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The Hume Society Handbook for Annual Conferences

The purpose of the Hume Society is to stimulate scholarship on David Hume's works worldwide. This purpose explains the Society's commitments to annual conferences, to holding these conferences around the world, to anonymous review of submissions, to having commentators for all accepted papers, to structuring the conferences to allow for a thorough and helpful discussion of presentations, and to ensuring occasions during which participants can meet informally to get to know one another and so continue their conversations beyond the confines of the Conference. The aim is to create a scholarly community of Hume scholars. Fulfilling this over-arching purpose, in an atmosphere of collegiality, ought to be kept in mind in proposing and running a conference.

Organizing a conference is not easy, and some accumulated wisdom may help. What follows is counsel drawn from my own experiences in directing and being involved in other ways in conferences since the inception of the Society and from the experiences of others who have been generous with their comments and advice.

This counsel is organized around the following themes:

- (1) Proposing a conference
- (2) Preliminaries
- (3) "Conference Manager" Software
- (4) Selecting papers
- (5) Structuring the conference
- (6) Essential details
- (7) Financial considerations
- (8) Hume Gear
- (9) Outline and checklist

(1) Proposing a conference -- A proposal for a conference is addressed to the President or Executive Vice President of the Society, who will submit it to the Executive Committee for their consideration. Proposals ought to be submitted three years before the proposed date.

Three years is barely enough time to mount a conference. A Call for Papers is to be sent out by February 1st of the year preceding the year a conference is to take place, and time is needed before then to settle the decisions affecting a Call for Papers -- the Conference themes, invited speakers, dates of the conference, site, and so on. The usual pace of academic consultation between even the well-intended means the usual delays in, for instance, hearing from those who have been invited.

The Executive Committee's approval will be contingent on the potential directors, the site, the cost, and other such matters -- all listed below. In addition, the Society has

committed to a pattern of annual conference locations alternating between North America and elsewhere. This is a presumptive prescription, and when special conditions arise, the Executive Committee may be persuaded to alter the pattern for a particular year. But the commitment to alternate off and on the North American continent comes from a collective judgment that the Society ought to further the study of Hume internationally.

The procedure -- The usual format is that a person at a particular university -- the potential on-site director -- offers to host a conference and submits a formal invitation which includes the following:

Why there? -- The Executive Committee is concerned that sites chosen be easy to get to and provide good meeting spaces and inexpensive accommodations. But the more desirous a site on other grounds -- e.g. aesthetic -- the less weighty such considerations will be. The Executive Committee is also concerned that conferences be spread about geographically. When the Society meets in North America, for instance, it should not meet in the same part of the country as the last few meetings.

How much? -- Costs to members should be kept low. This includes not just the Conference fee, but room and board as well. Best-guess estimates are required.

Official offer? -- The invitation generally includes a letter from a Dean or other administrative person at the host institution agreeing to host the Conference. The host institution must pick up some of the Conference costs (e.g. mailing and telephone costs for the on-site Director) and the letter is to ensure institutional commitment. When soliciting funds from the host institution, it should be noted that the Society provides travel awards for graduate students whose papers are selected through the anonymous review process as well as travel stipends for graduate students selected as commentators at the conference. Host institutions have contributed to the costs of travel for invited speakers.

Themes? -- The Executive Committee needs some idea of what aspects of Hume's thought the Conference is to emphasize. The aim is to create a coherent conference around a set of themes which are different enough from each other to provide the opportunity for all or most of the Society's members to contribute, but which form a coherent enough package to unify the Conference's offerings. Settling on such a set of themes is no easy task, and the ideal is hard to achieve. The more coherent the set of themes, the more reasonable the set will seem to the Executive Committee. The usual number is three.

Length? -- The standard length of a conference is four to five days, with one or one half-day devoted to a social function. A typical conference might begin on a Mon- day evening and end on a Friday afternoon with part or all of Wednesday for an excursion. The variants on this standard format come primarily from considerations of convenience and concern about participants' arrival and departure times.

Date? -- It has become standard for the Society to meet in late July or early August. Nothing is sacrosanct about this time, but it has the virtue of allowing almost all the members of the Society to meet. A later time in August cuts into the beginning of classes in a number of American universities; an earlier time, in June, say, makes it more difficult for some of those overseas to attend; and even a time in early July makes it difficult for any Japanese scholar to attend.

On or off campus? -- The usual site has traditionally been a university campus, but conferences have sometimes moved off campuses. This is in part a response to the increasing tendency of universities to charge for using their campuses. Under such conditions, the Society is willing to look to other sites which have become competitive. In any event, there must be a sufficient number of rooms available both for accommodating those who will be coming (240 having been recorded at Montreal, 150 in Rome, over a hundred for many conferences) and for ensuring enough rooms for presentations and a large enough room for the entire assembled group.

