

## **Brief Description Of What I Was Trying To Do With My Job Talk** **By Dr. Cheryl E. Ball, presented on the market Jan–Feb 2007**

Below I have outlined the job talk I gave, describing what I was trying to accomplish with each slide. While my actual script isn't provided (I didn't have one – I made a bullet point outline and rehearsed it enough to know exactly when to say what.), you can follow along by connecting the [title] portion with the title of the slides in the accompanying SWF file.

[Reading New Media] Title slide

[How'd I get here] Briefly introducing my background so I can talk about how it plays into how I define new media and how I got into my dissertation project.

[New Media?] Four questions to show outline of talk.

[New Media: Fields Doing New Media, etc.] Because the field of new media within English studies is so new, theoretically speaking, I had to define the field, my terms, and my situation within those. The next six slides do this work visually while I am describing how the visuals connect, literally, with new media at the center of the pie. If you study a new or understudied area, you may have to do similar explanation and situation of yourself within the field.

NOTE: This talk is nontraditional in that I didn't focus solely on research or present my main argument in my research. In part this was because I was out on the market for the second time, as an advanced assistant professor, and I only applied for jobs where they'd be interested in seeing how my research and teaching and editorial work all connected. I made sure to make this point evident during my talk, as some folks would have wondered why I didn't do just an argument-based/research talk, as most candidates do.

[Researching] I lay out my major research question on the first slide and then proceed to an outline slide so my audience will know I am going to talk about four different research projects and how each relates to my RQ.

[Researching: Book project] I thought all the schools would want to know I was working on a book that came out of my dissertation, so the visuals relate to the main texts that prompted my diss study. I explain my entire diss/book project in two screens.

[Researching: Edited Collection/CCCC Survey] I then briefly mention the next two projects and how they relate to my RQ. (It's important as an Adv. Assistant prof to show your research trajectory so that they will know you're far enough along

to get tenure in a shorter amt of time and also that your research all coheres at that point in your career. Note on the Survey slide that even tho there are 141 questions in that survey, I showcased ONE question which was crucial to my research, and also my future employment/tenure case.)

[Researching: Kairos Editorship] It's risky to include editorial work as research, but it was important for me to sell myself as editor of this journal and how it relates to my RQ, so I included it in my talk. Think really hard about including stuff like this in your talk when you're an entry-level hire.

[Teaching] An outline of classes I have taught followed by a few specifics about particular classes I wanted to highlight, as they related to my research interests. Also important for all the jobs I applied for was to show my interdisciplinarity (that I teach rhet/comp, tech comm., publishing stuff, and new media stuff). I ended with my "dream class" (multimodal composition pedagogy) and two examples from that class (the map, a teaching tool which I explained in the talk) and a student video that was a final project from that class (the theme of which also related directly back to MY research questions about new media).

NOTE: The danger with talking about teaching (or research) is the tendency to want to go on and on telling them all about every class or every seminar paper you've ever written. Nobody cares that much. And if they do, they'll ask you about it in the Q&A. So don't blather on. Figure out the essential information to tell them—whether it's about your main RQ and how Article X that you're working on relates to that (and that's it) or about how your internship class is a model class for studying X pedagogical research topic, etc. Keep it brief.

[Connections] Because of the nontraditional structure of my talk, I made sure to summarize my main point at the end.

[Thank You] The concluding slide is a great place to put additional info, like your portfolio URL which might have links to your other research and teaching. It also is an easy way to signal that you're done. And when you've reached the Thank You slide, it's time to stop talking. Let the questions commence! (Can you tell that going over time and rambling are my two biggest presentational pet peeves? And, believe me, they are everyone else's too.)