

# KWI: KANSAS WRITER'S INK

Newsletter Vol. 17 No. 12

January 23rd, 2017

## January Critique

Welcome back fellow writers! The holidays have come and gone and now we're at the end of the first month of the new year. It's hard to believe how fast we are progressing.

On Saturday, January 28th, 2017, we will be having our annual large critique meeting. We will gather together and bring our work for peers to review. If you would like to participate here is what you need to know: bring 10 pages, double-spaced, of your work to the meeting if you'd like to be critiqued (You do not have to submit your work for critique to attend.)

Why should you participate? Well, this is an excellent opportunity to hear your work read out loud. You'll be surprised by the interesting revelations about the content, dialogue and flow of your story. Members want to discuss your work and give you their thoughts and advice. The critiques are always done with a positive approach in order to be helpful to the writer.

As a reminder to all members this meeting will be held at the First Congregational Church (1701 SW Collins Ave). Please bring your own sack lunch and drink. We hope you can join us for this wonderful program.

## 2016-2017 KWI Board Members

**President:** Billie-Renee Knight

**Vice-President:** Morgan Chilson

**Secretary:** Leslie Galbraith

**Treasurer:** Shayne Sawyer

**Membership:** Bobbie Johnston

**Newsletter:** Romie Chavez

**Advisor to the President:** Tish Glasson



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## **February Online Workshops**

**By Angela Johnson**

### **Synopsis Writing Bootcamp** (Limited to 10 students)

Dates: February 1–15, 2017

Presenter: Susan Palmquist. FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#FEB6>.

### **Pitches & Blurbs and Tag Lines**

Date: February 1–17, 2017

Presenter: Linnea Sinclair. FMI, <http://contemporaryromance.org/workshops/>.

### **Goodreads is for Authors**

Dates: February 1–27, 2017

Presenter: Diane Peterson. FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#FEB10>.

### **Writing the Young Adult Novel**

Date: February 1–27, 2017

Presenter: Catherine Chant. FMI, <http://starrwa.org/on-line-workshops/>.

### **Arcane Healing Arts for Your Character**

Date: February 1–28, 2017

Presenter: Cynthia Carver/Renee Pellegrino. FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#FEB11>.

### **Author Branding**

Date: February 1–28, 2017

Presenter: Lana Pattinson. FMI, <http://www.utahrwa.com/URWAWorkshopRegistration.htm>.

### **Bookkeeping for Writers**

Date: February 1–28, 2017

Presenter: Pepper O'Neal. FMI, <http://www.heartofcarolina.org/calendar>.

### **Decoding Dialogue**

Date: February 1–28, 2017

Presenter: Pam McCutcheon. FMI, [VP.Programs@celtichearts.org](mailto:VP.Programs@celtichearts.org) or visit <https://www.rwa.org/e/in/eid=615>.

### **Get Grammar and Style**

Dates: February 1–28, 2017

Presenter: Kat Duncan. FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#FEB8>.

### **Plotting From Character**

Dates: February 1–28, 2017

Presenter: Shannon Donnelly. FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#FEB7>.

### **Writing Erotic Romances and Erotica**

Date: February 1–28, 2017

Presenter: Susan Palmquist. FMI, <http://www.marylandromancewriters.com/writing-erotic-romances-and-erotica/>.

### **What is a Tweet and Why Should I Care? Diving Deep into Social Marketing**

Date: February 2–28, 2017

Presenter: Jessie Clever. FMI, <http://www.utahrwa.com/URWAWorkshopRegistration.htm>.

## February Online Workshops (continued)

By: Angela Johnson

### **Writing & Resistance: Overcoming Our Blocks to Success**

Date: February 5–19, 2017

Presenter: Mindy Hardwick. FMI, <http://contemporaryromance.org/workshops/>.

### **Gambling for Writers**

Date: February 6–24, 2017

Presenter: Elizabeth Spaur, President LVRW. FMI, <http://www.lvrwa.org>.

### **How to Write Humorous Characters**

Date: February 6–March 3, 2017

Presenter: Ally Broadfield. FMI, <http://www.yosemiteromancewriters.com/#!/workshops/cctds>.

### **Scrivener for L-PLATERS**

Date: February 6–March 3, 2017

Presenter: Alison Stuart. FMI, <http://fthrw.com/online-workshops>.

### **Write in Passive Voice and Be Passed Over by a Publisher**

Date: February 6–March 3, 2017

Presenter: MM Pollard. FMI, <http://rwaonlinechapter.org/campus.htm>.

### **Clarify Your Writing Using Deep POV**

Date: February 7–March 2, 2017

Presenter: Laurie Sanders. FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#FEB9>.

### **Social Media**

Date: February 13–March 10, 2017

Presenter: Elena Dillon. FMI, <http://occrwa.org/classes/>.

### **Alphas: Leaders of the Pack**

Date: February 28–March 25, 2017

Presenter: Robin Matheson. FMI, <http://contemporaryromance.org/workshops/>.

## **KWI RETREAT 2017**

It's time to be thinking about next year's retreat. We've booked **April 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at the Basswood Lodge**. This was the only time they had available. A **\$50.00 deposit** is required by **February 1<sup>st</sup> 2017** to secure your spot for the weekend.

This year we've established a '**Pick Your Bed**' for the first 10 members who get their deposits to Shayne. When she receives your check, she'll contact you to find out where in the Lodge you wish to sleep—she'll then reserve that spot for you.

