee discussion, as well as separately online by fans that were not part of the committee, the idea of a "best translation" award has been proposed.

Establishing a new Hugo Award category is generally more of an undertaking than just proposing to WSFS Business Meeting attendees that a category be added. It is usually a 2-to-5 year process of research, analysis, and discussion, and not something that is quickly accomplished.

One reason for this is that the rules for the Hugo Awards and its categories are specified in the Constitution of The World Science Fiction Society (WSFS), and modification of that constitution requires approval by a majority of the members in attendance at two sequential WSFS Business Meetings (one multi-day meeting is held each year, at Worldcon). This may sound like a cumbersome and slow process, and it is – but it prevents hasty, poorly planned changes from being implemented. The second-year ratification requirement is an important sanity check, especially given that Worldcon is a travelling convention that takes place in a different location each year. A two-year process prevents wildly radical changes from being implemented by a Business Meeting swamped with members from only one geographical area.

Another reason that establishing a new Hugo Award category is such a lengthy process is that WSFS members are generally very mindful of the damage that hasty, poorly planned changes can do, and they are very protective of the Hugo Awards. At various times in the past, after extensive research and discussion, new categories have been established – or trialed, since each Worldcon has the option to

give out a special one-time Hugo in a category they specify – only to have nominations be almost nonexistent, resulting in the category being cancelled. Such an outcome is always a disappointment, in addition to using up time and effort that could have constructively been allocated to other areas of importance for the convention.

## **History**

In 1993, a trial of a Best Translator Hugo received nominations on 40 out of 397 total nominating ballots (10%). Those 40 people made 53 total nominations – in other words, a majority of them nominated only one translator – resulting in nominations for a total of 25 different translators. The first-place nominee had 14 nominations, and the fifth-place nominee(s) had 2 nominations, which was probably a multi-way tie among several people. The remaining nominees had 1 nomination each.

As a result, with the category not having 5 strong finalists, the Hugo Administrators used their discretion as permitted by the WSFS Constitution to omit that category from the rest of the year's award process. Because of past experiences like this with various attempted new categories, WSFS members are fairly rigorous about evaluating the viability of proposed new categories.

## **Proof of Concept**

In order to be willing to approve such an initiative, the majority of the WSFS members will want to see that a considerable amount of thought has been put into:

### **1) The Category Definition**

One of the important characteristics of the Hugo Awards category definitions is that they be defined in such a way that works would not be able to appear on the ballot in more than one category. This is why the WSFS Award for Best Young Adult Book is not a Hugo: because there was no way to draw a distinct line between YA and Not YA. The likelihood for a Translated Work Award would be much better if it were to be a separate award which would not overlap with the Hugo Awards, and which would not disqualify a work from being on the ballot for a fiction Hugo as well as for Translated Work.

If the award is to be a Hugo, the proposal would also have to address the changes which would be needed for the other category definitions to prevent overlap. At the very least, the fiction category definitions would have to be changed to include wording such as “and was not first published in a language other than English”. And this brings up the issue of whether that would be discouraging the nomination of translated works in regular fiction categories, possibly implying that such works are not good enough to compete with fiction written in English.

Finally, like the Science Fiction/Fantasy Novel split (discussed elsewhere), this category creates the risk of a work being eligible in two categories, something which the Business Meeting has scrupulously avoided. Were this to come to pass, we would need to figure out how to deal with this. We would note that this may require some adjustments to Section 3.8 in the Constitution (dealing with the moving of nominations between categories), something which is presently beyond the remit of this Committee.

### **2) Possible Ramifications of the Category and its Definition**

Details which must be considered when defining a category include:

Would there be a word count limit, and only novels be eligible, or would the category be open to works of any length?

Would graphic novels and manga or anime be eligible? (several people have pointed out that if the definition does not somehow exclude manga and anime, it is likely the only type of work which would ever make the ballot)

Would only fiction works be eligible, or would translated Related Work non-fiction be eligible as well?

How would exclusions in the other fiction category definitions be worded to account for the possibility of the translated English version being published before the native language version?

### **3) Substantial Evidence that There Would be a Non-Trivial Amount of Participation by Hugo Nominators**

This is the hardest part of building a case to justify a new Hugo category. The report by the WSFS Young Adult Award Committee provides an example of the work that went into getting it established, a process that took several years.

The general rule-of-thumb for a Hugo category to be considered potentially viable is:

- to be able to name 15 qualifying works published in the previous year which are not only qualifying but also Hugo-worthy, and
- to be able to show that a sufficient number of Hugo nominators have read those works and would likely have nominated them.

While “Hugo-worthy” has a different meaning for every individual, the intent of that phrase here is to indicate that just listing a sufficient number of works is not really enough; that list must also be made with an eye to the quality of the works on it. Showing that a significant number of people would have been willing to nominate a work is a good measure of that quality.

These are the translated works which have appeared on the Hugo Award longlists for the last 10 years; the number of nominations is in round brackets:

#### **2018**

no works on shortlist, longlist unknown

#### **2017**

*Novel:*

5th – Death’s End by Cixin Liu tr. Ken Liu (156)

11th – The Core of the Sun by Johanna Sinisalo tr. Lola Rogers (95)

*Novella:*

16th – Chimera by Gu Shi tr. S. Qiouyi Lu, and Ken Liu (39)

#### **2016**

*Novelette:*

1st – Folding Beijing by Hao Jingfang tr. Ken Liu (576) (Hugo Award Winner, slated work, estimate w/o slate, 136)

#### **2015**

*Novel:*

7th – The Three Body Problem by Liu Cixin tr. Ken Liu (210) (Hugo Award Winner)

*Novella:*

14th – Where the Trains Turn by Pasi Ilmari Jääskeläinen tr. Liisa Rantalaiho (69)

