

GEEKS FOR CONSENT

ASSESSING THE SAFETY OF SAN DIEGO'S COMIC CON INTERNATIONAL 2014

JULY 1, 2015

SUMMARY

The following is a 20+ page report detailing the significant harassment issues in convention spaces, San Diego Comic Con's (SDCC) inferior response to harassment, and a discussion of the legal and moral requirements for SDCC to do better.

SDCC has a vague anti harassment policy with no clear mechanisms for reporting harassment or enforcing the policy. **Leading up to SDCC 2014, GeeksForCONsent launched a petition and championed significant fan-based pressure on SDCC to improve their anti harassment efforts.** The petition received over 3,000¹ signatures. David Glanzer, SDCC's PR representative, responded that harassment was not a significant problem and that common sense was enough, and that a thorough, prominent policy might lead to bad press.

At San Diego Comic Con in 2014, multiple incidents of harassment were reported to GeeksForCONsent staff, including photographic and verbal harassment. Alicia Marie and Adrienne Curry, prominent cosplayers, experienced physical harassment. **San Diego Comic Con has still not revised their anti harassment policy or released a statement,** despite the significant national press they received for their failed anti-harassment efforts during the 2014 convention.

A few weeks after SDCC 2014, New York Comic Con (NYCC) convened a panel and revamped their entire policy, creating thorough, detailed signs, explicit enforcement mechanisms and multiple ways to report harassment, including an app that will allow for immediate and thorough response by convention staff. And NYCC surpassed SDCC by over 20,000 attendees, proving that it is possible to implement in large spaces, and only results in positive press and feelings of safety and security for attendees.

We are now weeks away from SDCC 2015, and they've still not committed to do better. We as fans must continue to demand more.

¹ "It's Time for @Comic_Con to Take Harassment Seriously! Insist They Create a Thorough Harassment Policy!" Change.org. Web. 26 June 2015. <<https://www.change.org/p/it-s-time-for-comic-con-to-take-harassment-seriously-insist-they-create-a-thorough-harassment-policy>>.

COMIC CON HARASSMENT POLICIES SINCE 2008

Though their general convention harassment policy is vague, SDCC does have a thorough, detailed policy for their volunteers to report harassment, including descriptions of unacceptable behavior, and specific mechanisms for reporting harassment. This thorough policy protecting volunteers articulates convention management's awareness of potential harassment, the need for a clear process for reporting the harassment, and the need to notify people of these definitions and procedures. **See pages 3-7 of Attachment 1.**

Despite the thoroughness of this policy, **volunteers have reported being harassed** at the convention while alone on shifts, unable to leave their posts, but also unable to locate staff members to assist with the harassment, which prevents them from reporting it in a timely manner. This also highlights the inadequacy of a 24 hour waiting period for resolving harassment issues, as they are usually done by strangers in passing, and without an immediate response, the offender will be difficult to locate.

The law requires SDCC to protect its employees, and extends SDCC's liability to the entire convention setting if they "knew or should have known" that attendees possessing badges were harassing other attendees and creating a hostile environment. San Diego Comic Con's awareness of the harassment and groping problem, which has been publicly complained of since at least 2008, and their subsequent lack of response, opens up the convention to liability for refusing to remedy the hostile environment based on gender and sexual orientation.

At least as early as 2008, fans and attendees began publicly calling for Comic Con International to release and publicize a formal anti-harassment policy.² After hearing about multiple incidents of harassment during the first day of San Diego Comic Con 2008, **Bully's Comics** attempted to locate the convention's anti-harassment policy with no luck. No policy was found in the convention book. He then went to the Guest Relations desk to ask about the policy and methods for reporting harassment, and he was directed to a security guard who was also unable to explain any policies or procedures for handling harassment within the convention space.

Bully's Comics requested a policy be added to the book: "Comic-Con has zero tolerance for harassment or violence against any of our attendees or exhibitors. Please report instances to a security guard or the Con Office in room 17."³ His justification for this request was the following:

"The first step to preventing such harassment is giving its victims the knowledge that they can safely and swiftly report such instances to someone in authority. Having no published guideline, and indeed being unable to give a clear answer to questions about it, gives harassment and violence one more [red]-tape loophole to hide behind."⁴

Bully's Comics' blog post led to a larger online discussion about how to handle harassment at

² "Bully Says: Comics Oughta Be Fun!" Bully Says: Comics Oughta Be Fun! 15 Aug. 2008. Web. 26 Oct. 2014. <<http://bullyscomics.blogspot.com/2008/08/serious-note.html>>.

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

the convention. Reports of harassment at the convention continued each year, by cosplayers as well as attendees, staff, and even volunteers. Despite constant pressure, no policy existed for the convention until 2012. The general policy was drafted and published in the Comic Con Events Guide, called the **Code of Conduct**, but it was not available online. The Code of Conduct read:

“Attendees must respect commonsense rules for public behavior, personal interaction, common courtesy, and respect for private property. Harassing or offensive behavior will not be tolerated. Comic-Con reserves the right to revoke, without refund, the membership and pass of any attendee not in compliance with this policy. Persons finding themselves in a situation where they feel their safety is at risk or who become aware of an attendee not in compliance with this policy should immediately locate a member of security or a staff member, so that the matter can be handled in an expeditious manner.”⁵

The above Code of Conduct wasn’t published online until the month after the 2013 convention⁶, using the above language.

- Neglecting to define the parameters of “harassing or offensive behavior” leaves a wide-margin for interpretation.
- Prefacing the call for attendees to report those in violation of the code with a statement that people should report when “they feel their safety is at risk” elevates the severity of situations that are expected to be reported, and downplays the seriousness of the most common forms of harassment experienced by attendees.
- While the policy directs attendees to find security or staff, there are no ways to identify which staff would be helpful in collecting the report, or which are aware of the harassment policies and procedures.
- The policy also does not outline what to do in the event staff and security cannot be located, as is the case throughout much of the convention space.
- The policy does not mention or specify which situations will be respected and treated as worthy of having been reported.

SDCC still, as of the date of this publication, has not created a thorough anti-harassment policy (harassment is briefly mentioned as part of their code of conduct), has not outlined a reporting mechanism to report harassment, nor has it outlined what actions would suffer consequences. In fact, David Glanzer, the convention’s director of marketing and public relations, gave a full interview to Comic Books Resources about SDCC’s policy and why it was sufficient. In part, he said,

“I think we’re comfortable in the policy we have. I think we’re comfortable in the response time of any complaints that we do have, and while we’re never happy that there are any complaints, or any people feeling that they’re being harassed, I think the precautions that

⁵ Van Eekhout, Greg. “Comic-Con International San Diego’s Harassment Policy.” Www.writingsandsnacks.com. 4 July 2013. Web. 26 Oct. 2014. <<http://writingandsnacks.com/2013/07/04/comic-con-international-san-diegos-harassment-policy/>>.

⁶ As of 2012, attendees were unable to locate the harassment policy online. “Several Bad Puns Later...” Elfgrove: Xaynie: Elfgrove: Airawyn Replied... 16 July 2012. Web. 26 June 2015. <<http://thats-what-sidhe-said.tumblr.com/post/27362439424/elfgrove-xaynie-elfgrove-airawyn-replied>>. The publication date for the policy page is listed on the server as August 10, 2013. “Convention Policies.” Comic-Con International: San Diego. 10 Aug. 2013. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.

we have, and the elements that we have in place have made it an issue that I think we certainly are addressing.”⁷

Since 3,004 attendees and fans disagreed⁸, GeeksForCONsent attended the convention to conduct a gender-based safety audit of the convention space and surrounding area. The audit includes objective and subjective observations compiled to create a report and suggestions based specifically on the experience at San Diego’s Comic Con International 2014.

