

**IFWA MEETING**  
**Thursday, March 2, 2017, 7:00 PM**  
**Sentry Box**  
**MINUTES**

**Information Items:** The IFWA Library is being dissolved. The list has been handed out by e-mail to all paid up IFWA members. Bring the list of things you want

**New Members:** Shauna Severgny (Fantasy Romance), Dan Hampton (writing short stories and nephelim novel), Shauna (YA Fantasy)

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Person</b>
7:00 PM	<p><b><u>Crits for March</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crit 1: Erin Sneath – YA Horror – chapter 1 Crit by Val King, Chris</li> <li>• Crit 2: Sandy Fitzpatrick - Fantasy Short – 4200 words about salamander Crit by Rob Easton, Cassandra Arnold</li> </ul>	Shannon Val / Chris  Rob / Cassandra
	<p><b><u>Crits for April, 2017</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crit 1: Kevin – experimental fantasy western – excerpt Crit by Rick, Michael G.</li> <li>• Crit 2: Dan Hampton – 6800 word short story – supernatural thriller Crit by Shauna, Leslie</li> </ul>	Shannon
8:00 PM	<p><b><u>Skills Session</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Breaking all the Writing Rules: a Discussion</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you look at a writing rule, remember there is only one rule: Don't be boring. Everything else is a suggestion.</li> <li>• Rules are intended to help people who don't know what they are doing. Once you know what to do, you also know how to break the rules.</li> <li>• <b>Example: Show Don't Tell</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• le Tell when you want to compress information</li> <li>• le Climax – show everything up to that point and then tell the climax</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Example: Passive Voice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why not use? Distances reader, not active, too long, tastes have changed – subject of the sentence is not the agent</li> <li>• But can use it to break up paragraphs and break things up – make readers tired</li> <li>• If happening TO us, passive is okay to use</li> <li>• If we are the agents of change, use active voice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Renee Bennett
8:30 PM	<p><b><u>Call for Agenda Items</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing Opportunity (Renee) – Sci-Fi-London 48 Hour Flash Fiction Challenge</b> – Saturday April 8, 2017 starting at 11 a.m. write fiction with elements they give us – have 48 hours to write a flash fiction story of 2,000</li> </ul>	Michael

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	<p>words or less. For complete rules, go here: <a href="http://48hour.sci-fi-london.com/challenge/48-hour-flash-fiction-2017">http://48hour.sci-fi-london.com/challenge/48-hour-flash-fiction-2017</a></p>	
8:35 PM	<p><b><u>Brag</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Enigma Front: The Monster Within</b> – 22 IFWits in antho</li> <li>• <b>Rick Overwater</b> – placed a couple of stories in January – Robot anthology and another anthology</li> <li>• <b>Ron Friedman</b> – sold a novel – time travel submarine novel</li> <li>• <b>Chris Carolan</b> – 1) editor at Edge has asked for revisions 2) sold story entitled “The Rankin File” to Bundoran for 49<sup>th</sup> Parallels</li> </ul>	Michael
8:40 PM	<p><b><u>Discuss / Decide</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IFWA Library:</b> Attached is the list of books in the IFWA Library as compiled by Adam Cole. Next meeting – if there is something you want, bring requests next meeting – then the library will be dissolved and any remaining books will be recycled or donated.</li> <li>• <b>Aurora Awards’ Board:</b> Ron Friedman, who has been on the Aurora Awards board for six years, is asking if another IFWit wants his position. This is a good networking opportunity which will put you in touch with the publishers and editors of the best Canadian authors.</li> </ul>	Michael
8:55 PM	<p><b><u>Announcements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Aurora Awards 1:</b> Aurora Awards eligibility list is now open. If you published something in 2016, you can add it to the list. Adding a work to the list is free. <a href="http://www.prixaurorawards.ca/aurora-awards/eligibility-lists/">http://www.prixaurorawards.ca/aurora-awards/eligibility-lists/</a></li> <li>• <b>Aurora Awards 2:</b> March 15 nominations open. CSFFA members can nominate eligible works. Membership is \$10 / year. Note: Last year Enigma Front was one vote shy of being a finalist. Don't say your vote doesn't count.</li> <li>• <b>Writers in the House</b> – April 22-23 (weekend after Easter) at the Fireside Room, Calgary Delta South – 135 Southland Drive S.E. – Times: 11a.m. – 11p.m. Saturday and Sunday – Admission free, but there is an expectation that we will order food and drink from Boomtown Pub for use of the room.</li> <li>• <b>Taste of Local Authors</b> – next Thursday (March 9, 2017) Owl's Nest</li> <li>• <b>Full Circle Theatre Fundraiser</b> (Kevin) – Saturday March 4 – they are putting on Kevin's play later this year – Will be doing live comedy podcast in Scorpio Theatre - \$10 to get in, cash bar</li> <li>• <b>Creative Ink</b> – Burnaby, BC – March 31-April 2 – modelled after WWC (Randy). For details: <a href="http://www.creativeinkfestival.com/">http://www.creativeinkfestival.com/</a></li> </ul>	Michael