*Novelette:*

6th – The Day the World Turned Upside Down by Thomas Olde Heuvelt tr. Lia Belt (72) (Hugo Award Winner)

13th – Spring Festival: Happiness, Anger, Love, Sorrow, Joy by Xia Jia tr. Ken Liu (42)

**2014**

*Short Story:*

2nd – The Ink Readers of Doi Saket by Thomas Olde Heuvelt tr. Lia Belt (73)

**2013**

*Novelette:*

2nd – The Boy Who Cast No Shadow by Thomas Olde Heuvelt tr. Laura Vroomen (62)

*Related Work:*

15th – World SF in Translation by Jari Koponen (17)

**2009-2012**

no works

**2008**

*Novelette:*

12th (6-way tie) – Where Do the Birds Fly Now by Yamano Koichi tr. Dana Lewis (10)

However, while there have been relatively few Hugo Award nominees and long listed works in translation, the number of works available in English translation has increased in recent years. The following totals come from a list of translated speculative fiction works created by Rachel Cardasco of [SF In Translation](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RyMOXmi1Zd4yvuTVHQcw5gka8YLZ1In42GJn6Rhh12E/) (note that these counts include novels, short fiction, and other works):

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RyMOXmi1Zd4yvuTVHQcw5gka8YLZ1In42GJn6Rhh12E/>

2018 - 30 (incomplete count for the year)

2017 - 50

2016 - 50

2015 - 36

2014 - 30

2013 - 27

2012 - 26

2011 - 9

2010 - 20

2009 - 14

2008 - 14

**Suggested Starting Point for Further Study**



Listed above are three 2016 works that made the Hugo longlist in 2017. For a campaign that is working to add a Best Translated Work category, a suggestion would be to come up with a list of 12 more translated works from that year, with some sort of evidence that indicates that a non-trivial number of Hugo nominators would possibly have nominated them. Such evidence could include reviews, Facebook or blog posts, and Tweets about the 12 additional translated works – not by just anyone, but *by people who are known to be Worldcon members and Hugo voters*. There are a couple of ways to identify Worldcon members. While people have the ability to opt out of having their names published, and a certain number of them do, Worldcons usually have on their website a Membership Directory. And bloggers who are reading and recommending works will often mention if they are nominating for the Hugo Awards.

This would certainly be a significant amount of work, and might be best split up by allocating one work to research, to each of a dozen volunteers.

Other possible means of gaining support and supporting evidence are:

- identify 3 good panelists with expertise on translated speculative fiction who will be at Worldcon, and suggest a panel on “SF in Translation” to the Worldcon program committee.
- have an information table at Worldcon, staffed by volunteers who can provide information on sources for recommendations of translated works, and discuss the campaign.
- provide an informational sheet to Worldcon to put in the Registration packets and/or in the free handout distribution area at Worldcon.
- figure out how to take a survey of Worldcon attendees that gets some sense of how many people have read how many translated works from the previous year, and what those works are.

This last one could be difficult, because depending on how it is set up, a survey can be susceptible to manipulation (for example, 10 people completing an online survey 20 times each, by using VPNs, anonymizers, and computers in different locations, or by obtaining multiple copies of the paper survey form at Worldcon and filling out many submissions). People want to maintain their privacy, but having individual names attached to a survey (but not attached to specific results) would give it more credibility.

The WSFS YA Award committee did an online survey for the name of the award. Fans of one author promoted it heavily on social media, which resulted in a large number of votes for naming the award after her – most of them from multiple-voters and people who are not, and will never be, Worldcon members. Obviously, this was not helpful to the committee’s efforts to select a name. To be credible, surveys used in building a case for establishment of a Hugo Award category should avoid being susceptible to this sort of manipulation.

If a substantial case is built showing that significant participation by Hugo nominators would be likely, a Worldcon, if asked, might be willing to consider using their option to present a one-time Hugo Award as a way to trial the category. However, this would add work for them, so the case would need to be very persuasive. And if a Worldcon is presenting Retro Hugo Awards as well as contemporary Hugo Awards – which amounts to nearly double the work for the Hugo process – they may not be willing to make their job even more complicated by adding a trial category.

The Committee feels that a proposed change for this year’s Business Meeting would be premature, and recommends establishing a Translated Work Hugo Category Subcommittee of this committee, and asking for additional interested volunteers to serve on it and present a report at the Business Meeting in the following year.

## **B. Replacement of Semiprozine and Best Editor Hugo Categories with Professional Magazine, Anthology/Collection, and Publisher/Imprint**

One member of the Committee made the following proposal:

Delete three existing categories that people find confusing and unclear and replace them with three new categories that, while not perfectly defined (it's difficult to define things completely air-tight), are at least more accessible and understandable to the people picking up the ballot or reading the results list.

### **Categories to Delete**

- Best Semiprozine
- Best Editor Long Form
- Best Editor Short Form

### **Categories to Add**

- Best Professional Magazine
- Best Anthology or Collection
- Best Publisher or Imprint

The Editor categories as they currently exist are problematic. They were well-meant, but are not necessarily rewarding what people can actually see, and they lead to a perception in some cases that the Hugo Awards are actually run by a small group of professionals in the SF field. What is easily apparent to most people are magazines (including non-print magazines), anthologies, and publishers.

The definition of Professional Magazine would be the converse of Fanzine, and would be pretty straightforward to determine:

- Paid its contributors or staff monetarily in other than copies of the publication, and/or
- Was generally available only for paid purchase

The proposal would eliminate semiprozines, which were an odd duck created to get *Locus* out of the Fanzine category ages ago. Under this proposal, publications currently classed as semiprozines would compete directly with professional magazines (which would once again be eligible after many years of not being eligible in any form at all). The internet has leveled the distribution playing field so much that we don't need to make the pro/semi-pro distinction anymore. *Locus* would be eligible for the category, too, as such a category would not be limited to primarily fictional works.