(2) Preliminaries once a proposal is approved -- Once the Executive Committee has accepted a proposal, the task of arranging the Conference falls upon the Conference directors. It is too much to expect the President or Executive Vice President to become involved in the details of putting on a conference, but they and the Executive Committee may be able to help with three matters that need attention between the approval by the Executive Committee and the arrival of the first papers for review:

Two to Four directors -- Each conference requires (at least) two directors, one on-site to handle local logistics and one off-site, the Program Director, to chair the Reading Committee for submitted papers. Sometimes a third or fourth director is suggested (though three or four directors will complicate decision making). In any event, any choice needs to be acceptable to the on-site director and approved by the Executive Committee. The Constitution of the Society requires that directors be members of the Society and that the Program Director be a member, or former member, of the Executive Committee. Graduate students should not be a part of the conference team.

The separation of tasks is of fundamental importance. The off-site director is in no position to determine the local details of the Conference; the on-site director will have little time to chair the committee that assesses the submitted papers. The directors must agree on or modify the themes originally

proposed, decide whom to invite to speak, if anyone, and lay out the Conference's organization. It is essential that directors agree on these three matters and that neither director make changes in any of them without the other director agreeing.

It is of special importance to agree on how many slots will be available for submitted papers. When papers are to be selected for the Conference, the directors will find that they have a bell curve of acceptability: some must-haves, some must-nots, and a group of relatively well-reviewed papers from which to select the balance. This is the one point in the process where co-directors are most likely to become former friends. The compromise position will always be to add papers to the Conference. Adding slots will require either expanding the length of the Conference, having sessions in the evening, or having three concurrent sessions. None is a good idea, the first because it is expensive and exhausting, the second because eight hours of Hume during the day is enough and the evenings are needed for the social life of the Conference to help build a community, and the third because with three sessions, some sessions are not going to attract much of an audience. Decisions about which of the well-reviewed papers are to be accepted should be constrained by the original decision about the Conference's structure and available slots for submitted papers and will require good humor and patience.

The tasks of the directors must be kept distinct. Nothing is more confusing to participants than receiving the same information about the conference from different directors.

Invited speakers -- There has never been a conference without invited speakers -- for plenary sessions or panels to discuss some issue or review a book. Part of the program is thus set up in advance, and the invited speakers should be listed in the Call for Papers, providing an incentive for attendance.

Yet as many former conference directors will attest, several disadvantages attend having invited speakers. First, no choice will be non-contentious. "Who could complain about X?" is not a rhetorical question. Second, the invited presentation may fall flat. Third, and, thankfully, rarer, the invited speaker may come with no presentation, preferring "to talk over issues" they have "thought about for years."

Fourth, invited speakers are more likely to drop out of the Conference at a late date -- too late to be replaced -- than those who have submitted papers. And, fifth, invited speakers are more likely than most to come only to give their talk and then leave. Their too fleeting presence does not help further the scholarly camaraderie that ought to mark conferences and diminishes the scholarly impact inviting them was meant to have.

One suggestion for the last two issues is to condition any financial support upon a speaker's staying for the duration of the conference. After all, one aim of having an invited speaker is to allow for those at the conference to meet and talk with the speaker.

If a panel discussion of a book is included in the program of the Conference, the directors must ensure that the panelists understand that their job is to discuss the book -- not use the occasion to present their own views.

The directors must also ensure that the panelists have copies of the book far enough in advance to allow them to do a thorough job of preparing for the discussion.

Since the Society meets round the world to involve more scholars in the Hume Society, the off-site director may well bow to the desires of the on-site director regarding invitations to local scholars to speak.

Call for papers -- A Call for Papers for a conference is issued in February of the year before a conference. It should include: the themes, location and dates of the conference; the names and affiliations (only) of conference directors; the URL for the conference website, if available; the names of the principal invited speakers; the URL for submitting papers; the name and address of the Executive Vice President or contact person for questions regarding submissions (not a conference director); and the conditions for submission, especially the deadline for submission. November 1st has become the standard cut-off date for submissions. The earlier the date, the less time potential contributors have between the previous year's conference and the time when papers are due; the later the date, the less time the Chair of the Reading Committee has to send papers out for review and make decisions about papers.

Among the conditions for submission of papers are that the paper be properly prepared for anonymous review, with an English-language abstract limited to 200 words, and with a reading time of no more than x (x usually equals 30 to 40) minutes.

It is not the usual practice of directors to accept abstracts of papers only. It is too difficult to tell if an abstract will turn into a good paper unless one knows who has submitted the abstract, skewing the anonymous selection process. Also, once an abstract is accepted, no leverage can be brought to bear to obtain the completed paper.

The Call for Papers should include the dates for the Conference and, if possible, the times on those dates when the Conference will begin and end.

