**MATERIALS NEEDED (IF NOT ALREADY SENT TO ME)**

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If you’re registered to do one or more **Friday query letter critiques** (see bulleted activities above in **bold**), please **send me your 1-page query letter(s) (12 pt font, single-spaced, one-inch margins all around) for them by Tuesday, October 29** if you have not already done so. **This also applies if you are on the waitlist for a query letter critique**—you can leave off a salutation at the top of the letter or include a generic “Dear Agent/Editor” because there’s no way to know which pairing will have any opening due to a participant cancellation or a Friday no-show.

If you are doing one or more **Saturday pitches** (see bulleted activities above in **bold**, **please send me your 1-page query letter(s) (12 pt font, single-spaced, one-inch margins all around) for them no later than 10:00 p.m. US Eastern on Friday, November 1**. If you’re first doing the query letter critique activity, this will give you time to rewrite your query letters for your pitch(es). **This also applies if you are on the waitlist for one or more pitches**—you can send me a query letter by this deadline for each agent/editor for whom you’re on standby.

CONFERENCE PREPARATION VIDEO

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Some years ago, I created a video where I interview authors and successful Atlanta Writers Conference veterans Steven Cooper and Liz Lazarus about ways to help you prepare for your conference experience, whether you’re doing pitches, manuscript and/or query letter critiques:

<https://youtu.be/CCDz7CDnRnA>

Spoiler Alert: One of the many take-home messages of the video is to *read this email in its entirety*! It’s such a long communiqué because we’ve included everything you need to know to prepare and get the most out of your Atlanta Writers Conference experience. Truly—it’s all in here, but if you still have questions after you watch the video AND read the following, please ask!

VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES ALL HELD ON ZOOM

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Use the Zoom links in the schedule section above to participate in the virtual activities you selected.

WHAT TO WEAR  
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Even though you’re meeting virtually with editors and/or agents, we recommend wearing a business casual outfit—not too dressy but professional-looking (at least the part that will show on camera)—so you make a good impression. That’s just as important online as in-person.

REFUND DEADLINE HAS PASSED  
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Per the information posted on the conference website and sent to you in the registration confirmation e-mail, the refund deadline was September 9, 2024, for the Manuscript Sample Critique and October 11, 2024 for all other activities.

Below, you will see:

- Full conference schedule of activities with descriptions

- Guidance if you’re on one or more waitlists

- Online instructions for your query letter critique, manuscript critique, and/or pitch meetings

- Tips for your query letter critique, manuscript critique, and/or pitch meetings

DETAILS ABOUT ACTIVITIES ON NOVEMBER 1 & NOVEMBER 2  
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Please review this information carefully. All times shown are US Eastern.

Friday, NOVEMBER 1  
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1:30-5:00 p.m.  
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Query Letter Critique, if you have REGISTERED for this (**will be listed in** **bold** on the schedule at the top of this message). As described on the conference website, the purpose of the Friday query letter critique is to give you objective feedback from an experienced publishing editor and literary agent (or two literary agents or two publishers) who have reviewed thousands of these, to improve your query letter. They know what works and what provokes a quick rejection. If you’re taking part in the Saturday pitches, the assignment was made to ensure you won’t be receiving a query letter critique from people you’re meeting with on Saturday, so you won’t harm your chances with them. **If the editor and/or agent(s) are interested in your book, however, we encourage you to ask whether they would like you to send your manuscript after the conference (i.e., turn this activity into a pitch) and be sure to get their contact information.** At each conference, this creates additional opportunities for participants to get their work considered and has sometimes resulted in participants getting contracts for publication or agent representation.

**IF YOU ARE PARTICIPATING, SEND YOUR 1-PAGE QUERY LETTER (12 PT FONT, SINGLE-SPACED, 1-INCH MARGINS ALL AROUND) AS A WORD DOC TO ME BY OCTOBER 29**, if you have not already done so. **This also applies if you are on the waitlist for a query letter critique**—you can leave off a salutation at the top of the letter or include a generic “Dear Agent/Editor” because there’s no way to know which pairing will have any opening due to a participant cancellation or a Friday no-show.