Publisher would require refinement to determine exactly what we mean. Optimally, it means imprint – what's on the cover of the book – even if multiple imprints are owned by the same legal entity. We would have to deal with cases like Tor US/Tor UK or to try and figure out if an imprint within a publisher is distinct from the parent publisher, but it still would be easier to figure out than Editor Long Form.

Anthology/Collection is a category that members have frequently requested. However, it may be argued that we must add two categories here, treating multi-author anthologies differently from single-author collections.

There is no Rule of Conservation of Hugo Number. Just because you delete three categories doesn't mean you have to add three categories. However, the three new categories would be easier to understand for the average person than the increasingly inscrutable existing categories.

It would be preferable to pair the category changes, so each deletion was paired with an addition:

- Semiprozine --> Professional Magazine
- Editor Short --> Anthology/Collection
- Editor Long --> Publisher/Imprint

Even if submitted as three pairs of changes, the Business Meeting could by majority vote split the deletions and additions by the motion to Divide the Question.

## Commentary

There did not appear to be a consensus within the Committee as to whether this would be a good idea or not. Among the responses to the proposal were the following:

"I have no objection to eliminating Best Semi-Prozine and changing over to Best Professional Magazine or establishing a Best Anthology/Collection category, which many people have been clamoring for quite a while. I do have an objection to the Editor/Long Form becoming an Publisher/Imprint category. I think we made a mistake when we created a Best Editor award. Even if we don't create a Publisher/Imprint category, I think we should eliminate Best Editor Long Form."

"Under what criteria would nominators have to vote for such an award?"

"A publisher name or imprint is on the cover of a book. This is something that people can see, like the title or the author. That's something the voters can actually nominate and understand. I think that voters would nominate that publisher (or imprint from a publisher that owns multiple imprints) that they think has produced the best body of work for the previous year."

"It seems to me that the award would be given to the editor in chief of the publishing house. . ."

"We are not trying to legislate who the individual human being who collects the trophy is. I really hope this committee doesn't want to try doing that in *any* category. This decision has traditionally been left up to the individual committees to determine in those cases where there are multiple individual human beings behind the winning item. Personally, I would present the Best Publisher/Imprint trophy to whoever the Publisher says to give it to. It's not an award to an individual human being, but to a publisher, or to an imprint owned by a publisher."

". . . but the Long Form award was established specifically to honor the work of individual book editors and I, for one, would hate to see that tradition done away with."

"Editor Long Form hasn't really been on the ballot for very long, and I wouldn't consider it 'traditional' in that sense. In my opinion it's not a very good category. As has been said before, few publishers include the editors' names on the works. When this category was created, there was some talk that the existence of this award would give them an incentive to include editors' names on works, but in practice this hasn't happened. So it's a category where the voters don't really have a good way to determine who edited what. It's confusing. Categories should be for things that voters can understand and see."

"I am currently of the opinion that the Hugo Awards are the wrong kind of award for recognizing book editors, simply because most book editors are invisible to the audience in a way that magazine editors are not. I suggest that the Nebula Awards, given by people much more closely in touch with who editors are, might be a better venue for such recognition."

"There are lots of things that are in the field of SF/F that might be worthy of awards. The question we have to ask ourselves is, 'Are those things that we can reasonably expect that the membership of WSFS has reasonable competence in accessing and recognizing?'"

“I would support changing Short Form Editor to Magazine/Anthology and Long Form Editor to Publisher/Imprint, but I am not in favor of retaining a singular Editor category, because it will always go to a Short Form Editor, since they are much more visibly associated with specific works than Long Form Editors.”

The eventual consensus of the Committee was that given the amount and complexity of the other items that are being proposed to the BM membership, these proposals should be deferred until the following year for additional discussion, assuming that the Committee is authorized to continue by the BM.

## C. Changes to the “Best Dramatic Presentation” Hugo Awards

The committee considered a number of potential changes to the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo Awards. While there was significant discussion of the problems of the current category and the best way to fix those problems, due to lack of time to give the proposals a thorough review in light of the other items on the agenda and the complex nature of the issue (there being multiple, very broadly divergent, approaches that are not necessarily mutually exclusive), the committee requests that if renewed, a subcommittee be appointed to deal with these proposals. The following items would form the basis for the subcommittee’s discussion, although they could of course choose to adopt any, all or none of these items, or to propose other alternatives:

- An explicit TV/Film division
- Adding a "very short" and/or "very long" category
- Adding a "Best Series" category

A copy of the Committee’s discussion can be found in Part IV.

=====

In the early years of the Hugo Awards, dramatic presentations (TV shows, movies, etc.) were not a prominent part of fandom in the way they are today. In the first twenty years the award was offered, No Award won four times (1959, 1963, 1971, and 1977). Even more telling, in the first decade of the award, a "full slate" of five nominees only appears twice (1960 and 1962), and in 1964 and 1966 there were so few nominations that the category was not even voted on. The three Hugo Awards which the *Twilight Zone* won were likely as much an indication of the strength of that legendary show as they were a sign of the dearth of other options (as even *The Twilight Zone* lost out to No Award in 1963). Some reminiscences of and records from the 1960s suggest that the category was in danger of being dropped at the time.

The arrival of *Star Trek* in the late 1960s marked a turning point which probably saved the Best Dramatic Presentation Award: It picked up eight of the ten nominations from 1967 and 1968, years which marked the first time that the category had produced full slates two years in a row. Since then, the category has never failed to produce at least four nominees (and produced a full slate every year from 1978 through its division in 2002).

By the 1990s, it became increasingly feasible to fill the category with worthy nominees from movies or television on a regular basis, contributing to a decision to divide the category into "Short Form" and "Long Form" starting in 2003. Neither category has wanted for nominees since then. Indeed some concern has arisen that the two categories are either presently insufficient for various reasons, ranging from the number of "limited series" (e.g. Hulu, Amazon) and shows with full-season story arcs to the trouble of having, for example, a season of *Game of Thrones* compete against a single two-hour movie when the two mediums are less and less a direct comparison.