HARASSMENT POLICY FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The 2012 and 2013 volunteer packets for San Diego International Comic Con outline, in pertinent part, the details for reporting harassment of convention volunteers and staff.

“**All harassment complaints should be documented in writing** and submitted within twenty-four (24) hours, or as soon as it is possible.

All submitted complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken. The investigation will be as objective and complete as reasonably possible. Upon completion of the investigation, a determination will be made and the results will be communicated to the complainant, the alleged harasser, and, as appropriate, to all others directly concerned.

If inappropriate conduct is proven, prompt and effective remedial action will be taken.”⁹

While this policy is more explicit than the policy for general attendees, it is not effective for the style of harassment that happens in passing within the convention space. The details in this policy also highlight the serious inadequacy of the convention’s general harassment policy. ***For the full harassment policy provided to volunteers, please refer to pages 3-7 of Attachment 1.***

⁷ “COMIC-CON RESPONDS TO ANTI-HARASSMENT PETITION: “SAFETY AND SECURITY IS A MAJOR CONCERN.”” Comic Book Resources. Ed. Albert Ching. 29 May 2014. Web. 26 Oct. 2014. <<http://www.comicbookresources.com/?page=article&id=53118>>.

⁸ Id. at 1.

⁹ Comic Con International, 2013 and 2014. Volunteer Training Manual. Emailed to volunteers in advance of the convention. See Attachment 1, pages 4-6, for full policy.

LEGAL PROTECTIONS

When the safety and security of attendees is an issue, California has state laws in place to protect the discriminatory application of laws and policies to protect those attendees, including the Unruh Civil Rights Act, and the Fair Employment and Housing Act. Harassment and groping at conventions disproportionately affects women and members of LGBTQ communities. For a convention in California to refuse to take adequate measures to limit that harassment is to violate multiple civil rights codes in California for failing to adequately protect women and LGBTQ attendees.

UNRUH CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

The Unruh Civil Rights Act provides protection from discrimination by business establishments in the state of California based on many factors, including sex and sexual orientation.

In pertinent part, the statute reads:

All persons within the jurisdiction of this state are **free and equal**, and no matter what their sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, or sexual orientation are **entitled to the full and equal accommodations**, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever.¹⁰ (*emphasis added*)

The Unruh Civil Rights act protects attendees, as well as volunteers and staff, from discrimination in their access to business establishments of every kind.

The California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) discusses harassment liabilities, and extends SDCC's liability to non-employees as well as employees:

Harassment of an employee, an applicant, or a person providing services pursuant to a contract by an employee, other than an agent or supervisor, shall be unlawful if the entity, or its agents or supervisors, knows or should have known of this conduct and fails to take immediate and appropriate corrective action. **An employer may also be responsible for the acts of nonemployees, with respect to sexual harassment of employees, applicants, or persons providing services pursuant to a contract in the workplace, where the employer, or its agents or supervisors, knows or should have known of the conduct and fails to take immediate and appropriate corrective action.** In reviewing cases involving the acts of nonemployees, the extent of the employer's control and any other legal responsibility that the employer may have with respect to the conduct of those nonemployees shall be considered. An entity shall take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment from occurring. Loss of tangible job benefits shall not be necessary in order to establish harassment.¹¹ (*emphasis added*)

¹⁰ Unruh Civil Rights Act. CAL. CIV. CODE § 51 : California Code - Section 51

¹¹ Fair Employment and Housing Act. California. Government Code, Title 2, Division 3, Part 2.8

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Conducting a community safety audit from a gendered perspective is a **United Nations best practice**.¹² The audit is a tool to help assess the safety of frequently used urban and suburban spaces, and it creates an open platform for women and LGBTQ folks who live, work and play in the communities being analyzed to share their experiences and ideas for reducing violence.

In a typical audit, community members tour 6- to 10-block areas of neighborhoods, noting objective conditions that might make certain areas feel less safe — including bus stops without proper lighting, blocks without adequate streetlights, and abandoned lots filled with debris.¹³ A safety audit also specifically focuses on areas like public parks and schools, noting the conditions in which a city's youth are expected to commute to and from school and recreational activities.¹⁴

Community members then meet with fellow neighborhood residents about factors that contribute to where and when they feel safe in public, and things that can be done to make them feel safer. This information is then analyzed, and recommendations are made based on the community's own expressed needs in conjunction with improvements that are feasible to implement.

The international non-profit Jagori created the gender-based safety audit model that is sponsored by the United Nations. GeeksForCONsent, a project of Feminist Public Works, adapted the gender-based safety audit model to be applicable to smaller, semi-regulated spaces, like the comic convention spaces. ***For more information on the safety audit model, see Attachment 2.***

The modified audit used for the convention space analyzed the policies and procedures in place to keep the convention setting safe, as well as steps taken within the convention hall to make the space feel safe. While we aren't looking for poor lighting and abandoned lots, the convention setting's dearth or abundance of volunteers, publicized policies, and accessibility of assistance in the event it is needed are a few physical conditions of the space to be analyzed.

Typical safety audits are of public spaces are of course governed by local laws, but are also unbounded, blanketly and completely accessible by the general public, and less restricted than a specific event space. Conventions, however, are semi-public spaces governed by specific codes of conduct, and administrators have the power to evict anyone from the premises. **For this reason, the convention space is poised to benefit greatly from a safety audit, since the setting is controlled and regulated, and the population is smaller than public streets.**

¹² "Women's Safety Audits: What Works and Where?". UN Habitat. 2008

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ Id.

DOCUMENTED HARASSMENT AT SAN DIEGO COMIC CON INTERNATIONAL

HARASSMENT OF GUESTS

The reported harassment since 2008 has been consistently and overwhelmingly posted about online from women attending comic conventions and industry events.

Bully's Comics outlined multiple examples of harassment he saw at San Diego Comic Con in 2008,¹⁵ which sparked a larger discussion on the internet about what conventions should be doing to protect attendees. He overheard men discussing photos on their digital camera, when one man shared a story:

“There were the Ghostbusters girls. That one, I grabbed her ass, ‘cause I wanted to see what her reaction was.”¹⁵

One woman working a booth selling books was closing up the booth when a group of men came to the booth, started taking her pictures without asking permission, and then entered the booth to start hugging and kissing her while taking pictures of what they were doing.¹⁷ In the crowded convention setting, where volunteers are hard to find and are not nearby enough to assist while the harassment is occurring, the culture that permits this behavior to continue allows that behavior to go unchecked. **By the time either of these women located a member of staff or security, or even the police, the offender would be long lost in the crowd and unlocateable.**

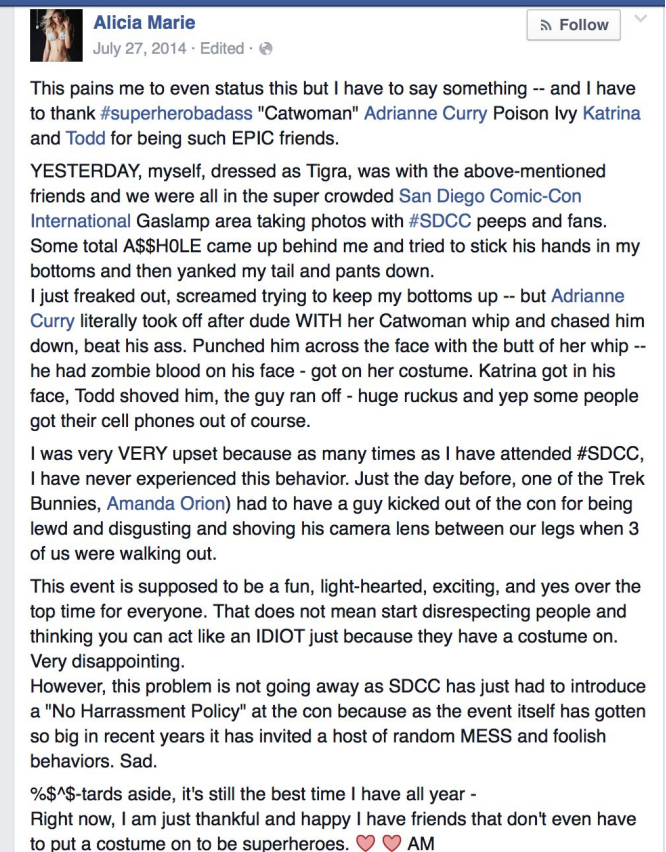
Similar stories have been shared since 2008, including verbal harassment, photographic harassment, and physical gropings. At the 2014 convention, **Alicia Marie** (a prominent cosplayer), was groped by a fellow con-goer. The fellow attendee attempted to place his hands inside the bottoms of her Tigra costume, and then pulled on her tail which pulled the bottoms of her costume down. She screamed and did her best to keep the bottoms from being removed, and her fellow cosplayer, **Adrienne Curry**, chased the harasser and hit him in retaliation. Just the day before, the two cosplayers with their third friend, **Amanda Orion**, experienced a man shoving his camera lens between their legs attempting to take upskirt shots without their consent.¹⁸

