

The Norfolk CT Library's Literary Book Discussion Rules

Sorry about what follows. It sounds puritanical. Then again, me.

Session logistics:

1. We meet about once every three to four weeks (except for longer breaks, usually in mid winter and around the end of August/start of September).
2. The sessions are on select Thursdays, starting at 10:30 a.m. EDT and ending at about 12:15 p.m. EDT.
3. The group meets in a hybrid format: both in-person and online (at the same time).
4. You can participate in-person or online, as you wish or can—and switch between them, as you wish or can.
5. *To attend in-person*, register at norfolklibrary.org (find the literary book group on the library's calendar and register your name as an attendee).
6. *To attend online*, there's no registration necessary. Just use the unique Zoom link sent via email on the Monday or Tuesday before each session.
7. I do not need to know if or how you'll attend.
8. *If you attend in-person*, you'll need to climb the narrow stairs off the library's reference room to get to the conference room where we'll meet.
9. In-person participants who have not registered may be relegated to the library's great room with a laptop to join online (depending on space at the conference table).
10. In-person participants will need to queue to get into the discussion, using a colored numbering system available on the table.

11. *For those online*, please adjust the time (and even the date, for those across the date line) of the Zoom links with GMT as your base and by taking summer or daylight saving time into account. We are on daylight saving time in my part of the world.
12. To get in queue to talk online, familiarize yourself with the *raise hand* function on Zoom. Also, the Zoom chats remain open during the session. Much happens. Check often.

Session etiquette:

1. For in-person participants, respect the people online. Don't talk while they're talking.
2. For online participants, please turn off the pings and beeps on your computer or tablet.
3. For everyone, please silence your phones.
4. Tread lightly on religion and politics. Be opinionated but respectful.
5. **There is one disallowed comment: "I didn't like it." We can't discuss personal preferences. Instead, we're driving toward the workings of narrative. So if you want to offer a negative reaction, try this: "The novel doesn't work because it. . . ." (Not "doesn't work because I. . . .") Now offer a reason it doesn't work based on the text: its structure, form, contradictions, character *development* (rather than its characters' likeability), or success at its stated and/or implied goals. (Which is a great question: What are the rarely stated but usually implied goals?)**
6. Try to limit yourself to one talking point at a time to move the discussion freely.
7. For online participants, please leave your camera on (as much as possible), try to stay seated, and don't take a phone call—as if you were participating in-person.
8. For everyone, bring your beverage of choice and an open mind. And have fun! I'm so glad you're doing this with us.