At the same time, other concerns ranging from a creeping increase in the number of Hugo Awards being given to the difficulty of working out new category divisions. The Committee will also need to weigh how to ensure that there are no unintended gaps in eligibility, as well as how to handle any interactions with new or different category divisions.

One concern which come to mind would include a "Very Long Form"/"Best Series" award "clearing out" short form nominations. It is very common for a popular show to see two or more longlist entries for short form (*Doctor Who* managed six in 2013), and it is likely that there would be substantial overlap. In many years, removing two to four such shows from the Short Form nomination list would result in the

Short Form nominees consisting of names either well down the longlist, if not off of the longlist entirely.<sup>1</sup> While this would result in a far more diverse pool of nominees, such a list would also arguably be in at least partial conflict with nominator intentions. Whether nominator behavior would change over time, nominating full series in “Very Long” instead of in “Short” versus nominating the series in “Very Long” *and* nominating episodes in “Short” to ensure that something from the show gets a nomination, would be an open question.

Other possible changes run into different, but potentially no less tricky, challenges, concerns, and possibilities: A TV/Movie split could lead to effectively guiding nominators away from other material (including but not limited to parts of limited/online-only or primarily-online series), while it would remain to be determined what sorts of material might end up dominating a “Very Short” category. Finally, with four categories it is very likely that some nominations will end up misplaced, particularly in early years or in cases where advertised runtime and actual runtime differ (e.g. a “half-hour” show that is actually 22 minutes long, or an episode of a “limited series” cartoon which runs particularly long) or it is hard for the average nominator to ascertain (such as adding up the episodes in a series). A “Very Short” category could also lead to more “clubhouse” nominations (such as Hugo Award speeches), the nomination of popular memes, or an extremely broad but shallow distribution of nominations not unlike often appears in the shorter fiction categories. Whether these last concerns are seen as “features” or “bugs” remains to be seen.

All of these might be able to be handled, in part or as a whole, through some mix of careful category design and consideration of eligibility rules. Another consideration would potentially be an effort to educate nominators on the changes (with the goal of reducing errant or “wasted” nominations).

At the moment there is no consensus on the approach (or approaches) to take on what is potentially a very complicated question deserving of extensive study and consideration.

---

<sup>1</sup>Examples:

- In 2017, if *Stranger Things* (three longlist entries), *The Expanse* (two longlist entries), *Westworld* (two longlist entries) and *Game of Thrones* (three longlist entries) were all nominated under a “Best Dramatic Series” or “Best Dramatic Presentation: Very Long” category, the present rules would mean that we would have had to go beyond the longlist for finalists.
- In 2014, if three series (*Game of Thrones*, *Doctor Who*, and *Orphan Black*) had been nominated in the same manner, the only reason the longlist wouldn’t have run out of names is that the longlist that year was 17 names long due to a three-way tie for 15th.
- In 2013, the withdrawal of *Doctor Who* (six longlist entries) and *Game of Thrones* (two longlist entries) would have resulted in any other withdrawal (*Community*, *Castle*, or *Fringe*) exhausting the extant longlist.
- In 2012, the withdrawal of *Doctor Who* (four longlist entries) alongside the already-extant withdrawal of *Game of Thrones* (five longlist entries) would have meant that six nominees would exhaust the longlist. The further withdrawal of *Fringe*, *Community*, or *Supernatural* would have led to dipping below the longlist.

## **D. Addition of Best Art Book and Renaming Best Related Work**

### **Summary**

In keeping with the issues referred to it from the 2017 Business Meeting, the Committee discussed whether to recommend establishing a "Best Art Book" and potentially renaming the Best Related Work category back to "Best Non-Fiction Book". Due largely to time constraints, the Committee feels that this question may not have received adequate and thorough consideration. As such, the Committee has chosen to propose this category for further review, should the Committee's mandate be renewed.

### **Discussion**

While the creation of "Best Art Book" was explicitly referred to the Committee for consideration, for various reasons discussions tended to focus on other topics where it was felt that a consensus could be reached prior to the 2018 Business Meeting. In preliminary discussions, Best Art Book was considered alongside the Professional Artist/Fan Artist awards and the Best Graphic Story award in a broad "art award" grouping. This created a major hurdle when Best Art Book was suggested as a replacement for Best Professional Artist: When the discussion moved to instead redefine Fan Artist and Professional Artist, Art Book basically "fell off the radar," especially as it became clear that there was room for an "early win" in that redefinition while the category substitution discussion was mutually exclusive with it. The mixed early consensus on the viability of the category further burdened it.

In consideration of the award's merits, there was, in particular, not a strong consensus as to whether an Art Book category could meet the "golden rule of 15" (having at least fifteen "Hugo Award-worthy" items in the category in most years). The recent lack of art books receiving significant numbers of nominations was also raised as a concern, as it indicated that there was a risk that it might falter for lack of nominator interest. In support of such an award, it was noted that some other awards (notably the Locus Awards) have strong Art Book categories. The suggestion was also made that the lack of nominations might be due not to a lack of interest in the subject matter but instead down to a "drift" in the generally-perceived nature of the category.

Further consideration of this question would therefore likely focus on the viability of the category and avoid suggesting that it be proposed as a "replacement" for another category. The Committee would need to, in particular, weigh whether the success of the Locus Award and the falling-away of art book nominations in the Hugo Awards was due to differences in the pools of nominators/voters, due to the aforementioned "drift" in the nominators' handling of the category, or if there were other causes behind it. Nominator interest would also need to be weighed.