The agents/editors assigned to you will review and discuss your query letter with each other for a few minutes before you will be admitted into the Zoom meeting room so they will be ready to provide guidance. Your meeting with them will last for up to ten minutes. Use this feedback to improve your query letter for any Saturday pitches for which you’ve registered (or are on a waitlist for) and/or for all future use when querying. **Tips for getting the most out of your query letter critique are near the bottom of this email.**

You can choose whether to send the query letter you’ve prepared for your pitch if you’re doing one or more of those on Saturday or send a different query letter altogether. You can have the body of the letter with or without a generic salutation (“Dear Agent”), or you can address your letter to the agent and/or editor to whom you’ve been assigned for the query letter critique (see the schedule listing at the top of this email, in **bold**).

Fifteen minutes before your scheduled meeting time, click the link provided above to enter the Zoom meeting. Then you will be assigned to the appropriate breakout room per the schedule by me or our VP of Operations Kim Conrey. Again, the first few minutes will be reserved for discussions between the agents/editors; then you’ll be invited into the breakout room for your meeting, which will last up to 10 minutes. Once you finish your Query Letter Critique meeting, please close your browser tab.

If you have multiple meetings, after each meeting, close your browser tab for Zoom rather than just leave the breakout room you were assigned to. Fifteen minutes before your next meeting, click the Zoom link above again to reenter Zoom for your next breakout room assignment. This will ensure we can assign you without complications (sometimes when participants leave the breakout room but not Zoom, we are unable to reassign them, which is why you need to leave Zoom entirely by closing your browser tab).

- END OF VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES FOR NOVEMBER 1 -

Saturday, NOVEMBER 2  
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10:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
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Manuscript submission critique meetings if you have REGISTERED for this (**will be listed in bold** on the schedule at the top of this message).

Fifteen minutes before your scheduled meeting time, click the link provided above to enter the Zoom meeting. Then you will be assigned to the appropriate breakout room per the schedule by me or our VP of Operations Kim Conrey. The agent/editor you selected will have had a little time to review their critique summary. Your meeting with them will last about 13 minutes. Once you finish your Manuscript Critique meeting, please close your browser tab.

If you have multiple meetings, after each meeting, close your browser tab for Zoom rather than just leave the breakout room you were assigned to. Fifteen minutes before your next meeting, click the Zoom link above again to reenter Zoom for your next breakout room assignment. This will ensure we can assign you without complications (sometimes when participants leave the breakout room but not Zoom, we are unable to reassign them, which is why you need to leave Zoom entirely by closing your browser tab).

I will send the agent/editor’s feedback to you a day or two before the conference (i.e., as soon as I receive it), so please have that feedback at hand and prepare questions in advance to get the most out of your meeting. If the agent/editor wants you to send a partial or full manuscript after the conference, they will have either indicated this on the summary feedback form you received with your critique or will provide you with contact details during the meeting if they indicated a need to discuss your project with you first, so be sure to ask for their email address!

2:15-5:30 p.m.  
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Pitch meetings if you have REGISTERED for this (**will be listed in** **bold** on the schedule at the top of this message).

**IF YOU ARE PARTICIPATING, SEND YOUR 1-PAGE QUERY LETTER (12 PT FONT, SINGLE-SPACED, 1-INCH MARGINS ALL AROUND) AS A WORD DOC TO ME BY 10:00 P.M. U.S. EASTERN TIME ON NOVEMBER 1 FOR EACH PITCH YOU SCHEDULED**, if you have not already done so. After that time, I will send the agents and editors the query letters for their pitch meetings, so I need yours before then. **This also applies if you are on the waitlist for one or more pitches**—you can send me a query letter by this deadline for each agent/editor for whom you’re on standby.

Fifteen minutes before your scheduled meeting time, click the link provided above to enter the Zoom meeting. Then you will be assigned to the appropriate breakout room per the schedule by me or our VP of Operations Kim Conrey. The first five minutes of the meeting is reserved for the agent/editor you selected to privately review your query letter and consider questions they want to ask. Then you’ll be invited into their breakout room for a meeting that will last up to 10 minutes. Once you finish your pitch meeting, please close your browser tab.

If you have multiple meetings, after each meeting, close your browser tab for Zoom rather than just leave the breakout room you were assigned to. Fifteen minutes before your next meeting, click the Zoom link above again to reenter Zoom for your next breakout room assignment. This will ensure we can assign you without complications (sometimes when participants leave the breakout room but not Zoom, we are unable to reassign them, which is why you need to leave Zoom entirely by closing your browser tab).

If they want you to send a partial or full manuscript, they will provide you with contact details during your meeting. If they want you to send pages but forget to give you their email address, be sure to ask for it!