- (3) **“Conference Manager” Software** – The Hume Society provides online software for submission and processing of conference papers under anonymous review. The program also facilitates communication between Conference directors and referees (for paper evaluations and rankings), between directors and submitting authors (for acceptance and rejections letters), and between directors and invited speakers (including commentators and session chairs). In the end, the program generates a posted list (on humesociety.org) of Conference speakers and their uploaded papers, as well as the names of all Conference directors and referees. Directors usually access the Conference Manager a month or two preceding the paper-submission deadline. Extensive help pages, and a person serving as “site manager,” provide assistance.
- (4) **Selecting papers** -- The Conference will be made by the quality of the papers presented. The bulk of the burden for selecting papers, and for selecting commentators, falls on the Chair of the Reading Committee since the bulk of the papers presented at a conference will come from submitted papers.

Themes -- The themes of the conference provide a criterion for those submitting papers, helping to create a coherent conference. But if selected papers were limited to those on a Conference's themes, however broad, experience suggests we would have small conferences and, more important, not accept some exceptionally good papers. An exceptionally good paper ought to be accepted regardless although it is always possible that even an exceptionally good paper will not make it in a year of exceptionally good papers, a director's dream.

The Reading Committee -- The off-site director, the Program Director, that is, is to be chair of the Reading Committee. Submitted papers are submitted to the Executive Vice President of the Society in a form for anonymous review.

Anonymous Review -- Papers should be submitted in a revisable format (.doc, .docx, or rtf) to allow for editing for the purpose of anonymous review. Authors' names, and other identifying references should be removed from the document.

The Reading Committee -- The Chair of the Reading Committee is responsible for selecting mainly from among the members of the Hume Society a set of persons who agree to referee submitted papers. That set constitutes the Reading Committee. Its members ought to be given recognition by being cited in the Conference Program, and, in any event, the membership ought to be public knowledge (but only after the fact) so that those submitting papers can know who judged their papers. At least one of these persons must be a member of the Executive Committee. It is presumed that this group of individuals will be relatively large since the ideal situation is for each paper to be read by two persons, each of whom is to grade the paper and to submit the grade, with at least a short justification, to the Chair of the Reading Committee. Some previous Chairs think it is essential that potential reviewers be contacted a year before to lock them in; others think they can be contacted as papers come in for review.

What Reading Committee members do -- The members of the Reading Committee read a set of the papers, each numbered and prepared for anonymous review, and submit to the Chair of the Reading Committee their judgment with a very brief explanation of one to four lines or so in justification.

When are reports due? -- With papers due November 1st, the Chair of the Reading Committee has no more than about two months -- until January 1st, or shortly thereafter -- to send out papers to reviewers, get the reviewers to respond, read all the papers, make final selections, send out notes to those who have submitted papers, and send notes of thanks to the reviewers explaining, where necessary, why their sterling judgments have not been followed in particular cases.

That deadline is tight, but the final program ought to be in place and on the Society's webpage as of April 1st. The Chair of the Reading Committee thus has only three months after January 1st to get confirmation from those whose

papers have been accepted that they are coming, arrange commentators for each of the papers, handle all the odds and ends that always crop up in putting on a conference (e.g. someone pulling out of the panel discussion), and arrange for chairs for each session.

What the Chair of the Reading Committee does -- The list is long:

Assessing reviews -- The Chair will need to assess the reviewers and thus their reviews. Some reviewers set a very high bar for submissions, with 90+% rejected; other set low bars. The Chair will get a sense of this regarding individual reviewers by looking at the set of grades received and will need to take that into account in making a final judgment about which papers are to be accepted and which rejected.

Maintaining anonymous reviews -- Reviewers may be sent their own paper to review or a paper whose author they can readily identify. The best solution is for the Chair of the Reading Committee, when writing a covering letter to the reviewers, to ask that reviewers return any papers they prefer not to review, including, obviously, but not limited to, their own. If reviewers tell the Chair that a paper is theirs, the reviewing process for that paper is no longer anonymous.

Who has final say? -- The Chair of the Reading Committee will need to work this out with the other director(s). In most cases it is the Chair who makes the final determination -- consistent with the recommendations of the readers. Where there are split decisions, the Chair can send the paper out once again to be reviewed by someone else or ask the previous reviewers to look at the paper again with the other reviews in hand for their consideration. In any event, Chairs should not simply substitute their judgment for the consensus of the reviewers.

The bell curve for submitted papers -- There are always a few clearly wonderful papers, more clear losers, and a large set of papers in the middle that have some merit. It is about the middle group that, as might be expected, disagreements among reviewers generally arise, and though sending out some of these papers to new reviewers may help, that also delays the process of selection -- when time can be of the essence -- and may not help with the ultimate decision if these new reviews are not decisive (because e.g. the new reviewers are of two minds about the quality of the paper). Ultimately the responsibility will fall on the Chair of the Reading Committee, and so that person ought to read all the papers and, as consistently as possible with the reviewers' judgments, needs to select from among the papers in that middle group which will do for the Conference and which will not -- a selection that may be justified by an appeal to the Conference's coherence as well as by an appeal to the quality of the paper.