As to other possible changes, the Committee briefly considered a proposal to rename the category back to its original name of "Best Non-Fiction Book" (which is what the category title used to be before it was changed to its current form). This proposal did not gain traction as a stand-alone element. The Committee would, additionally, consider a further examination of changes to this category if interest could be found to do so.

# **Proposal Not Recommended for Further Consideration: Best Novel Split**

## **Proposal**

To split the Best Novel Category into two categories, Best Science Fiction Novel and Best Fantasy Novel.

## **Pros**

Gives Hugo voters the ability to recognize twice as many excellent novels.

## **Cons**

This would be inconsistent with the other Fiction categories, which would not be split by genre.

The last award of the ceremony is always the most prestigious. Which genre would get this honor, Science Fiction or Fantasy?

An obvious omission from this categorization is horror. Currently, horror books are part of the potential field, but if there is a “Best Science Fiction” and “Best Fantasy” split, then that might lead people to not nominate horror books on the grounds that they don’t seem to fit in either category. If there is just one Novel category, then people are more likely to nominate without worrying whether a book fits what appears to be a more restrictive definition.

Such a division would require Hugo Administrators to decide into which category the novels that receive the most nominations belong. Historically, decisions by the Hugo Administrators to move material between categories have been met with major controversy (particularly in 1989 and 1994, when moved material within the fiction categories beat out the works in the category in question).

Attempts to categorize Novels as either Science Fiction or Fantasy are purely subjective, as many novels contain elements of both. However, the Hugo Admins could theoretically make this decision – possibly by assigning Novels to the category in which the work received more nominations.

But this raises potential conflicts and unfairness in terms of how nominations get assigned to a category.

Historically, the Hugo Administrators have attempted to transfer nominations from an incorrect category to the correct category whenever possible. However, they can only do this if that person's ballot has an empty slot in the other category. The Novel category tends to have the most or second-most amount of participation, and it is quite common for the Novel slots to all be filled on any given nominator’s ballot. It is likely that many nominations would remain in the category where they were made, because of an inability to move them – thus being omitted from that Novel’s nomination count, creating disputes about whether works have been cheated of their place on the ballot. Moreover, given the inherently subjective nature of the categories and the way EPH operates, it is quite possible for the Hugo Admins to end up accidentally defeating the reasonably explicit intentions of the voters.

Some examples of possible problems caused by Novels receiving nominations in both categories:

### **Case 1:**

If the rule is set up so that all Novel votes will be shifted to the correct category regardless of whether the nominator's ballot has room to do so, nominators could nominate, say, 8 Science Fiction novels and 2 Fantasy novels, and all of their SF nominations would get shifted to that category, regardless of the category in which they were originally made, so they are essentially being given 8 (or 10) nomination



slots in the SF Novel category, if that is what they want to nominate. This would violate the principle that each nominator gets only up to 5 nominations in any given category.

However, if the practice remains that nominations can only be shifted to a different category if the nominator still has an empty slot in that category, then the following problematic cases are possible:

**Case 2:**

Book A gets 138 nominations in SF, and 76 nominations in F. (214 nominations total)  
Book B gets 172 nominations in SF, and 57 nominations in F. (229 nominations total)

The Hugo Administrator is able to shift 61 of Book A's nominations, giving them 199 nominations in SF.

Result: Book A makes the final Hugo ballot for Best Novel, but Book B does not - despite Book B having more total nominations than Book A.

**Case 3:**

Book A and Book B are both on a nominator's ballot in the Fantasy category. Both books received considerably more nominations in the SF category than the F category, and the Hugo Admin determines that their nominations should both be shifted to the SF category.

But the Hugo Administrator is only able to shift 23 of Book B's nominations, giving them 195 nominations in SF.

The nominator has one open slot available on their SF ballot. Which nomination does the Hugo Administrator move from the F category to the SF category?

With the application of EPH, there is even more possibility for works with more nominations to be omitted from the ballot while works with fewer nominations are included on the ballot.

**Case 4:**

Book A and Book B receive 30 nominations from the same people, people who have "bullet nominated" Book A in Fantasy while nominating Book B (among scattered others) in Science Fiction. Book B receives more nominations in Fantasy than Science Fiction, so it gets moved over. As a result, Book A loses roughly 15 points under EPH (not an insignificant total). This in turn causes Book B to beat out Book A in Fantasy despite a substantial number of voters arguably indicating that they specifically *did not* want to split their Fantasy vote.

The committee believes that the potential problems caused by splitting the Best Novel category into two categories far outweigh the potential advantages, and does not recommend further consideration of this proposal.

## Part III: 2017 WSFS Business Meeting Items Referred to the Committee

The following motions, including the mandate that created the committee, were referred to the Hugo Study Committee by the 2017 WSFS Business Meeting. The full text including commentary and analysis can be seen in the minutes of the meeting at <http://www.wsfs.org/rules-of-the-world-science-fiction-society/>

### B.2.1 Short Title: Hugo Awards Study Committee

To create a Hugo Awards Study Committee, appointed by the Chair, to

- (1) Study revisions to Article 3 (Hugo Awards) of the WSFS Constitution, including any such proposals for amending Sections 3.2 and 3.3 as may be referred to it by the Business Meeting or suggested by others;
- (2) Make recommendations, which may include proposing constitutional amendments, to the 2018 Business Meeting; and
- (3) Authorize the Chair of the Committee to appoint other persons to serve on the committee at the Chair's discretion.