¹⁵ Id. at 2.

¹⁶ Id.

¹⁷ Id.

¹⁸ “Adrienne Curry - I Beat the Shit out of His Face with The... | Facebook.” Adrienne Curry - I Beat the Shit out of His Face with The... | Facebook. 27 July 2014. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.



Alicia Marie
July 27, 2014 · Edited · 🌐

This pains me to even status this but I have to say something -- and I have to thank #superherobadass "Catwoman" [Adrienne Curry](#) [Poison Ivy Katrina](#) and [Todd](#) for being such EPIC friends.

YESTERDAY, myself, dressed as Tigra, was with the above-mentioned friends and we were all in the super crowded [San Diego Comic-Con International](#) Gaslamp area taking photos with #SDCC peeps and fans. Some total A\$\$HOLE came up behind me and tried to stick his hands in my bottoms and then yanked my tail and pants down. I just freaked out, screamed trying to keep my bottoms up -- but [Adrienne Curry](#) literally took off after dude WITH her Catwoman whip and chased him down, beat his ass. Punched him across the face with the butt of her whip -- he had zombie blood on his face - got on her costume. Katrina got in his face, Todd shoved him, the guy ran off - huge ruckus and yep some people got their cell phones out of course.

I was very VERY upset because as many times as I have attended #SDCC, I have never experienced this behavior. Just the day before, one of the [Trek Bunnies](#), [Amanda Orion](#)) had to have a guy kicked out of the con for being lewd and disgusting and shoving his camera lens between our legs when 3 of us were walking out.

This event is supposed to be a fun, light-hearted, exciting, and yes over the top time for everyone. That does not mean start disrespecting people and thinking you can act like an IDIOT just because they have a costume on. Very disappointing.

However, this problem is not going away as SDCC has just had to introduce a "No Harrassment Policy" at the con because as the event itself has gotten so big in recent years it has invited a host of random MESS and foolish behaviors. Sad.

%^\$-tards aside, it's still the best time I have all year - Right now, I am just thankful and happy I have friends that don't even have to put a costume on to be superheroes. ❤️ ❤️ AM

Even when extreme incidents occur, like the sexual assault of Alicia Marie, people do not intervene and victims of harassment are left to deal with the issues on their own. Alicia Marie and her friend Adrienne Curry physically responded to the man who grabbed under Alicia Marie's shorts on their own without any assistance.¹⁹ This incident occurred outside the Convention Center, but amidst the Gaslamp Area which is an extension of the convention space, with various convention sponsored events throughout the downtown area.

HARASSMENT OF VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

Tumblr user **elfgrove** described how she and another woman volunteer were harassed during a volunteer shift:

“Speaking of skeezy dudes. When someone is obviously on assignment to stand in a certain spot in a hall holding a sign and yelling at the crowds, their lack of ability to leave is not an invitation to keep hitting on them when they don't initially respond to you. This wasn't just me, another girl who was on the same assignment further down the hall was getting harassed so badly she briefly left her post to talk to me and make sure she wasn't alone with the harassing dudes and so she could disappear until that particular group moved on. ...I try to sidle away, and this sh**head follows me. There are no other staffers in sight, and his group of 3 male friends are standing off to the side watching and grinning. I'm on duty, practically a captive audience, have to be polite because I am representing the con, have no back-up, and you are a foot taller than me. ...None of you are being unique, creative, or clever with that “Sexual Fulfillment Room” BS – which several clearly thought they were. I heard it more times than I could count.”

...

“The big issue here was the total lack of information on what the volunteers could/should do... We were only given direction of where to stand, what to yell, not to abandon our post under any circumstances, and not to lean against the wall or sit down (even if there were chairs nearby). The staff surely knows that this sort of sh** happens, and they should either not send females out to stand by themselves or should have told us what to do if it got as bad as it did (Mr. Less-Than-Six-Inches-Of-Personal-Space).”²⁰

She goes on to outline that Comic-Con did not respond to their emails about the harassment; and that the format for reporting harassment of volunteers is inadequate for actually enforcing the policy. In the convention space, unless there is the ability to report the harassment and receive a response in real-time, there is no way to stop or regulate the harassers. **The most that can be done is the harassment will be documented**, but the harasser will be long gone, or in a new costume, if the harassment isn't dealt with promptly.

¹⁹Id.

²⁰Id. at 4.

TYPES AND QUALITY OF RESPONSE TO HARASSMENT AVAILABLE TO ATTENDEES

2014 HARASSMENT POLICY

In 2014, the Code of Conduct was posted online, and was appropriately called a Code of Conduct instead of a harassment policy, as **only one sentence refers to harassment**. The policy was vague about what would constitute harassment under the policy, what behavior would actually involve consequences for the harasser, and how their suggested reporting mechanism could possibly involve stopping the behavior if people need to find a phone or walk to Hall C in order to report the harassment. The Code of Conduct reads:

“Attendees must respect commonsense rules for public behavior, personal interaction, common courtesy, and respect for private property. Harassing or offensive behavior will not be tolerated. Comic-con reserves the right to revoke, without refund, the membership and badge of any attendee not in compliance with this policy.”

Persons finding themselves in a situation where they feel their safety is at risk or who become aware of an attendee not in compliance with this policy should immediately locate a member of security, or a staff member, so that the matter can be handled in an expeditious manner. If your safety is at risk and you need immediate assistance, you may also use a white house phone and dial 5911.

Security can be contacted by visiting the Show Office in Lobby C. A Comic-Con staff member will be in the office during public hours.”²¹

The policy was amended slightly in the months leading up to the 2015 convention. It now reads as follows:

Attendees must respect common sense rules for public behavior, personal interaction, common courtesy, and respect for private property. Harassing or offensive behavior will not be tolerated. Comic-Con reserves the right to revoke, without refund, the membership and badge of any attendee not in compliance with this policy. Persons finding themselves in a situation where they feel their safety is at risk or who become aware of an attendee not in compliance with this policy should immediately locate the nearest member of security, or staff member, so that the matter can be handled in an expeditious manner.

The Comic-Con Show Office is located in the Hall C lobby. During show hours you can always find a Comic-Con staff member or security guard in the show office. Please visit us there if you have any concerns or questions.²²

While discussing the lack of specificity of this policy, and the fact Comic-Con opted instead to defer to attendees’ “common sense,” we refer to other San Diego Comic-Con policies that do include such specificity. One example is the **Costume Weapons Policy**, which is briefly outlined on the second

²¹“Events Guide”. San Diego Comic Con International. Page 2. July 24-27, 2014.