**An update on beds: bedroom 3 and 1 is taken. There is still room in the basement bedroom, and there is 1 bunk left in bedroom 2.**

Mail your deposits to:

Shayne Sawyer

2601 SW Western Ave

Topeka, KS 66611

## Author Critiques: Tips for Discussion

By: Romie Chavez

In lieu of our critiquing program this weekend, I'm reminded of an article I read: *10 Tips for Critiquing Other People's Writing*, by Mark Nichol. This article presents interesting points about how to approach requests for critiquing another author's work. He starts off by suggesting that you (the reviewer) should get a clear understanding of what the author is requesting. Is the writer asking for a general impression or an in-depth critique? Once you know the answer to that question, you can proceed.

"Be honest and objective, because that is what the writer wants and needs," Nichol says. Think of it in terms of how a literary agent or editor would assess the work. If you find any structural weaknesses or slack prose don't hesitate to speak up. Your main objective when critiquing is to help the writer be the best at their craft.

Nichol's ten tips for a positive and productive experience include the following:

**Tolerate the Task.**

When critiquing, understand that you do not have to be an expert in the writer's genre (although it does help). Bottom line; don't turn down a request for feedback just because you're not into Romance or Science Fiction. It's all about helping the writer succeed in reaching their audience.

**Ask for a Clean Copy**

The sample copy that you read should be submission ready or as close to professional as possible. A writer who is serious about their work and wants to submit it for publication should practice formatting their submission by the guidelines.

**Mark it Up**

When reviewing electronic copies, Track Changes comes in handy. Use it to insert comments or suggestions. If you're reading a hard copy, use a pen or colored pencil for brief notes. Write or type comments on a separate sheet to hand over to the author.

**Evaluate the Writing, Not the Writer**

Remember, you're evaluating the product. Discuss with the producer certain sections of the material and refer to characters actions. Don't be afraid to tackle narrative flow or dialogue. It's about improving the work, not the writer.

**Start—and Stop—with the Positive**

Take a strengths-based approach with the material. Discuss with the author what they did well and reiterate those points as you give a detailed analysis of their work; using positive language helps. Be honest, but diplomatic in your approach. Even people who take criticism well still need positive validation.

**Craft Your Critiques**

It's essential for you to be specific, not vague. Be active, not passive. The author has come to you for a critique so you owe it them to point out problems, but also have a solutions. Communication is the key to a good critique.

**Guide, Don't Carry**

Think of the advice given as patterns for the writer to use as templates. The goal is not for you to rewrite their work, but to give them the tools they need to recognize the changes on their own.

**Invite Questions**

After you've critiqued the work and sent your feedback, set up a time to meet and discuss any questions. If a writer becomes defensive, remind them that a critique is just your opinion and the author reserves the right to act on the information.

**Follow Up**

Don't be afraid to check in with the writer and ask how they're progressing with their work. Even if you were as diplomatic as possible, an author may still be sensitive to the feedback. Continue to encourage and guide the writer on their journey.

**Know Your Limits**

Be sure to establish boundaries in the beginning. Remember, you're devoting your time and effort towards the critique. If they want you to look at the work a second time with the suggestions added, be sure you're able to commit to the allotted time you've set up.

Nichol presents an interesting and enlightening method toward critiquing another author's work. As with any advice, these tips are not set in stone and have room to be tweaked as needed depending on your personal preference. If you would like to see the full article, check it out at the link here: [www.dailywritingtips.com/10-tips-for-critiquing-other-people's-writing/](http://www.dailywritingtips.com/10-tips-for-critiquing-other-people's-writing/)

With that said, it's important for all writers to be respectful of one another. We all want to succeed. The time and effort we put into our work consumes us. Virginia Woolf said it best when it comes to explaining what a writer goes through: "Every secret of a writer's soul, every experience of his life, every quality of his mind, is written large in his works." No truer words were spoken. However, we must also understand that criticism is essential to our work. Writers must have a thick skin. Finding the right balance is the key to success.

## Kudos

Vice President of KWI, Morgan Chilson was honored on Thursday, January 19th, by Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce for her hard work and dedication with the Topeka Capital Journal. Congrats to Morgan!

Shayne Sawyer and Romie Chavez represented KWI at the Topeka Shawnee County Public Library's Great Writers, Right Here author fair. They completely ran out of business cards and networked with other fellow writers.

## Further Reading

### Female Protagonists in Crime Fiction: What You Need to Know

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/female-protagonists-crime-fiction-need-know>

### How to Write Better Villains: 5 Ways to Get Into the Mind of a Psychopath

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/write-better-villains-5-ways-get-mind-psychopath>

### Author Nick Petrie Discusses Building a Strong Protagonist

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/author-peter-ash-discusses-building-strong-protagonist>

### How Long Until You Can Follow Up on Magazine Query Letters?

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/how-long-until-you-can-follow-up-on-query-letter>

### Something to Consider Before You Hire a Book Editor

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/something-consider-hire-book-editor>

### 7 Ways to Make a Young Reader's Hair Stand Up

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/7-ways-make-young-readers-hair-stand>

### 7 Steps to Creating a Flexible Outline for Any Story

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/7-steps-to-creating-a-flexible-outline-for-any-story>

## KWI Blog

Are you interested in writing a blog for KWI? Contact Tish 'Bear' Glasson by e-mail: [bearwmnkwi@gmail.com](mailto:bearwmnkwi@gmail.com).

## KWI Meetings

### Next Meeting:

When: January 28th, 2017:

Where: First Congregational Church  
(1701 SW Collins Ave, Topeka, KS)

Topic: Large Critique Meeting

### Future Meeting:

When: February 25th, 2017

Where: Topeka Shawnee County Library

Room: Anton Room (upper level)

Topic: TBA

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All meetings begin as follows:

Time: 9:30am –3:30pm

Writing/Critique/Tape

9:30am-10:00am/ 10:00am –11:30

## Financials

Beginning Balance	\$3,617.53
Income	\$50.00
Expenses	\$0.00
Ending Balance	\$3,617.53

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[www.kswriters.wordpress.com](http://www.kswriters.wordpress.com)