One person reads all -- In any event, one person ought to read through the entire set of submissions and grade them, at least roughly, into “must-have,” “must-not-have,” and “maybe yes, maybe no,” independently of the judgments of the outside reviewers. That person should be the Chair of the Reading Committee, who will not have submitted a paper for anonymous review, and Chairs should not substitute their judgment for the consensus of the outside reviewers should there be a discrepancy. Having the Chair read through all the submissions, however onerous a task, helps to cover the gaps in coverage that may occur when some of those who agreed to review fail to come through in a timely manner, and it helps ensure a uniformity of judgment that would not otherwise be possible given the inevitable variance that occurs because different reviewers bring different standards to their judgments. It perhaps ought to go without saying, but perhaps needs to be said, that the Chair must be chosen with some care because of the need for a broad interests in Hume and for a willingness to credit work that runs counter to the person’s own.

Letters of rejection -- Letters of rejection should be courteous. All that is really needed is a short letter stating that a paper was not accepted by the Reading Committee. It would be nice to add that many fine papers were submitted, and no all papers of merit could be included on the conference program.

Letters of acceptance -- These will serve those who have submitted papers or those who have been asked to comment when they seek funding, and so these letters should not be bland, but state clearly that the Directors are happy to invite the person to the Conference, that the Conference can hardly succeed without this wonderful paper, that the Society is unfortunately unable to provide any funding for any participants, even for one whose presence at the conference is so essential, but that the Directors sincerely hope that the person invited can obtain funding to come to present such a wonderful paper.

This same format can be used for commentators with some modifications. Both those presenting papers and those commenting should be reminded that they are coming for a conference, not just a presentation, and that it is presumed that they will stay for the entire conference. Presentations generate discussions beyond the confines of the presentation itself, and those discussions cannot proceed well if those presenting and those commenting are not around.

Additional information about reading time limits and other important matters -- A separate sheet should be included with letters of rejection and acceptance that contains information about the conference - - dates and starting and ending times, location (where exactly in the great city of X is the Conference going to be), relevant website with

accommodation information, and lengths of time for the paper to be presented, for commentator, and for discussion. The Chair should add that chairs of sessions will enforce the time limits rigorously. As Conference directors will discover, all this information will need to be repeated numerous times up until the conference, and having it all available on a single sheet that can be sent out as a pdf to everyone will save much later labor.

(5) Structuring the Conference -- The over-arching goals are to provide for discussion of the papers presented and, further, to encourage the kind of informal discussion of the papers and other topics that allow those present to get to know one another, discover what others are doing, and further their scholarly relations in ways not necessarily connected to the Conference.

Encouraging discussion of papers -- The Conference directors can encourage discussion of the papers by a variety of expedients:

The length of sessions -- Few decisions are more crucial to a Conference's success than that about the length of individual sessions. The shorter the sessions, the more papers can be fitted into a conference. Besides, an hour seems time enough to present a paper, have comments, and have a good discussion. Experience suggests, however, that only for the very worst of papers -- those so obviously right, or so obviously wrong, there is little worth discussing -- is an hour sufficient. In deciding on the length of sessions, directors should recognize the following:

- Rare is a speaker who will present a paper in 30 to 35 minutes.
- Few commentators will keep their remarks short -- and on point.
- Only a few chairs will have the draconian capacity to cut off participants.

Droning on -- Directors ought to use a variety of expedients to help ensure that participants do not speak on and on:

- Potential contributors should be informed in the Call for Papers of the reading time for papers.
- Speakers should be informed in the letters of acceptance that they have a certain amount of time in which to speak, that they should modify their papers accordingly, and that the directors will require revisions if the paper is still too long when submitted for the conference collection of papers.

- Commentators should be told that their job is to summarize, within a set period of time what has been said (so the audience has a chance to hear again in a compact form what they have just heard) and to initiate the discussion by laying out briefly one or two of the problems the commentator sees with the paper. The job of commentators is emphatically not to give another presentation, but to encourage discussion of the presentation already given. Brevity in a commentator is a virtue.
- Chairs should be informed of the time limits and told to enforce them. Chairs should be informed both when they are asked to chair and immediately before they actually chair a session.
- The speaker should be told by the chairs that he or she is not to be allowed to respond to the comments except in the course of answering questions from the audience -- the sooner to open up discussion. It is easy enough for a speaker to say, "Well, that question reminds me of a concern my commentator had, and...".

Experience suggests that even in the all-too-rare best of cases where hour-long sessions last an hour, and everyone speaks only for their appointed times, is even 15 or 20 minutes left for discussion. Since the ideal is to encourage discussion, directors are advised to have longer sessions -- 75 minutes. It will still be necessary to set limits for speakers and commentators and to have chairs who are draconian, but the chances of lucking into extended good discussions will be much improved.