²² “Convention Policies.” Comic-Con International: San Diego. 1 Apr. 2015. Web. 29 June 2015. <<http://www.comic-con.org/cci/convention-policies>>.

page of the events guide, directing readers to the full policy on page 6. The policy clearly defines unacceptable behavior, and why that behavior is unacceptable. It also has bolded typeface as it defines its zero-tolerance policy for non-compliance with the Costume Weapons Policy. The policy reads:

No functional weapons are allowed at Comic-Con. Simulated or costume weapons are allowed as part of your costume, subject to prior approval by security and compliance with the following:

- All costume weapons must be inspected at the Weapons Check Desk in Lobby E (location subject to change).
- All costume weapons must conform to state and federal law.
- Projectile costume weapons must be rendered inoperable.
- Costume swords must be tied to your costume in such a way that they can't be drawn.
- After each person's costume weapons has been checked, it will be tagged by security, and you will be given a wristband to wear to designate that your weapons have been checked.

Security will escort you to the security station for inspection if your costume weapon is not tagged.

If you do not want to have your costume weapons inspected or tagged, or if you are not willing to comply with these policies, please do not bring your costume weapons. Comic-Con reserves the right to change or modify any policy or rule at any time and without notice.²³

This, and other policies, are prominent and explicit both within the Events Guide and on the convention's website.

The policy was not actively publicized before or during the convention. An email did go out to all badge holders the Friday before the 2014 convention updating the harassment policy to include reporting mechanisms via the White Phones and the Show Room in Hall C. **For the full email, please refer to Attachment 3.** The Tuesday before the convention, holders of press badges were emailed the same information. While this form of publicity was an excellent first step, the policy itself and internal enforcement mechanisms are in need of more specificity.

SITE-SPECIFIC CONCERNS

The Code of Conduct was also difficult to locate within the convention halls. A positive step in the right direction was the re-labeling of the code of conduct, calling it a harassment policy, and adding it to the large convention posters outside each hall. **Unfortunately, attendees were actively discouraged by volunteers and staff from standing stationary in the hallways, including if they were reading the sign.** Despite the positive step of explicit labelling of the policy as "anti harassment", the language was not clarified and there was still no mention of clear reporting procedures, or discussion of what was considered punishable behavior.

²³ Id. at 6, pp. 2 and 6.



Aside from the font choice being Comic Sans, the poster, while prominently displayed, was also surrounded by signs reminding people they could not stand or congregate near the poster. When we stopped to read the sign and take a photograph of it, we were told twice to “keep it moving.”

Additionally, the white phones are not highlighted, nor is the harassment policy repeated or posted near the phones. If people haven't remembered the number they were supposed to call, upon reaching the phones they would have no reminder aside from the placard by the phone, which, while it lists the same number, says prominently in red writing, “EMERGENCY CALL 5911, Fire, Medical, Security.” This reinforces the idea you are actually calling 911, so only the most serious, emergent, dangerous examples of harassment are expected to be reported.



We asked multiple staff members of the convention where we could report harassment. Some told us vaguely to “Go to Lobby C”. Others told us they couldn't comment. Staff of the Convention Center mail room, unaffiliated with the Comic Convention, were more helpful. They informed us that the Convention Center staff were briefed on harassment, and described to us a roped off area near the Office in Lobby C for people to report semi-privately. Had we not approached the mailroom staff while making photocopies, we would have had no idea of the additional information to include about the safe space for reporting the harassment. Volunteers and staff who were not armed with that information were ill-equipped to inform convention attendees of the ability to take advantage of that option for reporting.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of Comic Con International 2014 involved objective observations, like cataloging the number of accessible volunteers that were visible and available in each area of the convention space, including the hallways and walkways inside and outside the San Diego Convention Center. It also involved subjective interviews of attendees, exhibitors, and artists about their experiences at the convention, and their awareness of the harassment policy.

PHYSICAL CONCERNS

In a space so full of people that the fire marshal forced a prohibition of any loitering or lingering, awareness of the basic policies that will be enforced is important. **Volunteers and staff were difficult to locate as they were guarding exits or high profile booths, not wandering the convention halls or making themselves present in any accessible way.** Since the visible volunteers and staff were assigned specific tasks, such as herding crowds, managing lines for panels, and monitoring entrances and exits, they were inaccessible as a resource for reporting harassment, or assistance with the reporting process as they were constantly engaged in active responsibilities. Additionally, the volunteers with the convention are ordered not to leave their posts for any reason.²⁴ It would follow, then, that even if a volunteer was to be located, their ability to assist a harassment victim would be extremely limited.

After walking 30 rows of the convention hall, only 23 staff members were visible. 11 of those staff members were monitoring the line for the large events in Hall H. Ten staff members were monitoring emergency exits to be sure the exits were clear and not being blocked. The other two were acting as security for the 20th Century Fox exhibitors booth, also emphasizing crowd control. No other staff or volunteers were present or easily identifiable within the convention hall. **Of the various volunteers, staff, and security, at least five different styles of shirt or uniform were noted, with no easily identifiable color or uniform to seek out in the crowd if assistance was needed.**

White phones were not located within the convention hall. To access a phone people had to make their ways to the ends of the hall, or immediately outside the doors leading to the lobby. In such a congested space, **unless a person physically took the harasser with them to the white phone,** there would be no way to acknowledge or address the behavior. It also requires the person who is harassed to exit the convention hall in order to report the behavior.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Of the people interviewed across the convention hall, the only ones who knew of the harassment policy indicated they were made aware through press articles about the effort to improve the policy. Most, however, were still **unaware if a policy actually existed, or of any details about the policy.**

²⁴ See Attachment 1.

Across the board, once we recited the brief policy, every person interviewed acknowledged that it was vague, and they were still unclear as to what behavior was being proscribed.

Even when extreme incidents occur, like the sexual assault of prominent cosplayer Alicia Marie, people do not intervene and victims of harassment are left to deal with the issues on their own. And the harassment and groping affects more than just the cosplayers. One attendee indicated that, while in regular clothing (as opposed to cosplay) a man approached her and clearly took a photo zoomed in on her chest. She yelled at him until he went away but no one stepped in to do anything about it. **She didn't seek out security because she feels "security doesn't help and there is no follow through when harassment is reported."**

An artist at an exhibitor's table indicated she was harassed during an interview last year, and was also physically "picked up by a man for a photo without permission." She "yelled at him until he left," but she too didn't even consider seeking out security for assistance. Another attendee told us about a male artist who offered her a sliding-scale discount on a commissioned piece based on the amount of clothing she removed.

Artists in artist alley confirmed that no policy was highlighted in their artist alley paperwork; nor was there any policy or paper posted on artists' tables on check in day.

The two people who indicated they thought the policy was sufficient were unable to answer the question, "What counts as harassment?" A lack of awareness of what behavior will not be tolerated is as troubling as the lack of awareness of what behavior will be taken seriously when reported. This allows for offenders to feel that they are free from repercussions while discouraging those who are harassed from reporting anything other than the most serious forms of harassment and violence. A photographer within the convention hall, after being read the harassment policy, noted that **"without a visible, clear policy, people who do NOT harass or experience harassment, won't realize they need to intervene because they aren't even aware what's happening."** They also won't know what security will take seriously if they report observed behavior on someone's behalf.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PHYSICAL SPACE

There needs to be a **larger staff and volunteer presence** throughout the convention, within the hall and lobby areas, and outside the lobby where people congregate to rest. This presence can even be in the form of volunteers walking through and enjoying the convention hall while wearing an easily identifiable shirt so people can stop them if help is needed.

The staff need to be wearing something that is **uniform and easily identifiable** to attendees in the event that assistance needs to be quickly and easily located.

Mechanisms for reporting and responding to harassment in real time need to be implemented and publicized. New York Comic Con's smartphone app is an excellent example of an efficient solution. The convention's application has a live-reporting form at the link to the harassment policy for people to report harassment in real time. The app only requires a handful of volunteers to be trained to then be on call to collect and promptly respond to harassment as it is reported in the app.