Time	Topic	Person
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ESCAPE VELOCITY</b>, Ron Friedman's honourable mention collection, will be launched on Tuesday, March 28 at 7:00PM, at the Owls Nest. There will be cookies. <a href="https://ronsfriedman.wordpress.com/2017/01/06/escape-velocity/">https://ronsfriedman.wordpress.com/2017/01/06/escape-velocity/</a></li></ul>	

### 11 Fool-Proof Rules for Writing Fiction (Trent Lewin)

1. Adjectives. Use them. Abuse them. Saturate every sentence with them.
2. Don't ever produce an ending!
3. Stick phantom sentences into your writing to make sure people are paying attention.
4. On that note, never add humor to your writing!
5. Write what you know. Never write something outside your experience. Ever.
6. Bow to the horrors of writer's block.
7. Concentrate on marketing your writing before you've actually produced anything marketable.
8. Refrain from sex while writing your novel.
9. Buy books on how to write fiction.
10. Don't write long fiction.
11. Make highly sarcastic lists of writing rules, especially when no one has heard of you and you break all of your own rules.

### 10 Writing 'Rules' We Wish More Science Fiction and Fantasy Authors Would Break (109)

1. No third-person omniscient.
2. No prologues.
3. Avoid infodumps.
4. Fantasy novels have to be series instead of standalones.
5. No portal fantasy.
6. No FTL.
7. Women can't write 'hard' science fiction.
8. Magic has to be just a minor part of a fantasy world.
9. No present tense.
10. No 'unsympathetic' characters.

### Writing Tips by Elmore Leonard

1. Never open a book with the weather.
2. Avoid prologues.
3. Never use a verb other than 'said' to carry dialogue.

4. Never use an adverb to modify the verb 'said'.
5. Keep your exclamation points under control!
6. Never use the words 'suddenly' or 'all hell breaks loose'.
7. Use dialect sparingly.
8. Avoid detailed description of characters.
9. Same for places and things.
10. Leave out the parts readers tend to skip.

### Geoff Dyer

1. Never worry about the commercial prospects of a project.
2. Don't write in public places.
3. Don't sentence yourself to sucking up to Nabokov.
4. If you use a computer, refine your autocorrect so that you will never be able to get another one.
5. Keep a diary or journal.
6. Have regrets. They are fuel. On the page, they become desire.
7. Have more than one idea on the go at a time.
8. Beware of clichés.
9. Write every day.
10. Never write with the brakes on.

### Richard Ford

1. Marry someone you love and who thinks you being a writer is a good thing.
2. Don't have children.
3. Don't read your reviews.
4. Don't write reviews. Your judgement is tainted.
5. Don't argue with your spouse early in the morning, or at night.
6. Don't drink and write at the same time.
7. Don't write letters to the editor. No one cares.
8. Don't wish ill on your colleagues.
9. Try to think of others' good luck as encouragement for yourself.

10. Don't take any shit if you can possibly help it.

### Esther Freud

1. Cut out the metaphors and similes.
2. A story needs rhythm. Read it aloud to yourself. If it doesn't spin a bit of magic, something's missing.
3. Editing is everything. Cut until you can cut no more.
4. Find your best time of day to write and write. It won't matter afterwards if your kitchen is messy.
5. Don't wait for inspiration. Discipline is the key.
6. Trust your reader. Not everything needs to be explained.
7. Never forget, even your own rules are there to be broken.

