

PUBZ: MLC Writing & Publishing Zone | Report_Feb2014

Meeting date & time 2/11/2014 5:30 PM | location **MLC Gallery, 111 Gerrard, first floor**

Moderator	Jason Wang	Attendees
Type of meeting	Workshop	Catherine Russell, Dr. Esther Berry, Emma Doran, Graham MacLean, Dominique Wrizile, Holly Edejer, Chelsea Olsen, Tara Sadeghian, Amy Smith, Jason Wang — 10 in total;
Major Presenter	Emma Doran	
Support by	Tara Sadeghian & Catherine Russell	Virtual Attendee (Twitter): Dr. Irene Gammel

TOPIC: “Imagined Audiences: What It Means To Call Documents Performative?” — Practicing an Academic Talk & Preparing For a Doctoral Defense

Action items	Person responsible	Time allotted
Greeting, introduction, and administrative updates	Jason Wang	5 mins
Individual introduction	All Participants	15 mins
Presentation: “Imagined Audiences”	Emma Doran	30 mins
Reflections on Emma Doran’s presentation	Plenum Discussion	20 mins
Q&A about academic talks and PhD defense	Plenum Discussion	15 mins
Other business: Future Call for Submissions	Jason Wang	5 mins
Adjournment		

Learning points

Preparing for a doctoral defense involves returning to one’s recently-finished work in order to present a precise and concise overview to the exam committee, comprised of established scholars in the area. To that end, Emma Doran, ABD in Communication and Culture, presented her dissertation research on modern dance reviews.

This PUBZ workshop revolved around two working questions:

1. How does Performance Media (such as the modern dance review) reconfigure notions of audience?
2. What are some effective tactics for distilling dissertation content into concise talking points for a doctoral defense?

The history of modern dance review involves many aesthetics, media, and audience negotiations. Doran argues that the modern dance review, as a genre, marks the shift from documentary journalist writing to performative one. Thus, it renders the theatrical space through modern dance review; thereby, audience is imagined in the history.

Some helpful steps:

1. Involve your supervisor and supervisory committee to guide you and listen carefully to advice
2. Familiarize yourself with each argument in the dissertation before the defense
3. Foreground compelling ideas and examples and move elegantly into theoretical concepts
4. Consider the importance of the dissertation title--it needs to nail the content
5. Showcase research rationale and significance in defense
6. Do more than fill a gap in the field; contribute a theoretical framework.
7. Be aware of other relevant materials which might be not covered in the dissertation: list them in case that examiners will ask and explain your choices carefully
8. Clarify how your research contributes to the critical conversation in a number of fields
9. Explore which different fields your concepts might contribute to and show broad relevancy
10. Be patient and meticulous if your research method involves archival materials; keep a record of sources for all materials at all times
11. Include images and discuss them fully; images should not be an add-on, but should be organically integrated and analyzed
12. Have your proposal and manuscript read by somebody outside of the field; involve a smart and avid reader and listen carefully to feedback
13. Consider carefully invitations to external examiners and keep fingers crossed that they accept the invitation