**NOTE FOR SATURDAY ACTIVITIES:** Due to past technical issues involving the audio-visual technology during the award ceremony that concludes the in-person event, this activity will not be broadcast on Zoom. If an agent/editor awards you a best manuscript sample or best pitch, I will email that certificate to you a day or two after the conference.

- END OF VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES FOR NOVEMBER 2 -

**FOR THOSE WAITLISTED FOR A QUERY LETTER CRITIQUE AND/OR PITCH(ES)**  
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Opportunities for those on the query letter critique waitlist may occur between 1:45 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. on Friday. If you have a low number (#1-#3) in a waitlist queue, there’s a greater chance of an early afternoon opportunity. If you are #4 or higher in a queue, if an opening does occur it’s most likely to be mid-to-late afternoon. Again, **please send your query letter to me by October 29.**

Opportunities for those on one or more pitch waitlists may occur between 10:15 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. on Saturday. If you have a low number (#1-#3) in a waitlist queue, there’s a greater chance of a morning or early afternoon opportunity. If you are #4 or higher in a queue, if an opening does occur it’s most likely to be mid-to-late afternoon. Again, **please send your query letter for any waitlisted pitches to me by November 1 at 10 p.m. US Eastern.**

We will text you at the number you provided during registration (shown near the top of this email) to let you know about an opening. If a spot is confirmed for you, I will provide you with instructions to submit your $80 payment and to send me your query letter (if you haven’t done so already). You will use the Zoom link provided at the top of this email for the query letter critique on Friday or pitches on Saturday to enter the online meeting and will be assigned to the room for the agent/editor you selected per the time that has become available.

**Note that if you were on a waitlist for a Manuscript Critique, that activity is closed**—all participants submitted their materials, and no further opportunities exist for a manuscript critique at this conference.

**QUEUING INSTRUCTIONS: for Friday query letter critique, Saturday manuscript critiques, and Saturday pitches**  
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**It is your responsibility to be in the Zoom meeting room as your turn approaches.** Please log in **15 MINUTES before your scheduled time** in case we’re running ahead of schedule or there’s a no-show before you. Your schedule at the top of this email tells you the time of your meeting. An automated system will send you a text using the mobile number you provided (if you have a US number), to tell you to report to the meeting room but please don’t depend on this reminder alone—you’re responsible for logging into the Zoom room at the right time. Because of the software we’re using, the text from us will show a 678 area code.

Once you enter the Zoom meeting by clicking the appropriate link provided at the top of this email, you will be assigned to the appropriate breakout room after the agent/editor has done their review (up to five minutes for query letter critiques and pitches; first two minutes for manuscript critiques). Once you finish your meeting, you can close your browser tab or click the Leave button to leave the meeting.

If you have problems with the Zoom link on your phone/computer, we’ve provided the phone number, meeting ID, and passcode to use so you can still talk to the agent(s)/editor(s) and not miss your meeting.

If you signed up for a manuscript critique but are unable to attend or you log in later than your start time, you'll at least have the agent/editor's comments about your work. We won’t be able to reschedule your meeting after the conference.

If you log in late for your query letter critique or pitch, you'll need to wait until after the last one scheduled to see if the agent(s)/editor(s) can still discuss your project with you on Zoom.

**TIPS FOR THE FRIDAY QUERY LETTER CRITIQUE SESSION**  
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**If you registered for a query letter critique, please click the appropriate Zoom link 15 minutes before your assigned time shown at the beginning of this email.** For this meeting, there will be an agent and an editor (or two agents or two editors) collaborating to provide you with advice, and the session will last about 10 minutes after they have finished reading your submission. A few minutes will be set aside for the agents/editors to open and read the query letter you sent earlier and discuss it together. For example, if your meeting shows the start time as 2:33 p.m., the time from 2:33 to 2:35 p.m. would be used by the agents/editors to read and discuss your query letter. Your meeting with them would be from 2:35 to 2:45 p.m. in this example.

If any agent/editor wants to see manuscript pages and/or a synopsis, they will ask you to send these and will provide their contact information. You will want to have a copy of your query letter at hand to take notes on, so you can capture their feedback.  
  