Choosing commentators -- The goal of the directors is to encourage discussion and to ensure that those whose papers were accepted get the best comments possible. If a paper is critical of a particular contemporary scholarly work, the author of that work is the obvious choice to comment. In addition, directors may well choose from among those whose papers were rejected. They were, after all, willing to come to the Conference. The directors may also send a note to Hume Society members asking for volunteers -- who may, or may not, be selected.

The daily schedule -- Working out the daily schedule of the Conference must be done early so that, among other things, the Chair of the Reading Committee can know how many slots are available for presentations. But every decision is a compromise between competing desires.

Length of sessions -- If sessions are to be 75 minutes in length, it will be difficult to fit three sessions in a morning without starting at an inordinately early time and/or ending at a late time for lunch. This is particularly so because time must be left to go from session to session, and at some time in the morning enough time must be available for a break. Starting at 8:30 means ending at 12:45 if 15 minutes is left between the three sessions (3 x 75 minutes, plus 2 x

15 minutes between sessions). The same constraints hold for the afternoon sessions with the added problem that the later the lunch, the later the sessions must start so that it will be difficult to end at 5, say. Allowing an hour and fifteen minutes for lunch if the morning sessions end at 12:45 means starting at 2 and ending at 6:15 if the interval between sessions is kept to 15 minutes. Directors may save time by cutting the length of the breaks, but not much.

Evening sessions -- There is a continual debate on whether evening sessions are a good idea. Participants are tired after a full day's work. It is also hard to provide enough time for a decent dinner and also have an evening session that ends early enough to allow participants to gather somewhere to drink and talk and still get to bed early enough to rise the next morning fresh for an early session.

Yet not having evening sessions means fewer slots and a smaller conference, and it is no doubt a tossup whether the camaraderie of the conference is best furthered by trying to ensure that participants gather together for an evening session or by providing time for participants to dine in small groups without having to be back for an evening session.

It ought to go without saying that beginning a conference in the evening will mean that many of those attending may be tired from traveling that day.

Competing sessions -- There is also always a lament about having to schedule competing sessions. Unfortunately, not having competing sessions means very few papers indeed, but having competing sessions means that the directors must make some judicious judgments about what to schedule when.

A temporal map of the conference -- The result of determining the length of the sessions and the daily schedule will be a tentative map of the conference -- when it will start, when it will end, when sessions will begin each morning, when they will end each day, when there will be coffee breaks, when lunch, and so on.

The organization of papers -- If there are three papers on, say, causation, the directors need to organize them so that they do not conflict with one another and, preferably, follow one another on the same day and follow one another in a coherent way so that considering the first will help with considering the second and considering the second will help with the third. Perhaps the way to think about this is to suppose the papers a quick study in a problem in Hume scholarship where someone not conversant with the problem could learn about it by listening to and taking part in the discussion of these papers. How could the papers be arranged so as best to allow that to occur? And how could the papers be arranged so that those who are conversant about the problem can best contribute and themselves learn of new difficulties?

Directors should so arrange papers that conflicts between papers of similar sorts are avoided -- by not having two papers on Hume's ethics at the same time, for instance. On the other hand, grouping all papers of a like kind together in a way that avoids conflict may encourage splitting the conference

into various factions by the mode of its organization so that, for example, those in Hume's ethics are never able to attend, or feel any need to attend, a session in Hume's epistemology or on his histories. Keeping like papers together and yet avoiding having what may appear to be separate conferences on different aspects of Hume's thought are competing desiderata, and so every organizational structure will be a compromise. Yet, obviously, some compromises are better than others, and directors need to recognize the need to compromise if they are to choose judiciously what papers to place where.

Making papers available to participants -- In a Society that prides itself on being international, it would be unusual to have a conference, either on or off the North American continent, in which all the participants were native speakers of English, so fluent in that tongue as to need no written text. It would be even more surprising, in a conference the bulk of which has traditionally been devoted to philosophy -- with long quotations from Hume, with arcane and extended arguments, and with detailed and carefully phrased explanations -- for even the most fluent of scholars, deeply conversant about all aspects of Hume, not to want to see a text. Few features of the conference are more likely to encourage discussion than having copies of the papers -- from all participants, commentators and invited speakers as well as those whose papers were accepted.

Authors should be given clear instructions about how accepted papers are to be submitted for conference publication. For this purpose papers should be submitted in a revisable format.

Those whose submissions are accepted should have an opportunity to revise, with a due date significantly before the Conference begins, leaving enough time for commentators to write their remarks and get them to the directors to be included in the volume. Invited speakers should be given the same date for submission as those submitting papers. Directors should know that no matter how graciously they ask speakers, some will not get their papers done in time.

The cost of reproducing the papers should be included in the registration fee.

Encouraging informal discussion -- In trying to encourage informal discussion, the Conference directors ought to plan the standard off-site event with that in mind and keep that goal in mind when planning the Conference banquet and determining how to accommodate and feed those attending the Conference.

