

### *Starting a Critique Group: Things to Consider*

- Group size: critique groups generally have between 5 and 15 people, I prefer 8 or so, because then people have a greater commitment to each other.
- To facilitate or not to facilitate: I prefer to have a facilitator (can be rotating) who performs three tasks:
  1. Keeps time
  2. Creates talking points to open conversation about each work
  3. Ensures that everyone participates
- Formal or informal? You can be very strict and businesslike, or you can be more informal, with drinks or dinner beforehand. I once had a group where a different person was responsible for providing dinner (either by cooking or ordering takeaway) each week. This is more fun, but takes more time, and is not advantageous for extremely busy people.
- Setting parameters: As a group, decide the following:
  1. Time spent on each work
  2. Time in advance work must be sent
  3. A fair way of determining who gets to submit. It's okay that people don't submit each time.
  4. Maximum number of submissions per session
  5. Maximum page limit per submission
- It's okay to be flexible with these rules, but they should be clear. Occasionally we would allow someone to do a "double submission", but they then wouldn't be able to submit again for a double long period of time.

### *Nuts and Bolts*

- Double-space.
- Microsoft Word/OpenOffice is best.
- Paginate.
- In your email, ask for what you want people to look at. (NB: often if you have questions, you already know the answer :.))
- 15-20 pages maximum. A complete chapter is best. Generally, if you submit more, the critique gets watered down, and people start making the same kinds of comments..