### D.6 Short Title: The Division of the Hugo Award Best Novel Category

*Moved:* to strike Section 3.3.1 of the WSFS Constitution by ~~deleting~~ and adding text as follows in order to divide the award into two categories:

**3.3.1: Best Science Fiction Novel.** A science fiction ~~or fantasy~~ story of forty thousand (40,000) words or more.

**3.3.2: Best Fantasy Novel.** A fantasy story of forty thousand (40,000) words or more.

**Proposed by:** Vincent Docherty, Chris M. Barkley and Robert J. Sawyer

### D.7 Short Title: A Reorganization of the Best Related Work Category

*Moved:* to strike Section 3.3.5 of the WSFS Constitution by ~~deleting~~ and adding text as follows:

~~**3.3.5: Best Related Work.** Any work related to the field of science fiction, fantasy, or fandom, appearing for the first time during the previous calendar year or which has been substantially modified during the previous calendar year, and which is either non-fiction or, if fictional, is noteworthy primarily for aspects other than the fictional text, and which is not eligible in any other category.~~

**3.3.5: Best Non-Fiction Book.** Any book or work related to the field of science fiction, fantasy, or fandom, appearing for the first time during the previous calendar year or which has been substantially modified during the previous calendar year, and which is clearly non-fiction or has a basis in fact with the intent to be educational and/or informational in nature and which is not eligible in any other category.

**3.3.6: Best Art Book.** Any art book or related volumes of works in the field of science fiction, fantasy, or fandom, appearing for the first time during the previous calendar year or which has been substantially modified during the previous calendar year.

**Proposed by:** Vincent Docherty and Chris M. Barkley

## D.8 Short Title: Best Dramatic Presentation Reorganization

*Moved:* to strike Sections 3.3.7 and 3.3.8 of the WSFS Constitution by ~~deleting~~ and adding text as follows:

**3.3.7: Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form.** Any theatrical feature or other production, with a complete running time of more than 90 minutes, in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy or related subjects that has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during the previous calendar year.

The intent of this motion is mainly for theatrical films, theater presentations and audio books, etc.

**3.3.8: Best Dramatic Presentation, Episodic Form.** Any television program or other production, with a complete running time of between 30 and 90 minutes, in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy or related subjects that has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during the previous calendar year. No more than two episodes of any one series may be finalists in this category.

The intent of this motion is for stand-alone television episodes or other media.

~~**3.3.83.3.9: Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form.** Any television program or other production, with a complete running time of between 30 and 90~~ **3.3.9: Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form.** Any production, with a complete running time of less than 30 minutes, in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy or related subjects that has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during the previous calendar year. No more than two episodes of any one show may be finalists in this category.

The intent of this motion is mainly for current Internet/YouTube type works, or cartoon/serials, typically less than 30 minutes.

**3.3.10: Best Dramatic Presentation, Series.** Any episodic series or other dramatic production, with more than four episodes of sixty minutes or more, or a running time of 240 minutes or more in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy or related subjects that has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during the previous calendar year.

The intent of this motion is for streaming series, mini-series or episodic television shows are eligible, the key point being to honor programs comprising a single story-arc presented over a number of episodes, rather than separate episodes in an anthology series, which would be eligible in the BDP-Episodic category.)

Current Rule 3.2.10 relating to BDP category boundaries remains unchanged, as does Current Rule 3.2.9 (“No work shall appear in more than one category on the final Award ballot.”)

**Proposed by:** Vincent Docherty and Chris M. Barkley

## Part IV: Commentary and Discussion on Possible Best Dramatic Presentation Award Changes

“My read on the debate was that there was reasonable support for dividing BDP, but that an objective division on TV versus movie was increasingly difficult with the rise of other media formats and distribution networks...and that a TV versus movie division might easily exclude other material.”

\*\*\*

“Part of the reason I strongly favor this is that if the Best Dramatic revision were to come back looking to add two categories and this (Best Translation) were to come back as well, I think there's a risk the two proposals "shoot" one another (sort-of like *Infinity War*, *Deadpool*, and *Solo* cannibalizing much of the same box office audience). The more committees you have doing something independent of one another, the greater the chance the proposals end up in some form of conflict.

It has also been argued here that convention ceremonies are no longer likely to get sufficient nominations to qualify in Best Dramatic Presentation (Short Form). NB that The Drink Tank's acceptance speech only made the final ballot in 2012 because three episodes of *Game of Thrones* were withdrawn (so that the whole series could be on the Long Form ballot), and no similar nomination has qualified for the top 15/16 since. I think I spotted a single nomination vote last year for an event that happened at Sasquan.

On the other hand we have seen musical performances qualify in that category in 2011, 2017 and 2018, for the first time in decades.”

\*\*\*

“I think there's a reason we have BDP-L and BDP-S rather than "movie" and "TV" - the neutral language may at first seem unnecessarily odd to a casual observer but it is a reminder than other dramatic forms - live plays, radio, plays etc etc - are also eligible.”

\*\*\*

A more detailed analysis was provided by one committee member, detailing the various ways that different series could interact with different-length categories:

A big problem to my mind with BDP Short (BDP:S) versus BDP Very Long (BDP:VL) is that there are different beasts out there that cut the system in multiple ways.

*Doctor Who* (side note: has never had two full seasons drop in a single year - lately it's lucky to get two seasons in three years, though some “seasons” have been packaged as two “series”) - Often has an ongoing plot written by the show-runner who also writes a number of the episodes and inserts the ongoing plot in a number of other episodes that they both commission and "story edit".

*Game of Thrones* - A 70-hour movie, according to the showrunners. This one pair of writers write almost all of the episodes and are the showrunners, with occasional scripts part-written by another contributor.

*Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams* - Adaptations of/stories inspired by short stories by a long-dead writer, an anthology series with no connections between episodes and a different writer(s) for each episode.

*Supernatural* - An ongoing plot, a bit like *Dr Who*, but with far more standalone episodes (and many more episodes per season) which have very little if anything to do with the season-long story.