Opening reception -- It is always nice to have a reception at the beginning of the conference where participants can meet and see who is there (and who is not). The aim is to encourage the forms of relationship between participants that will ensure informal discussion, allowing, in particular, those who are new to Hume Society meetings to get to know the other participants. So name tags will help, for instance.

Paying for such a reception can be a problem since it is hard to imagine a reception without alcoholic beverages, and, as directors will discover, some

participants do not wish to subsidize others, especially in that way. Pay-as-you-go seems the best choice, but participants should be told when they register that the reception drinks will not be free. Finding a sponsor for the reception is the best solution.

Planning an off-site event -- It is usual to have one day or, more usually, part of one day set aside for a trip for Conference participants. The best of these look to what is special about the locale that visitors should see. In any event, the aim is to provide a chance for the Society's members to meet together informally so that, among other things, they can get to know one another better, and a primary criterion for choosing an event ought to be to provide for such informal conversations -- either at the site, or on the way to the site, or both.

The trip ought to be optional, with participants having to pay for themselves and guests separately from registration and the banquet.

Venues for informal gatherings at the site -- It is difficult to judge how well a site will lend itself to the kinds of informal gatherings that ought to mark a conference, but a conference's success in encouraging discussion will do much to make it memorable. The conferences are noted for their relaxed and relatively unhurried pace and praised for their capacity to bring together Hume scholars to meet and talk. The physical arrangements ought to encourage social interaction when they can.

So, for instance, having a common room where participants can gather after a talk, or of an evening, to drink and talk, having a common breakfast room where the form of seating allows for participants to talk to one another, having accommodations that allow for small gatherings -- all these encourage the sort of social discourse that makes those at the conference feel comfortable and at ease.

Coffee and other refreshments -- It is helpful to have a break in the morning and one in the afternoon so participants can have a chance to get something to drink, at least, go to the bathroom, and chat. To encourage the sorts of gathering that are conducive to conversation, it is nice to have coffee and so on available at a single spot near the meeting rooms. Since the cost is generally set independently of how many participants actually have coffee, the costs must be absorbed in the registration fee so that participants are not given the option of not paying for such refreshments. But directors should include enough variety so that participants can have some choice -- tea as well as coffee, juice, and so on. Again, however, the overriding aim is to keep costs modest.

The conference banquet -- The Conference banquet standardly occurs on the evening of the last full day of the Conference. Thus, for a conference that runs from Monday evening through early Friday afternoon, the banquet would occur on Thursday evening.

The aim is simply to have as wonderful a time as can be had (on a relatively modest budget). Some Conference banquets have been particularly

memorable because they took place in delightful locations, provided wonderful food accompanied by a surfeit of good wine or provided particularly good occasions for extended discussion and dinner conversation. It is no doubt as rare when a single conference succeeds by all these measures as when a conference fails on all these measures. But a conference banquet will be judged by those attending it on the basis of these measures whatever directors may wish. So directors should always choose the best by each of these measures. They should also:

- Charge for the banquet separately since some participants will be unable to attend;
- Ensure that each participant who wishes to come pays for the banquet, and for any guests, when paying for registration;
- Require each participant who pays to indicate whether they would prefer a vegetarian or vegan meal (if the latter is available), a meal with meat still being the default;
- Put what has been ordered on each banquet meal ticket at the Conference -- and perhaps even the name tags -- since, incredibly enough, some participants will forget what they ordered;
- Refuse to allow anyone to change their preference at the meal site -- and inform those serving of this policy -- since changing a preference at the last minute causes undue hardship on those serving the banquet and, in some cases, on the rest of the group if the meals are delayed because of someone's change;
- Be prepared for, and devise a policy for handling, some who do not fill in the registration form with their preference and do not respond to repeated requests or deadlines for their preference.

It has become a tradition for the President of the Society to provide the conference directors each with a bottle of single malt (on the principle that single malt travels better than claret). The gifts are generally preceded by a brief laudatory speech by the President and given immediately after dessert, when those who drink are sufficiently light-headed enough to think anything the President says is wonderful. The funding for the bottles comes from the Hume Society, and the President will need to ensure that a sufficient number of bottles of very good single malt are purchased prior to the banquet. In recent years, the repertoire of gifts has expanded to include hard-to-obtain volumes on Hume.

It has also become tradition for the President to provide graduate students with their travel awards and official award letter at the banquet. The Society covers the cost of the banquet for these graduate students.

Business meeting -- A Hume Society business meeting is a necessary feature of each Conference, standardly late in the afternoon before the Conference banquet -- far enough into the meeting so that some member may properly move that the Directors be thanked at the banquet for having put together such a wonderful event, not so far removed from the regular workings of the Conference that participants will feel that they must stay on to attend, and just before a major event of the Conference so that participants will not have

wandered off to do something else with the rest of the day, foregoing the business meeting.