The policy needs to be made transparent and unavoidable for all in attendance.

Agreements with off-site but affiliated event spaces need to be made to post and enforce the harassment policy uniformly. At some off-site events within hotels and event spaces, official SDCC volunteers were present. This needs to become a uniform, standardized practice at all events within the convention area.

SOCIAL CONCERNS

The harassment policy must be **posted prominently** within the convention hall, as well as in places people tend to gather throughout the convention center space.

The policy must be highlighted in the artist alley and exhibitor packets, explicitly outlining that the behavior will not be tolerated from anyone, attendee, exhibitor, or artist.

The harassment policy needs to be both more detailed in terms of what constitutes harassment, what sorts of behaviors will be taken seriously when reported, and what the mechanisms are for reporting the behavior.

The policy needs to be more **widely publicized**, both online before the convention, and on-site during the convention, within and without the convention hall.

CAPACITY BUILDING

NYCC's 2013 policy was one GeeksForCONsent also scrutinized. We reached out to NYCC, around the time we began our Spring 2013 push against SDCC, and received no response from either convention. NYCC's policy was a bit more specific, but still lacking, especially considering the high-profile reports of harassment they were also receiving. **A few weeks after the significant press decrying San Diego Comic Con's insufficient anti-harassment effort, New York Comic Con (NYCC) convened a panel for assistance with revamping their entire approach to harassment within the convention space.**²⁵ The suggestions that were implemented were a dramatic improvement to their anti harassment effort and are an excellent model for San Diego Comic Con. NYCC's effort also directly rebuts SDCC's excuse that they are a large space that is difficult to regulate. **NYCC, with over 151,000 unique attendees in 2014, implemented the model policy including everything we've been pushing for the past two years, and their attendance numbers surpassed SDCC, which has a 130,000 attendee cap, by over 20,000 people.**

NYCC's new, detailed policy was posted on several signs at the entrance of the convention center that were physically larger than we were. Not only is the policy visible online and within the space, but it clearly details what will not be tolerated, that there will be a thorough and swift response to any reports of harassment, and that their commitment is to creating their convention as a space that is safe and accessible for everyone. **For the full NYCC Harassment Policy, see Attachment 4.** The addition of the ability to report harassment through the convention's smartphone app



allows for a real time, reliable enforcement mechanism for harassment, instilling confidence in those harassed and harassing that the policy is taken seriously by the convention.

Large scale conventions must continue to make visible and credible attempts at improving conditions for women and LGBT attendees of their conventions. NYCC's efforts are an admirable step in capacity building for the entire convention circuit across the United States. **San Diego Comic Con must follow suit.**

²⁵ Pahle, Rebecca. "The Mary Sue Presents NYCC's Anti-Harassment Policy (And We Helped!)." The Mary Sue The Mary Sue Presents NYCCs AntiHarassment Policy And We Helped Comments. 17 Sept. 2014. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.

ATTACHMENT 1

SAN DIEGO'S COMIC CON INTERNATIONAL 2013 VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION PACKET



**SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION INC.
VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION PACKET**

**COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL
SAN DIEGO CONVENTION CENTER
111 WEST HARBOR DRIVE ○ SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
JULY 18-21, 2013**



VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

General Information: If you are volunteering on Thursday July 18th, We suggest that you come to the Volunteer Area in lobby A of the San Diego Convention Center on Wednesday July 17th between 10:00 AM and 9:00 PM to check in, get a badge, and get your Thursday assignment. Also, those volunteers who completed assignments in 2012, and are signed up for 2013, can get their Preview Night stickers when they check in during the hours above. However, if you can't come Wednesday, no problem!

Whatever day you get to Comic-Con, please come to the Volunteer Area first. (*NOTE: If you have purchased an attendee badge for Comic-Con 2013, you must go to Attendee Registration in the Sails Pavilion FIRST and pick up your badge before coming to the Volunteer Area for an assignment.*) The Volunteer Area will be located in the lobby A of the San Diego Convention Center. Watch for signs to point you to the correct door.

About 10 days before the show, you will get an email confirmation with a barcode on it. Please bring your barcode confirmation, your Member ID, and a photo ID with date of birth, and your Volunteer Agreement Form (page 10) to the Volunteer Area to identify you as a confirmed volunteer. A school ID with signed parental waiver is also accepted. If you have lost your confirmation or barcode do not panic. It speeds up the check in process, but we can check you in without it. We will then give you an assignment and a badge so that you can access the area to which you are assigned. When you are not actively volunteering, these badges will allow you into the Exhibit Hall and panels during regular Comic-Con hours. Additionally, if you are under 18 years of age you must bring a signed parental consent form (found on page 11) to the Volunteer Area when you check in.

Only volunteers who completed at least one assignment in 2012 and are signed up for 2013 may attend Preview Night, July 17, 2013, 6-9 PM. You must check in at the Volunteer Area as soon as you arrive to get a Preview Night sticker. The Volunteer Area will be open at 10:00 AM on Wednesday, July 17th.

Volunteer Area Hours

(hours subject to change)

10AM – 9PM: Wednesday, July 17th

7AM – 7PM: Thursday, July 18th thru Saturday, July 20th

7AM – until last assignment is over: Sunday, July 21st



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You may want to arrive early to get parking in the Convention Center, BUT unless you are assigned a task in the early morning, you will not be able to enter the Convention Center lobby before 8 AM. Go get some breakfast and come back at 8 AM.

Badges: Lost badges issued by the Volunteer Department will be replaced at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinators, Jennifer Maturo or Marc Wilson. Lost badges issued through Attendee Registration must be dealt with at the Attendee Registration Help Desk in the Sails Pavilion. **All badges are the property of SDCC and must be relinquished to SDCC upon request.** Please see a Volunteer Coordinator if there are any problems.

Volunteer On-Duty Stickers: When you go to the Assignment Check-In desk at the designated time, you will get a sticker that is to be worn while you are on an assignment. This sticker identifies you as a volunteer on duty. When you finish your assignment and are no longer on duty, take it off and throw it away. Please do not stick it on any walls, floors, doors, your friend's forehead, etc. You must always have your regular convention badge showing as well.

We ask that you volunteer for one assignment each day (an assignment is usually 3 hours). If you are not available for the full assignment, let us know. We will try to reassign you to a time that better fits your schedule. Before 1:30 PM, we only give out assignments for the current day. Starting at 1:30 PM, we begin to schedule assignments for the next day. Two hours after the end of your assignment, or after 1:30 pm **whichever is later**, you may go to the Scheduling Desk to get an assignment for the following day.

Please arrive at the Assignment Check-In (ACI) desk on time and stay at your assignment the entire time. If you must miss an assignment for some reason (and we understand that things happen), let a Volunteer Department staff person know in advance, if possible, so that you can be replaced and reassigned. If you are not at the ACI desk prior to your assignment or if you do not check out with the department to which you are assigned at the end of the assignment, you will not get credit for that assignment. If this happens, you will not be able to sign up for any further assignments for the rest of the show. If you are released early from your assignment, *be sure* to report back to the ACI desk to let us know you were released early so you will still be eligible for assignments the following day.

Thank You! To show our appreciation for dedicated volunteers, once you have completed an assignment you are eligible for the much-sought-after-not-available-in-any-store Volunteer T-shirt! You will get a t-shirt ticket with your badge with information on where and when to get your shirt. This ticket is invalid by itself and must be validated by Volunteer Department staff at the validation desk in lobby A in order for you to get a t-shirt. After you have completed your first assignment you may get your validation from the desk and get your wearable "thank you" from all of us at Comic-Con International. We are grateful for your support of Comic-Con and we hope that you will enjoy volunteering your time with us and being part of the huge effort it takes to put on a convention like Comic-Con International.



SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION INC. VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION PACKET

COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL

DAILY VOLUNTEER POLICIES and SAFETY GUIDELINES

Mission Statement: San Diego Comic Convention, Inc. (dba Comic-Con International, WonderCon and APE-Alternative Press Expo) is a nonprofit educational corporation dedicated to creating awareness of and appreciation for comics and related art forms, primarily through the presentation of conventions and events that celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of comics to art and culture.

Purpose of Volunteer Policies: The achievement of these goals is best served by the active participation of members of comic fandom and the community at large. To this end, San Diego Comic Convention Inc. (SDCC) accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels and within all appropriate programs and activities.

The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance and direction to volunteers. SDCC policies set productive standards of conduct, reduce faulty communications, and insure consistency in all aspects of the volunteer experience. Only the Volunteers Dept. coordinators, the Human Resources Coordinator and/or SDCC administration staff and Board of Directors may grant changes or exceptions to these policies and then only in writing.

Scope of Volunteer Policies: These policies apply to those individuals who volunteer their time on behalf of SDCC for APE (Alternative Press Expo), WonderCon, and/or Comic-Con International.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities: Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to SDCC and its membership. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be treated with respect, effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for volunteer assignments performed, however, the receipt of an honorarium or any other form of compensation is not to be expected in any volunteer position. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their assignments to the best of their abilities, to follow the policies and procedures as set out below, and to be punctual and courteous.

GENERAL POLICIES

Eligibility: Volunteers must be 16 years or older to volunteer for WonderCon and/or Comic-Con International, and 18 years or older to volunteer for APE. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have a signed parental notice of consent (see page 11) on file with the Volunteer Department. SDCC is not responsible for volunteers who are minors when they are not actively engaged in volunteer activities. Volunteers must be age 16 on or before June 30, 2013 to volunteer for Comic-Con International 2013.



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Company Property: No volunteer will remove company property from the event site without specific instruction from a supervisor responsible for the property in question. Removing or attempting to remove company property without permission may result in dismissal from the volunteer program and legal action.

Personal Property: SDCC will not be held responsible for damage to personal property not authorized for convention usage by the Board or Directors.

Dress Code: Volunteers are responsible for presenting a good image to everyone they come in contact with. Shirt and shoes are required at all times. Profane or X-rated clothing/costumes are not allowed. Real or facsimile weapons may not be carried at any time while on duty. As a courtesy to all, we ask for volunteers to practice clean personal hygiene.

Training: Volunteers will receive specific instructions onsite to provide them with the information necessary to perform their assignment.

Personal Conduct: Volunteers may not engage in unprofessional, unethical or disrespectful conduct. Some examples of conduct that are *not permissible* include the following:

1. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during volunteer activities.
2. Physical or verbal abuse of clients (including but not limited to attendees, exhibitors and professionals), their family members/friends, volunteers or staff members.
3. Using profanity in communicating with clients, their family/friends, volunteers or staff members.
4. Unauthorized use of company equipment including telephones, computers or other office equipment.
5. Theft of any property (personal items, food, supplies, money, etc.) belonging to SDCC, any client, volunteer or staff member.
6. Using a volunteer position to gain any personal or financial favors from clients, their family/friends, volunteers, donors or staff members.
7. Fighting is absolutely prohibited, as is roughhousing and horseplay.
8. Gambling of any kind or bookmaking on company premises and/or event premises is prohibited.



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In addition, these generally accepted guidelines of conduct apply:

1. While conducting convention business, volunteers must present themselves in a professional manner at all times.
2. Volunteers must not present themselves as officially representing SDCC, or its clients or agents, in disputes, legal matters, media interviews, on the Internet, in e-mail or in any other venue without the express authorization from the Executive Director, President of the Board of Directors or the Director of Marketing/PR.
3. Volunteers must take no action or conduct themselves in any manner that may cause injury to themselves or others.
4. Volunteers must not do anything to interfere with another's ability to participate in the volunteer program.
5. Volunteers must treat others with courtesy and respect.
6. Punctuality and good attendance is an expected condition of the volunteer program.

Harassment Policy: SDCC is committed to establishing and maintaining a volunteer/work environment free from discrimination, coercion and harassment. In that regard, the organization wishes to affirmatively address the issue of unlawful harassment including, but not limited to, sexual harassment. The company strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate unlawful harassment by managers, supervisors, employees or volunteers.

Harassment based upon any protected classification is illegal and against our policy, including harassment based on age, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, disability or any other basis protected by law. It violates Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act and state fair employment laws because it discriminates on the basis of sex. Unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to making unwanted advances or unwelcome verbal, physical or physical conduct where:

1. submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of volunteer participation; or
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting such individual; or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's volunteer performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive volunteer/work environment.



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Examples of sexual harassment are provided below. However, it is not possible to identify each and every act which constitutes or may constitute sexual harassment.

- Unwelcome requests for sexual favors; lewd or derogatory comments or jokes, comments regarding sexual behavior or the body of another employee; sexual innuendo and other vocal activity such as cat calls or whistles.
- Obscene letters, notes, invitations, photographs, cartoons, articles, or other written or pictorial materials of a sexual nature.
- Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed the interest is unwelcome.
- Retaliating against a volunteer for refusing a sexual advance or reporting an incident of possible sexual harassment to the company or any government agency.
- Offering or providing factors or benefits such as promotions, favorable evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, etc. in exchange for sexual favors.
- Any unwanted physical touching or assault or blocking or impeding movements.

If a volunteer believes he/she has been the subject of unlawful harassment or if an employee or volunteer observes the harassment of another individual, the incident should be promptly reported to the volunteer coordinator, a department head or assistant, the Executive Director or to the President of the Board of Directors. A volunteer has the right to report the harassment claim to any person of authority within the organization. All harassment complaints should be documented in writing and submitted within twenty-four (24) hours, or as soon as it is possible.

All submitted complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken. The investigation will be as objective and complete as reasonably possible. Upon completion of the investigation, a determination will be made and the results will be communicated to the complainant, the alleged harasser and, as appropriate, to all others directly concerned.

If inappropriate conduct is proven, prompt and effective remedial action will be taken. This includes the following steps: 1) appropriate action will be taken against the harasser and communicated to the complainant; 2) steps will be taken to prevent any further harassment; within the reasonable control of the company and as appropriate under the circumstances; and 3) other appropriate remedial action will be taken. With regard to acts of harassment by those outside the company, corrective action within the reasonable control of the company, and as appropriate under the circumstances, will be taken.

No volunteer will suffer reprisals or retaliation for making a complaint of unlawful harassment in good faith, or any other unlawful conduct, or for initiating or assisting in any action or proceeding in good faith regarding unlawful harassment or discrimination. Any incidents of further harassment or retaliation should be reported immediately to the volunteer coordinator, a



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department head or assistant, the Executive Director or to the President of the Board of Directors.

Open Door Policy: If a volunteer has any problems or concerns about any aspect of the volunteer program, they should feel free to contact the head of the department for which he/she is volunteering. A daily volunteer may also contact Volunteer Department staff. Volunteers may also contact Human Resources or the Board of Directors to discuss problems or concerns.

General Safety Guidelines: It is desirable for each volunteer to practice safety awareness by thinking defensively, anticipating unsafe situations and reporting unsafe conditions immediately. For the protection and safety of all, SDCC has established the following guidelines designed to prevent accident and injury. In addition, department heads and Division Administrators may establish specific requirements for individual departments. The Human Resources Coordinator is in charge of implementing the safety guidelines for SDCC.