*The Flash, Arrow, Supergirl, DC's Legends of Tomorrow* - Linked shows set in the same "universe" that once a year have a multi-show crossover including all four. Each of these is somewhere between *Supernatural* and *Doctor Who* on the ongoing plot importance (*Legends* is more *Doctor Who*-like, *The Flash* tends to be more *Supernatural*-like). At present one could nominate the four-show crossover in BDP:L, but if we introduced BDP:VL then the individual episodes for a show could be in BDP:S. the four-episode in BDP:L or BDP:VL and each show could be in BDP:VL.

Some good points, though I'll note that in some ways this more underscores the idea as a solution rather than a problem. Leaving aside BDP:Long for a moment because it is and will remain dominated by movies (and particularly by blockbusters), if people can generally identify shows that don't have a lot of coherence across entire seasons, vs. shows that can only properly be considered as a single very long or super-long work, it avoids (mostly) the confusion between the two and makes BDP:S and BDP:VL more compatible.

Finally, there's the problem that many shows get split over Hugo eligibility (calendar) years and a single episode may be shown in 2018, as part of a season that finishes in 2019, so we get eligibility for the single episode in one year and for the full season in another year, meaning it's inconsistent to say that a show can go in only one of the other of BDP:S and BDP:VL”

\*\*\*

“I don't see a problem here. This is and has been a parcel of the awards since *Foundation* got nominated twice; if a smaller work gets onto the ballot or even wins in one year, and then gets incorporated in a larger work that competes in a different category, that larger work is still eligible for that larger category despite the previous nomination or win. It doesn't come up a lot, but it's a natural result of saying that a larger work can incorporate smaller works and still be considered an original work. I wouldn't expect that it would be -more- an issue here than for Best Series (which, unlike this award, allows a work to compete multiple times in the -same- category as long as the new version has enough new material), and despite series often crossing the year boundary, I'd expect it to mostly not come up, because even if a series -can- compete in multiple length categories, it likely has only one it's really competitive in given the distinction being present in the rules.

I will also say that I voted against and still dislike the multi-episode rule for BDP:S. I understand why it was adopted (too many *Doctor Who* episodes dominating the ballot in a few years) but I think it's unfair when the showrunner makes the decision to drop off an episode where the writer would also be a finalist/potential winner, but their episode is the one that gets dropped. I think this is an invidious position to put, say. Stephen Moffatt in, when he's the showrunner and also the writer of some episodes but gets to make the decision for whether it's his episode(s) or one from another or more than one other writers who gets the finalist slot.

\*\*\*

“I agree, and think this is an excellent point; however, I'm uninterested in fighting this battle yet again.

\*\*\*

“Although it would become less of an issue in practice with BDP:VL even if it stayed in place, since shows likely to get multiple nominations would likely get series nominations instead.”

\*\*\*

“I think there are definitely enough TV seasons worthy of an award to do a category in a given year at this point. For 2017, the following come to mind:

- Black Mirror
- Colony
- Doctor Who (which sometimes drops two series per year)

- Game of Thrones
- Man in the High Castle
- Star Trek: Discovery
- Stranger Things
- The Expanse
- The 100
- The Walking Dead (and spinoffs)
- The X-Files
- Timeless
- Twelve Monkeys
- Westworld
- Z Nation

And so on. We can argue about the merits of some of the shows (both on merits and on likability), but there are a *lot* of solid-to-amazing shows out there now. A series award would never have worked in the 1980s or 1990s for want of content (let alone decent content) to make that 15-show bar, but now you have enough companies producing stuff that I think the category can easily work.

There's nothing intrinsically wrong with saying the only things we want to honor are theatrically-released motion pictures (as individual works) and television series (albeit that you need to be really careful not to define this in such a way that you end up excluding series not released through "traditional" distribution channels. You can simply say, "There aren't enough [class of dramatized non-prose work] to justify their own category, so we don't care about excluding them -- there doesn't need to be a category for everything."

But remember the axiom 'it should be an honor to be a finalist.' The rule of thumb is generally taken that there should be at least fifteen potential finalists, all of which would be legitimate winners. It's not enough to say, 'Well, there are three or four great things every year, and two or three other things that we can have be "spear carriers" to fill up the ballot.' Are there really 15 Hugo-worthy SF/F dramatic series out there every year?"

\*\*\*

"Obviously. That's most of what gets nominated for BDP:Short, and there's a long backlist of worthy seasons of shows; heck, we basically ignore anime (and almost exclusively, anything animated), but time travel science fiction like Steinsgate and fantasy like RWBY and Little Witch Academia are clearly worth of consideration. This isn't something like "Best Series" where there's a real question of how many things complete in a given year; it's just a length category with an enormous number of entrants."

\*\*\*

"The question is more "is there enough left of BDP:Short if most of what's nominated there is eligible for a longer work category?" There are real questions of blur given that the bulk of BDP:Short nominees are really being nominated because people enjoy the larger work they're part of, but it's certainly a rich enough super-category that I'm not concerned about viability, just distinctiveness. "

\*\*\*

"One thing to keep in mind with category names is how much explanation they require to people who're either coming into fandom, or belong to non-Anglophone fandoms. Most of the categories pass that test with flying colors, but at the Helsinki Worldcon I noticed people had problems with what exactly "best dramatic presentation" was. And the Finnish Worldcon fan audience is highly English-literate (the only one that I noticed caused more confusion was "best semiprozine").

That said, I can't think of a better name for the dramatic presentation categories that isn't also less inclusive to those who might be nominated. Calling a category "best TV episode" will nudge people away from nominating something that's released on Vimeo or YouTube, or indeed as a short film, let alone something like this year's "The Deep". It's a thorny issue where inclusiveness to fandom outside English-speaking countries is difficult to square with inclusiveness to potential award nominees.

The goal here is not to duplicate what the Emmys and the Golden Globes and the Saturn Awards are doing (nor, for that matter, the Eisners). The goal is to recognise things of importance to Hugo voters, in a way that it is as effective \*and\* uncumbersome as possible.