The Conference directors must schedule the business meeting. The Executive Vice President and the President determine the agenda, with the Executive Committee. The Business Meeting lasts an hour.

The Executive Committee of the Society also holds its annual meeting during the conference (often during lunch). The Conference directors may also make arrangements for that meeting if needed.

(6) Essential details -- The devil is in the details, of course, but directors will save themselves a great deal of trouble, both before and during the conference, by taking care of some of the details before the Conference.

Email and web access -- Providing wifi during the conference is a decided plus. If participants do not have access to email and the web, the onsite director will end up scrambling to provide some means of access for those participants who must have contact.

At what time does it start and end? -- Determine, as early as possible, at what times of day the conference will start and end. Participants can then better make decisions about when to arrive and leave and make more judicious decisions about airline tickets and accommodations.

Directions -- The more information directors can provide so that participants can find their own ways, the less directors will be bothered at the last minute by those who do not know how to get to the conference site or, once there, where to go to find the registration table. So in giving directions to the Conference site, presume complete ignorance on the part of those coming and give thorough, clear and concise directions. "When you arrive by plane at Orly, take the bus to Paris. That bus will cost 5 euros and can be found outside the entrance way marked with the sign: 'Transports a Paris'..." and so on and so on. Maps help enormously, and any other information directors can provide about the conference site will be much appreciated by those attending.

In particular, directors should specify early on the building where participants are to go to check in for the conference -- by a street address so that participants can google the site, getting a map, a view of the place, and directions, if need be. That information will help those trying to find accommodations, for instance.

Registration -- Attach a registration form to the Conference website -- or to the Society's website. That form should contain the following: a place for personal information (who is registering, who is accompanying the registrant, what is the preferred mailing address, email address, phone number), a list of the items for the conference for which money is required (registration, banquet, conference excursion), a statement of how to pay (preferably via credit card), and information about where the registration is to be sent if it is not recorded automatically.

Early posting of the registration form encourages early registration, but the directors need to set a deadline for participant registration. The sooner participants have money committed, the more likely it is they will come to the Conference. The directors also need to set a deadline for participation in the banquet -- preferably the same time final papers are due, on the assumption that the fewer dates a participant has to remember the more likely a participant will remember.

Directors should send an email confirming registration and its details. A signed receipt should be available at the registration table at the conference for those who need written confirmation for accounting purposes.

Accommodations -- Directors should not become involved in making reservations for accommodations for those attending, but should let those who indicate they will attend know what is available and how to make contact (giving websites and/ or email addresses). This information should go on the Conference website, with a specification of which hotels/motels are preferred - - because of price, location, quality, or other desiderata. If directors are able to arrange a special rate, by all means they should let participants know.

(7) Financial considerations -- Since the Hume Society can provide no general funding for conferences, directors must work to keep costs low and must raise whatever funding is needed from their home institutions, registration fees, and outside sources. The Society does provide funding for graduate students whose papers are accepted, and, as we have already noted, that funding can be used when soliciting additional funding from outside sources and from the home institution: "The Society is contributing \$4000 to meet on the campus; the University ought to match that." In one case, a director sold advertising space in the program of the conference.

Yet directors are well-advised to make judicious use of outside funding. Few things cause more resentment among those attending a conference than discovering that some received funding -- an honorarium, fees waived, expenses paid. Waiving fees, for instance, means that other participants are subsidizing those who do not pay -- a sure source of resentment, with the corresponding harm to the camaraderie of conferences.

Even if more funding is necessary than can be provided by the home institution, directors should strive to keep registration fees low. Lumping all the expenses of the Conference -- banquet, trip, reproduction of papers, and so on -- into the registration fee may be easier for the conference directors, but is guaranteed to make the conference fee a significant enough expense to cause complaints and general irritation on the part of those attending.

(8) Hume Gear -- Directors have provided posters and/or T-shirts especially designed for the Conference. These are provided at a bit over cost. The posters have replicated the various portraits of Hume. T-shirts are not a source of profit, but they do create a sense of identity and unity within the conference itself.

Advice for ordering T-shirts comes from the experience of past conference directors. When participants register, have them pay then for any T-shirts they wish, indicating the size(s) wanted. Directors will have to decide whether they want to order

extras. They will be asked for more at the Conference, especially when everyone is in good cheer towards the end of the conference banquet and the T-shirts have a particularly memorable design. Hume caps were available at the Helsinki Conference, but were not a great success.

(9) Outline and checklist -- What follows is an outline of the tasks for conference directors, with an indication of what will require expenses. It is helpful to use the following symbols: SD for the director on-site, RCD for the off-site director and chair of the reading committee, and \$\$ for expenses:

3 years ahead:

1. SD/RCD -- Set location and dates.
2. SD/RCD -- Lay out a tentative schedule for the conference to determine how many papers can be accommodated in the program, deciding how many con- current sessions should be held and how many invited speakers are ideal.
3. SD -- Reserve meeting rooms (at least three for the duration of the conference if you do not already know how the conference will be configured and if it costs nothing, yet, for the rooms). Schedule the banquet and opening reception. Once meetings rooms are reserved, you may be locked into the maximum number of papers that can be accepted for the Conference.