1. All persons shall follow these safe practices, render every possible aid to safe operations, and report all unsafe conditions to their department head.
2. Anyone known or reasonably suspected to be under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotics shall not be allowed to volunteer while in that condition.
3. Avoid risk of rupture, internal injury or back injury in attempting to lift or push excessive loads. Observe the correct position for lifting. Stand with feet slightly apart, assume a squatting position with knees bent and chin tucked in. Tilt head forward, grasp the load with both hands and gradually push up with legs, keeping back straight, avoiding any abrupt movement. Do not try to lift an item, which is too heavy or bulky to be handled by one person. ASK FOR HELP.
4. Do not allow wax, oil, water or any other material to remain on the floor where people might slip. Report any spills to the department head, and assistant or the volunteer coordinator immediately.
5. Do not block fire doors, fire extinguishers, gas meters, electrical panels, traffic lanes, aisles, stairways or exits.
6. Never operate any machinery or equipment without obtaining full instructions, and only when specifically told to do so by a supervisor.
7. Do not use defective tools or equipment. Report defects immediately to the Dept Head.
8. Never begin any hazardous job unless completely familiar with the proper techniques and precautions that apply to it. Check with the supervisor if unsure.
9. Never attempt to repair, adjust, or lubricate a machine unless instructed on the proper procedures. Never attempt to repair/adjust electrical equipment unless the power switch is properly turned off/unplugged.
10. If volunteering outside in the sun or in areas of extreme heat, drink lots of water (or Gatorade or similar product), 8 oz. every 20-30 minutes, to avoid heat exhaustion, heat stroke or heat cramps.



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11. Keep area and all facilities used clean and neat.
12. Understand assignments fully and follow instructions. If unsure of the safe procedure, ask supervisor.
13. Know the location of first aid room/EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) and fire fighting equipment.
14. Unnecessary and excessive haste is the cause of many accidents. Exercise caution at all times. WALK, DO NOT RUN.
15. All convention-related injuries and accidents, no matter how minor, must be reported immediately to a department head, assistant or the volunteer coordinator.
16. A violation of a safety precaution is, in itself, an unsafe act. Please follow these guidelines.

Convention Specific Safety Guidelines: Volunteers may be assigned to more than one department or area over the course of the convention. In addition to the above listed safety guidelines, we have listed here a few, more specific areas in which to practice caution:

1. Lifting: Volunteers may be asked to lift a wide variety of items (boxes of program guides, film cans, flats of beverages etc.) Countermeasures: Note #3 above for the proper lifting method. REMEMBER! ASK FOR HELP IF NEEDED. Or make multiple trips if that is what it takes to avoid injury. If this is not possible, DO NOT lift the item. Find someone to help or leave it.
2. Slips/Trips/Falls: Possible hazards are tripping over electrical wires, drape stands, or over others while carrying boxes etc. Those volunteering in Films, Japanese Animation and the Masquerade have the added challenge of being in the dark, avoiding falling off the back of projection risers, avoiding tripping on backstage cables/stairs, or avoiding falling off the stage. Volunteers are asked to please be careful and not to work in those areas that make them feel uncomfortable or put them at risk of slipping, tripping or falling. Countermeasures: Move slowly and keep eyes moving so hazards will be noticed. Use caution on stairways and escalators. Flashlights will be available to staff in darkened areas as well as “catchers” and strip lights for the Masquerade stage.
3. Falling Equipment: There are many signs, drapes, booths, lights, and other equipment all over the event site. There is a very slight possibility that this equipment might fall over or off the walls or ceiling. Countermeasures: All of this equipment has been set up by professionals and is properly secured to prevent this type of injury. Please help by not leaning/sitting on ends of tables and hanging/pulling on drape poles or light stands. Also, use caution when sitting in folding chairs as they can easily fold or tip over.
4. Electrical Shock/Burns: Be careful when plugging/unplugging equipment like typewriters, cash registers, projectors, etc. Countermeasures: Do not stick fingers inside a typewriter, working parts of a cash register, or projector. Ask supervisor for help with changing tape rolls, ribbon, film etc. Parts of these machines can get very hot and could cause burns. Do not attempt to change bulbs in a projector.
5. Cut/Puncture/Misc. Injuries: Volunteers may be asked to use various items that could cause these types of injuries (scissors, box cutters, knives, etc.). Countermeasures: Avoiding horseplay and paying attention at all times will help eliminate these types of injuries.



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First Aid: Remember, if a volunteer is injured in any way, or if he/she sees someone who is injured and unable to get help by himself or herself, notify a department head, assistant, or anyone with a radio immediately. If no one is available, call building security. A First Aid station/EMT is available on site at all times. Be sure to check out its location before beginning your first volunteer assignment. First aid materials will also be available backstage at the Masquerade for Comic-Con.

Fire Hazards: If a potential fire hazard is seen, report it to supervisor or to anyone with a radio. Know where the fire extinguishers are in the area. If smoke is seen or smelled, try to locate the source and then notify a department head, assistant, or anyone with a radio, or report it to building security. Keeping areas free of clutter and papers that can potentially fall near a live wire or outlet will help in avoiding fire hazards.

Protection of Personal Property: Never leave purses, wallets, items bought in the exhibit hall or anything else of value lying around. Leave unnecessary items at home. If there is a bag check area at the convention site, take advantage of it. Volunteers should wear fanny packs or other types of carriers that will allow them to keep valuables on their persons and yet leave hands free. If any items are missing, notify a department head or an assistant immediately. They will notify security.



**SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION INC.
VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION PACKET**

**SAN DIEGO COMIC CONVENTION, INC.
DAILY VOLUNTEER POLICIES & SAFETY GUIDELINES
AGREEMENT FORM**

(please sign and bring to the Volunteer Area when you check in)

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE POLICIES AND SAFETY GUIDELINES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY BE CHANGED, MODIFIED OR DELETED AT ANY TIME AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF SDCC. I AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE RULES AND REGULATIONS CONTAINED HEREIN AND WITH ANY REVISIONS SUBSEQUENTLY MADE BY SDCC.

Signature of Volunteer _____

Date: _____

Please Print Name _____

PARENTAL CONSENT, MEDICAL WAIVER AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

You must be at least 16 years old on or before June 30, 2013 to volunteer for Comic-Con International 2013. If you are under the age of 18, you must bring a signed copy of this parental consent form to the Volunteer Area to get your first assignment. No exceptions -- no other form is acceptable.

I, _____ [name], warrant that I am the parent having legal custody of or the legal guardian of _____ [name of minor] ("Minor"), who was born on _____. I understand that Minor has the intention of volunteering time for Comic-Con International (CCI).

I agree and consent to Minor's participation at COMIC-CON INTERNTIONAL

I understand and agree that it is Minor's responsibility to find food, lodging and transportation to and from the location of any volunteer activity he/she agrees to perform. I further understand and agree that CCI, its agents, employees, heirs, successors and assigns are in no way responsible for providing food, lodging and/or transportation to the Minor. In the event of accident or injury to Minor while volunteering, I authorize CCI, its directors, officers, agents, employees, successors and assigns to seek and obtain medical and/or dental treatment and/or care for Minor. The authority granted by this Parental Consent, Medical Waiver and Indemnity Agreement includes the authority to consent to any medical and/or dental treatment and/or care to be rendered to Minor under the general and/or specific supervision of a qualified physician, surgeon or dentist. Furthermore, I agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless CCI, its directors, officers, agents, employees, successors and assigns from any and all damages, losses, claims, liabilities, charges, suits, penalties, costs and/or expenses, including but not limited to court costs, attorneys' fees and expenses, resulting from any act (whether intentional or not), omission or negligence of Minor and/or from any injury occurring to Minor.

Signature of parent/guardian _____

Contact Phone (_____) _____

ATTACHMENT 2

Gender-Based Safety Audits Recommended Readings

Whitzman, Carolyn, et. al. "The Effectiveness of Women's Safety Audits." *Security Journal* 22.3 (2009): 203-18. Print.