The objective of this activity is to improve your query letter. Be sure to ask the agents’/editors’ opinions about each paragraph, the writing style, the comparable (“comp”) titles you selected, if anything is missing or belabored too much, and pay attention to any other advice they have about how to present your book and yourself in the best possible way. If you haven’t written your query letter yet and need resources to help you, please consult the Registration Confirmation email sent to you when you registered for the conference or the [submission guidelines](https://atlantawritersconference.com/submission-guidelines/) page on the website—it has recommended weblinks to get you started.

If you’ll be doing a pitch on Saturday afternoon, this Friday critique session will give you feedback to improve your query letter so you can present your best effort for Saturday. Send me the query letter(s) addressed to the agent(s)/editor(s) you selected for any Saturday pitch(es) you registered for (see the schedule listing at the top of letter, in **bold**). Again, you need to send your pitch meeting query letter(s) to me **by 10:00 p.m. US Eastern on NOVEMBER 1.**  
  
If the agents/editors doing the query letter critique are interested in your project and invite you to submit some manuscript pages, be sure to get their contact information and write "Requested materials from Atlanta Writers Conference " in the subject line of your email to them; also, remind the agent/editor in the first paragraph of your message what work they requested at the conference.

**TIPS FOR THE SATURDAY MANUSCRIPT CRITIQUE SESSION**  
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**If you registered for a manuscript critique, please click the appropriate Zoom link 15 minutes before your assigned time shown at the beginning of this email.** This meeting will be one-on-one with the agent/editor you selected and will last about 15 minutes, including two minutes set aside at the start of your meeting time for the agent/editor to review their comments. For example, if your meeting shows the start time as 10:30 a.m., the time from 10:30 to about 10:32 a.m. would be used by the agent/editor to remind themself about your work and their comments. Your meeting with them would be from 10:32 to 10:45 a.m. in this example.

Be sure to have notes made and questions ready based on their comments that I’ll send to you a day or two before the conference. Be sure to ask for clarification if you don’t understand any comments, but don't be defensive. The critiques are intended to help you prepare your best work for any future submissions you make—they're not criticisms about you. If the agent/editor wants to see additional manuscript pages, they will have given you instructions on the summary sheet about what to send and where to send it. If they indicated the need to discuss your project with you before they decide, be sure to ask them for their contact information if they do decide they want you to send a full/partial manuscript to them after the conference.  
  
If the agent/editor invites you to submit corrected work for consideration, be sure to get their contact information and write "Requested materials from Atlanta Writers Conference" in the subject line of your email to them; also, remind the agent/editor in the first paragraph of your message what work they requested at the conference.

**TIPS ON THE SATURDAY PITCH SESSION**  
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**If you registered for a pitch, please click the appropriate Zoom link 15 minutes before your assigned time shown at the beginning of this email.** This meeting will be one-on-one with the agent/editor you requested and will last about 10 minutes, after they finish reading your query letter. Five minutes will be set aside for the agent/editor to read the 1-page query letter you sent to me by 10 p.m. Eastern on NOVEMBER 1. For example, if your meeting shows the start time as 2:30 p.m., the time from 2:30 to 2:35 p.m. would be used by the agent/editor to read and consider your query letter. Your meeting with them would be from 2:35 to 2:45 p.m. in this example.

If the agent/editor wants to see manuscript pages and/or a synopsis, they will ask you to send these and will give you their contact information.  
  
How do you pitch? Remember that your query letter will do the hard work of telling the agent/editor the basics about your book, so you can build on those details, answer and ask questions, and keep the conversation going. This is so much more effective than reciting a memorized spiel.

You will be pitching yourself as much as your book, because the agent/editor won’t know about the quality and style of your writing beyond what is in your query letter. The idea is to make a personal connection and pique the individual's interest, so you'll be asked to submit manuscript pages. Be humble and ask for feedback about how you presented yourself and your book.

If the agent/editor invites you to submit any manuscript pages, be sure to get their contact information and write "Requested materials from Atlanta Writers Conference" in the subject line of your email to them; also, remind the agent/editor in the first paragraph of your message what work they requested at the conference.  
  
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If you have any questions, please ask me now. We hope you enjoy the conference!  
  
Regards,

George  
  
George Weinstein

Executive Director, Atlanta Writers Club

<https://atlantawritersclub.org/>

Atlanta Writers Conference Director

<http://atlantawritersconference.com>

Award-winning author of *Hardscrabble Road,* *Return to Hardscrabble Road*, *Aftermath, Watch What You Say*, *The Five Destinies of Carlos Moreno,* *The Caretaker*, and *Offlining*

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