

GRANT-WRITING WORKSHOP

Sep 7, 2012 Dagmar Herzog, History Department, Graduate Center, City University of New York, dherzog@gc.cuny.edu

*get models – several diff ones

*formulate a passionate persuasive argument

That x has not been done is not enough, you need to say how your work changes our thinking about agreed-upon big issues, so work on articulating how to express why ppl should care

Clarify your position. Explain succinctly what other scholars have said, what they've gotten right, what they've misunderstood

Explain your sources, and your method

The more you've immersed yourself already in the sources, and have an original take – have noticed something others haven't, or are juxtaposing sources previously not read together, the more you can show what exactly you'll be doing that is new

Explain what's unique about YOUR ability to do this – what is it about your background experience, your approach, your intellectual evolution, that makes you the right person

Help ppl think along with you, e.g. you could start with a question, or with a problem that ppl realize needs to be understood better, or with a problem that is currently preoccupying many ppl

Some of those enduringly fascinating problems are:

How power works, what justice is, why human beings do what they do, how change happens

It's good to focus on conflicts – those make compelling stories, it's good to focus on puzzling seeming contradictions that you can explain

When you look at texts, think about: arguments, assumptions, anxieties, insinuations – i.e. how ideological-emotional-political-cultural-social-economic conflict works.

The abstract is very important, work on it. Imagine being comprehensible and interesting to the following audiences: your mother, a 19-year-old student, potential colleagues outside your field during a job interview. Convey intellectual excitement.

Explain what you'll do with their money and the time given you, and what you aim to achieve during that time.

Be systematic – make each paragraph flow from the prior one.