2 years ahead:

4. SD/RCD -- Set conference themes and invite any speakers. Inform them of the length of time for which they are to speak and tell them that a copy of their presentation is required in time enough to be printed for the conference (June 1st or 15th or, a stretch, July 1st the year of the conference). \$\$ for telephone and mailing if necessary.

By the 1st of December two years before the Conference:

5. SD/RCD -- Get information to the Executive Vice President of the Society for the Call for Papers. The Call must include the Conference themes, the dates and location of the Conference, the times of day the conference starts and ends if possible, the date by which papers are to be due (usually November 1st the next fall), instructions about how to submit papers, properly prepared for anonymous reviewing and the conditions of submission (as agreed upon by the directors). The Call should include the names of principal invited speakers, and of the Conference Directors, but should not include the latter's contact information.

1 year ahead:

6. RCD -- If there are to be any book panels, make sure that the participants know that they are to discuss the book and ensure that each has a copy of the book. \$\$ if the book is to be provided by the conference directors, but most publishers will provide review copies for panel members. The directors should check to see who needs a copy and then write the publisher, or philosophy editor, asking if it is possible to send review copies to the members of the panel (not counting the author).
7. SD -- Make plans and reservations for the off-site event. \$\$ if need to make the reservations.

By the 1st of September the year before the Conference:

8. SD/RCD -- Submit a call for commentators (if desired) and a progress report to the Executive Vice President for inclusion on the Society's webpage. That report ought to include all the new information available: registration fee if available, details of the conference, including the invited speakers, book panels, plenary sessions -- everything that someone interested in coming would want to know in order to decide.

Before the deadline for the submission of papers, the fall before the Conference:

9. RCD -- Line up referees for the submitted papers.
10. RCD -- Make papers available to the referees as quickly as possible. Be sure to include a deadline for their responses (e.g. December 31st or, better, two weeks after receipt of the paper) so that those submitting papers can be notified by February.
11. RCD -- Read through all the submissions. As responses come in, make sure that papers on which there is no unanimity are sent out to new reviewers or are sent back for reconsideration to those who have already reviewed along with the comments of other reviewers -- though the RCD may act as an additional re- viewer for such papers.

By February:

12. RCD -- Send notifications out of acceptance, setting a deadline (no more than two weeks) for agreeing to come. Those letters should provide information about the reading time (30 minutes, say) and the need to make any changes in the paper to ensure that it can be read within that period of time -- without haste. The form should also set a date by which a revised paper is to be sent to the RCD.

February and March:

13. RCD -- Contact commentators and begin to determine who will chair sessions.
14. SD -- Determine which costs will need to be passed onto the participants so that fees can be set for pre-registration although it would be much better to do this significantly before this time.
15. SD/RCD -- Work out the details of the registration form (e.g. whether those coming should be sent to the SD or the RCD -- although, again, it would be best to do this the previous fall) and any other information that is to be sent to those who may wish to come to the Conference (a short statement regarding travel, accommodations, registration, and so on).
16. SD/RCD -- Send out to all the membership a registration packet, containing as much information about the conference as possible.

By April 1st:

- RCD -- Set the final program, including chairs. Meeting this deadline will ease considerably the difficulties that come from the inevitable crunch of the last few months before the Conference.
17. RCD -- Remind everyone, especially chairs, of the reading times for papers and comments (noting that comments are to summarize what has been said and initiate discussion by laying out briefly one or two of the problems the commentator sees with the paper.).
 18. RCD -- Tell participants, especially commentators, their papers are due by, say, June 1st for a conference the end of July.

From April until the Conference:

19. SD -- Acknowledge registration, sending an email receipt and any other additional information necessary for those attending the conference (e.g. maps, travel information -- even if a duplicate of what was previously sent).
20. SD -- Get a final copy of the program printed in a nice format. \$\$
21. SD -- Duplicate the papers for the Conference, preferably in a size suitable for putting on a bookshelf. \$\$
22. SD -- Prepare everything else necessary for the Conference (name tags, any folders and brochures on nearby restaurants, and so on).

23.SD -- Remember that nothing contingent is certain and double check on all meeting room reservations. Make arrangements for a registration table. Make sure that if coffee or other refreshments are to be provided, the arrangements for them are clear. Remember that someone has to be sure that the doors are unlocked for the reserved rooms, that the speakers have a supply of water and glasses, that the microphones work, that the audio-visual devices function with the computer the presenter has brought, etc.

On the principle that everything is a work in progress, please send critical comments to Wade Robison at wade.robison@gmail.com or by snail mail to The Ezra A. Hale Chair in Applied Ethics, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY 14623