

### 2.1.3 Short Title: A Story by Any Other Name

*Moved*, to amend Article 3 of the WSFS Constitution to clarify that eligibility for the fiction categories should be based on content rather than the format of delivery, by amending as follows:

By inserting a new section after existing 3.2.5:

**Section 3.2.6:** the categories of Best Novel, Novella, Novelette, and Short Story shall be open to works in which the text is the primary form of communication, regardless of the publication medium, including but not limited to physical print, audiobook, and ebook.

And amending section 3.2.5:

Section 3.2.5: In the ~~story written fiction~~ categories (3.3.1 – 3.3.5), an author may withdraw a version of a work from consideration if the author feels that the version is not representative of what that author wrote.

**Commentary:** this motion is primarily intended to address the handling of audiobooks within the four written fiction categories, although it will also formalise the existing understanding that electronically published stories should be considered *pari passu* with those published in physical format.

1. Online discussion has highlighted two distinct and opposing views on “simple” audiobooks (i.e. readings with no explicit dramatic element). Some feel strongly that audio is just another valid delivery mechanism for written words, while others feel that any reading is inherently dramatic and that audiobooks must automatically be placed in BDP. Both views are valid expressions of individuals’ subjective experience – a democratic test is needed to establish the majority view.
2. Some are concerned that this change will create a grey area between the written and BDP categories. We believe that voters can distinguish a dramatic interpretation from a simple reading, and that they will select the appropriate category according to whether they are voting for the text or for the performance.
3. The Hugos have historically given significant weight to the views of the voters and nominees when considering category assignments within the hard category boundaries in the Constitution – examples include *The Wheel of Time*, *Game of Thrones Season 1*, and *Wicked Girls*. Using this mechanism to resolve borderline cases in future (where an audiobook received votes in both BDP and story categories) would be in keeping with existing practice.
4. Considering simple audiobooks as another valid way to publish a text will bring the Hugo Awards into line with other awards (e.g. the Locus and Bram Stoker Awards); and with the standard industry treatment of rights and first publication dates.

5. The change to section 3.2.5 will extend this clause to cover Best Graphic Story (an anomaly at present) and remove the reference to the word “written” which some have interpreted as excluding audiobooks, and could hence appear to be in conflict with the new clause 3.2.6.

Proposed by: Colin Harris

Seconded by: Mary Robinette Kowal