C.Moser. "Safety, Gender Mainstreaming and Gender-based Programmes." In *Women in the City: On Violence and Rights*, ed. A. (Ed), 77-95. Santiago, Chile: 2009. Print.

ATTACHMENT 3

EMAIL SENT BY COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL AT 7:09PM EST ON FRIDAY, JULY 18, 2014.



Feminist Public Works <feministpublicworks@gmail.com>

Important information for attending Comic-Con International 2014

2 messages

DO NOT REPLY Comic-Con International <do-not-reply@comic-con.org>

Fri, Jul 18, 2014 at 10:09 PM

Reply-To: do-not-reply@comic-con.org

To: philly@ihollaback.org

Hello,

Here is some important information for attending Comic-Con International 2014.

Almost all of this information is located on our website, but we know you are busy getting ready for Comic-Con so we wanted to highlight some important things for you.

Emergencies:

For any emergency that requires immediate response, please use a white house phone and dial **5911** as this will expedite emergency response to the Convention Center.

Code of Conduct/Anti Harassment Policy

Attendees must respect common sense rules for public behavior, personal interaction, common courtesy, and respect for private property. Harassing or offensive behavior will not be tolerated. Comic-Con reserves the right to revoke, without refund, the membership and badge of any attendee not in compliance with this policy.

Persons finding themselves in a situation where they feel their safety is at risk or who become aware of an attendee not in compliance with this policy should immediately locate a member of security, or a Comic-Con staff member, so that the matter can be handled in an expeditious manner. If your safety is at risk and you need immediate assistance you may also use a white house phone and dial **5911**.

Security may be contacted by visiting our Show Office in Lobby C. A Comic-Con staff member will be in the office during public hours.

Recording and Release:

If a non-news organization requests to interview or record you, they will most likely ask you to sign a release form. Remember to sign the release **AFTER** you have conducted your interview. If you are unhappy with the recording you can ask them not to use your footage and refuse to sign the release form. Remember: sign the release form **AFTER** you have conducted your interview.

Program Location Changes:

Every year events change location, please check your Events Guide for more information.

The Comic-Con International/Robert A. Heinlein Blood Drive is now at the Manchester Grand Hyatt. For more information visit

<http://www.comic-con.org/cci/blood-drive>

The Fulfillment Room is now at the Manchester Grand Hyatt. For more information visit

<http://www.comic-con.org/cci/2014/manchester-grand-hyatt>

Transportation:

The Shuttle Bus is a great way to get around, it's free to badge holders and information on it can be found at <http://www.comic-con.org/cci/shuttles>

The Trolley is a great way to get downtown to avoid all the traffic. For schedule and other information visit <http://www.comic-con.org/cci/transportation>

New Programs:

Check your Events Guide onsite for more information and additional programs.

Don't want to wait in the line for Hall H or Ballroom 20? You can still see some of those programs from BOTH rooms by checking out the Comic-Con Playback Room at the Omni San Diego hotel, which will feature rebroadcasts of some of the panels in Hall H AND Ballroom 20. Check <http://www.comic-con.org/cci/2014/omni-san-diego-playback-room> for more information.

This year we are having some cool smaller programs at the Horton Grand Theatre. For more information, visit <http://www.comic-con.org/cci/2014/horton-grand-theatre>

This year we are implementing the Toucan Tracker Wristbands for the first program of the day in Hall H. Scroll down to the end of this page for additional information on this new effort.

Policies to remember:

Our Costume Weapons policy can be found at

<http://www.comic-con.org/toucan/13sdcc-2014-wearing-costume-comic-con-check-our-costume-weapons-policy-first>

Remember to keep your 2014 badge if you want to pre-register for next years show. Information on Comic-Con International 2015 will appear on our website this fall.

Google Glasses/Video Recorders/Camera Phones

Remember recording of footage on the screens during panels is prohibited. This includes Google Glasses. You cannot wear Google Glasses during footage viewing in any program room. If your Google Glasses are prescription, please bring a different pair to use during these times.

Also, please turn off your device (phones, tablets, etc.) screens and put them away during the screening of panel footage. Not doing so interferes with everyone's viewing quality and causes security to think you're recording the clip.

Other Events you might want to visit:

MTV is again hosting a welcome party called MTV FanFest. For more information visit <http://www.comic-con.org/toucan/17sdcc-2014-all-fun-outside-convention-center>

And there are these other cool things happening outside the Convention Center:

- NBC Experience at Gaslamp Square (in between the Convention Center and Hard Rock Hotel)
- The Assassin's Creed Experience next to the Hilton Gaslamp Hotel
- Homer's Dome at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront front lawn
- *Godzilla* Display behind the Convention Center next to the 5th Ave. pier and ferry landing
- Nintendo Video Game Lounge, San Diego Ballroom at the Marriott Marquis & Marina
- The *Adventure Time* Conquest Fulfillment Center across from the Children's Museum.
- *Game of Thrones*: Survive the Realm Experience at the Omni Hotel Gallery.

Additional Important Information:**Introducing the Toucan Tracker Wristbands for Hall H's First Panel of the Day!**

In order to help you manage your valuable time at Comic-Con, we're starting a new system for the initial morning line for Hall H called **Toucan Trackers!** Our goal is to help attendees get a better idea of the length of the line for Hall H.

For detailed information on the Toucan Tracker Wristbands, please visit:

<http://www.comic-con.org/toucan/22sdcc-2014-introducing-toucan-tracker-wristbands-hall-h%E2%80%99s-first-panel-of-day>

Hotels and Comments:

If you have a hotel issue please visit the Travel Desk in Lobby D of the Convention Center.

For general comments and issues during the show, you can visit the Show Office in Lobby C of the Convention Center.

We're glad you'll be joining us this year!

Rochelle Keyhan <philly@ihollaback.org>
To: Rebecca Keegan <Rebecca.Keegan@latimes.com>

Wed, Jul 23, 2014 at 2:13 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "DO NOT REPLY Comic-Con International" <do-not-reply@comic-con.org>
Date: July 18, 2014 at 7:09:12 PM PDT
To: philly@ihollaback.org
Subject: Important information for attending Comic-Con International 2014
Reply-To: do-not-reply@comic-con.org

[Quoted text hidden]

To report an incident via the NYCC App, tap the NYCC Anti-Harassment Policy icon and follow the steps under Report Harassment. Please fill out the form in as much detail as possible so we can address the situation immediately and thoroughly. If you're still in the area where the incident took place and it's safe to stay where you are, our Security Team will meet you there.

If a person engages in harassing behavior, New York Comic Con (NYCC) Staff will take prompt action in any form they deem appropriate, including expulsion from NYCC with no refund. Our policy applies to EVERYONE at the convention. Exhibitors, Fans (Attendees) Speakers, Guests, Professionals, Press, Staff, Volunteers, and Security are all subject to our anti-harassment policy and will be held to the same standards and disciplinary action.

Anyone can report harassment. If someone's behavior has made you uncomfortable, or if you witness the same happening to someone else, you should immediately contact NYCC Staff, Security Team, or a Crew Member. You may also come to NYCC's Show Office or report the incident via the NYCC App.

If necessary, we will contact local law enforcement, provide escort, offer a safe place or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to make sure they feel safe for the rest of NYCC.

Remember: **Cosplay is not consent.** Keep your hands to yourself. If you would like to take a picture with or of another NYCC Fan, always ask first and respect that person's right to say no. When at NYCC, be respectful, be nice, be cool and be kind to each other.

ReedPOP's mission is to create a fun, safe, welcoming, awesome event where Fans of all kinds can come together and celebrate. We want you to not only have the most amazing weekend ever, but to experience it in an environment where you are safe and accepted. As Fans ourselves, we understand the importance of creating a safe space for everyone who attends NYCC