If we changed the categories in that way, we would have to add two or three more categories in order to provide for things Hugo voters may want to recognise from time to time: Short Film, Music, Dramatic Presentation -- at the very least, probably also Video Games. (All of these things are currently eligible in the DP categories.)”

\*\*\*

“And then we get to what I call the Golden Rule of 15, something that came out of the short-lived attempt to have a Best Video Game category:

A category is only viable IF a list of at least 15 Hugo-worthy (NOT just eligible, but \*worthy\*) items can be produced for it in any given year, AND a substantial number of Hugo nominators will participate such that the number of nominations for the finalists is not trivial.

In order for me to be willing to support DP category changes, they must meet these criteria, AND not leave currently-eligible works ineligible in any category. (Note that Related Work is not a catch-all for the oddities, since to be eligible there, works must be notable primarily for aspects other than their fictional content.)”

\*\*\*

“Why can any mainstream awards ceremony happily handle Best TV Show and Best Movie and we can't?”

\*\*\*

“Why do we, uniquely, seem to want to throw in record albums and plays?

“Functionally, because the Hugo Awards, unlike industry awards, aren't trying to focus on movies, or books, or podcasts. We're not trying to give awards to the best X within an industry.

“We're trying to give awards to the things we (that is, the Worldcon community) liked in the past year; the award structure is fundamentally there to bring order to what is a phenomenally chaotic ask.

“This means that the overwhelming impetus of our award process and category structure is to set things up such that when a critical mass of Worldcon fans go "we really liked 'Fuck Me, Ray Bradbury' (for instance), there's a category where it can go. “

\*\*\*

“Here are some problems in dramatic presentation categories that I would personally like to see fixed (to the extent that it is doable):

“(A) For a nominator who likes a certain TV series, it is not at all clear what they should do to get the thing they enjoy on the ballot. Any of the single episodes could be nominated in the BDP-short (but picking just one is difficult in many cases), and the whole thing could also be

nominated in the BDP-long. If you are really into a series, the best you can do is nominate five different episodes and the whole thing, but that seems just silly.

“(B) A series that is popular among nominators might not make the ballot if the nominators don't happen to concentrate their votes on the right episode(s). As is, the Hugo Awards are rigged to favour series which have single episodes that stand out from the rest. I don't think that's desirable.

“(C) Several episodes of a same shows can crowd the ballot – not a huge issue since only two episodes per show can be finalists, but in theory the final BDP-short ballot could include only episodes from three different shows.

“(D) "Dramatic Presentation" is a confusing term that doesn't mean anything to most people (or anybody else than seasoned Hugo Awards experts). I feel that category names should be human-readable and layperson-understandable.

“(E) Music albums and TV series episodes competing in the same category is even more confusing. Same is true for movies and audiobooks that are lumped together (even though I guess any audiobook is not likely to ever make it to the final ballot -- correct me if that has happened sometime). I really think that audiovisual SFF (= movies + TV) is so central to the genre that it ought to have its own category/ies.

“A-C could be addressed with a change to a system where whole TV series are nominated instead of single episodes. There are probably counterarguments to doing that, but this would be in my mind more in line with how shows are consumed and enjoyed.

“D-E require some rethinking of category naming and scope. The obvious counterargument is that then some works would not be covered by any category if some other tweaks are not made elsewhere.

“Other people here probably have their own lists of problems they want fixed, and I'd be interested in hearing them.”

\*\*\*

“For cleaning up Best Dramatic Presentation, the best approach would likely be either:

“1. Change the length categories to Short (under 30 minutes, suitable for short films, animated episodes, YouTube clips, and songs), Medium (under 4 hours, suitable for movies and super-strong single episodes of tv shows) and long (over 4 hours, suitable for miniseries and seasons of tv shows). This would correctly recognize that while individual episodes of shows can be very strong, we are almost always honoring or watching the whole show--it would put tv shows and Netflix shows into the same category for the most part without giving tv shows two awards. If people didn't want a Short category, it could be dropped, but that's probably superior to just swapping the tv and movie categories.

“2. Keep the categories the same, but add a "very long" category that clocks in at 4 hours or more. This has the disadvantage of effectively having two categories for tv shows, but would also take some pressure off the awards which now stretch to cover 1 hour, 2 hour, 6 hour, 13 hour, and longer pieces with the same two pieces of blanket.”

\*\*\*

“Functionally, the jokey clubhouse award thing is only soluble by getting more people to nominate. If 40 people can nominate something, you can find 40 people to support any old thing.”

\*\*\*

“The reason that I oppose changing the two Dramatic categories to "Movie" and "TV show" is that you would end up a situation where you're *excluding* works that are already eligible. That is, making that



change now means that works that are currently eligible for one or the other of those categories which wouldn't be eligible in any category at all.”

“I am opposed to adding a “Best TV Series” category. TV episodes almost exclusively dominate the Short Form category, and if we add a Series category, we are just giving TV series even more representation, while short films are still left out in the cold.”

### **Submitted by the Hugo Awards Study Committee**

August 2, 2018

The full list of people who volunteered and subsequently had access to the committee discussion group and shared drive is listed below. In some cases active participation was limited to particular topics, and others were review-only/no-email.

Andrew A. Adams  
Chris Barkley  
Paul Cornell  
Joni Brill Dashoff  
Todd Dashoff  
Linda Deneroff  
Vincent Docherty  
Cliff Dunn  
Kathryn Duval  
Martin Easterbrook  
Colin Harris  
John Hertz  
Kevin Hewett  
Joshua Kronengold  
Michael Lee  
Mark J. Meenan  
Farah Mendlesohn  
Lisa Padol  
Hanne Paine  
Oskari Rantala  
Ann Marie Rudolph  
Kate Secor  
Kevin Standlee  
Kári Tulinius  
Jo Van Ekeren  
Nicholas Whyte  
Ben Yalow