

# Moderating the Moderators

Moderating 1001: How to Moderate a Panel

Frames

Western Australian Regional Science Fiction Convention (Swancon)

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# Borrow, beg and steal

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This presentation is stolen from:

- ▶ past moderating the moderators panels;
- ▶ discussions with various people;
- ▶ and the very good thread on facebook.

# A moderator is many things.

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## The definition of a moderator:

1. An arbitrator or mediator ...

1.1 A presiding officer, especially a chairman of a debate: *“the debates will each feature one moderator and a panel of three questioners”* Oxford Dictionary, online 2016

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- ▶ Leader
- ▶ Crowd-controller
- ▶ Interviewer
- ▶ Chairperson

# A moderator is a leader.

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- ▶ Make sure the audience and the panellists are settled.
- ▶ While the moderator is the leader, they are **not** the most important person on the panel.

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- ▶ Make sure the audience and the panellists are settled.
- ▶ Set the tone of the presentation.
- ▶ Introduce the panelists, and the topic at the beginning.
- ▶ While the moderator is the leader, they are **not** the most important person on the panel.

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- ▶ Get people to raise their hands.
- ▶ If questions are to be held until question time, tell the audience.
- ▶ It can help to restate the question.

# A moderator could be an interviewer

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- ▶ Have some questions ready in-case the audience gets quiet.

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- ▶ If the panel is question driven.
- ▶ Have some questions ready in-case the audience gets quiet.
- ▶ But don't ask your questions at the cost of the audiences.

# A moderator is the chairperson.

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- ▶ The moderator controls the panel.
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- ▶ Questions don't have to be posted to each person in turn.
  - ▶ Some back and forth is good.
  - ▶ Not everyone needs to answer every question.

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- ▶ The moderator controls the panel.
- ▶ Don't let the anyone hog the spotlight.
- ▶ Questions don't have to be posted to each person in turn.
  - ▶ Some back and forth is good.
  - ▶ Not everyone needs to answer every question.
- ▶ But don't let anyone be rude.

# A moderator is not a panelist.

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- ▶ You may be an expert; or at least well opinioned on the topic.

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- ▶ You may be an expert; or at least well opinioned on the topic.
- ▶ Hold in your questions and arguments til the panel is over.
  
- ▶ As moderator we do not want your opinion.
- ▶ We want interesting questions, so we can hear the panellists opinions.

# The audience is also not a panelist.

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- ▶ Don't let audience members get away with rants disguised as questions.
- ▶ But sometimes sharing from the audience is good.

# A moderator can use props.

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Thick padding, a sword & shield, plus a clear escape route – that usually helps.

*Jay Watson, 2016*

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- ▶ Pens (wand like objects.)
- ▶ Paper
- ▶ Water

# A one-hour panel is not 1 hour long.

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- ▶ End it at 45 minutes if it is done at 45 minutes
- ▶ 50 minutes is ideal.

# Conclusion

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- ▶ Keep it flowing.
- ▶ Let all the panellists be heard.
- ▶ Don't let people be rude.
- ▶ Don't run over time.