### CJ Cherryh's First Rule of Writing

1. Never follow a rule over a cliff.

## From OpenCulture.com

### Henry Miller (from *Henry Miller on Writing*)

1. Work on one thing at a time until finished.
2. Start no more new books, add no more new material to "Black Spring."
3. Don't be nervous. Work calmly, joyously, recklessly on whatever is in hand.
4. Work according to the program and not according to mood. Stop at the appointed time!
5. When you can't create you can work.
6. Cement a little every day, rather than add new fertilizers.
7. Keep human! See people; go places, drink if you feel like it.
8. Don't be a draught-horse! Work with pleasure only.
9. Discard the Program when you feel like it—but go back to it the next day. Concentrate. Narrow down. Exclude.
10. Forget the books you want to write. Think only of the book you are writing.
11. Write first and always. Painting, music, friends, cinema, all these come afterwards.

### George Orwell (From *Why I Write*)

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

### Margaret Atwood (originally appeared in *The Guardian*)

1. Take a pencil to write with on aeroplanes. Pens leak. But if the pencil breaks, you can't sharpen it on the plane, because you can't take knives with you. Therefore: take two pencils.
2. If both pencils break, you can do a rough sharpening job with a nail file of the metal or glass type.

3. Take something to write on. Paper is good. In a pinch, pieces of wood or your arm will do.

4. If you're using a computer, always safeguard new text with a -memory stick.
5. Do back exercises. Pain is distracting.
6. Hold the reader's attention. (This is likely to work better if you can hold your own.) But you don't know who the reader is, so it's like shooting fish with a slingshot in the dark. What fascinates A will bore the pants off B.
7. You most likely need a thesaurus, a rudimentary grammar book, and a grip on reality. This latter means: there's no free lunch. Writing is work. It's also gambling. You don't get a pension plan. Other people can help you a bit, but essentially you're on your own. Nobody is making you do this: you chose it, so don't whine.
8. You can never read your own book with the innocent anticipation that comes with that first delicious page of a new book, because you wrote the thing. You've been backstage. You've seen how the rabbits were smuggled into the hat. Therefore ask a reading friend or two to look at it before you give it to anyone in the publishing business. This friend should not be someone with whom you have a romantic relationship, unless you want to break up.
9. Don't sit down in the middle of the woods. If you're lost in the plot or blocked, retrace your steps to where you went wrong. Then take the other road. And/or change the person. Change the tense. Change the opening page.
10. Prayer might work. Or reading - something else. Or a constant visualisation of the holy grail that is the finished, published version of your resplendent book.

### Neil Gaiman

1. Write.
2. Put one word after another. Find the right word, put it down.
3. Finish what you're writing. Whatever you have to do to finish it, finish it.
4. Put it aside. Read it pretending you've never read it before. Show it to friends whose opinion you respect and who like the kind of thing that this is.
5. Remember: when people tell you something's wrong or doesn't work for them, they are almost always right. When they tell you exactly what they think is wrong and how to fix it, they are almost always wrong.

6. Fix it. Remember that, sooner or later, before it ever reaches perfection, you will have to let it go and move on and start to write the next thing. Perfection is like chasing the horizon. Keep moving.
7. Laugh at your own jokes.
8. The main rule of writing is that if you do it with enough assurance and confidence, you're allowed to do whatever you like. (That may be a rule for life as well as for writing. But it's definitely true for writing.) So write your story as it needs to be written. Write it honestly, and tell it as best you can. I'm not sure that there are any other rules. Not ones that matter.

### William Safire (the author of the New York Times Magazine column "On Language")

1. Remember to never split an infinitive.
2. The passive voice should never be used.
3. Do not put statements in the negative form.
4. Verbs have to agree with their subjects.
5. Proofread carefully to see if you words out.
6. If you reread your work, you can find on rereading a great deal of repetition can be by rereading and editing.
7. A writer must not shift your point of view.
8. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction. (Remember, too, a preposition is a terrible word to end a sentence with.)
9. Don't overuse exclamation marks!!
10. Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents.
11. Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.
12. If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is.
13. Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixing metaphors.
14. Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky.
15. Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.
16. Always pick on the correct idiom.
17. The adverb always follows the verb.
18. Last but not least, avoid cliches like the plague; seek viable alternatives.