

TPQ Edit 1 Transcript

Hello, my name is Shelley Allen. I'm from Routledge, Taylor and Francis. Welcome to this interview with Heidi Rose, Editor of *Text and Performance Quarterly*.

Heidi, how would you describe *TPQ* and what are its aims and scopes and what is the range of issues and concerns that the journal is aiming to explore?

Well, *TPQ*, *Text and Performance Quarterly* is the central performance studies journal for NCA and for the field of communication in general. It looks at performance, both widely and specifically. So its performance as an epistemology, as a way of knowing; performance as an object and a subject of study; performance, as well as a methodology of study and I think a central strength of the journal is its ability to attract readers who are specifically performance study scholars and practitioners, but also readers from across the communication field, and, increasingly so, in recent years. Our work appeals to many different kinds of qualitative researchers, our work covers inter-personal issues, organisational issues, cross-cultural, inter-cultural kinds of issues and rhetoric, but all through the lens of performance.

I think another thing that *TPQ* does, differently than even other performance related journals from other fields, is it really brings together poetics and aesthetics and rhetoric, in ways that no other journal does.

What do you think are the most contentious issues in communication studies which the journal is seeking to address?

I think a big issue is the concept of presence. It seems that in a lot of areas of the field we're continuing to wrestle with this concept, as technology, in particular, continues to alter the ways in which we communicate, the way that we build and sustain relationships, the way that we create art and so I think that concept of presence is a big one.

I think, also, we're continuing to address and to make accessible performance as a way of knowing and fuller meanings around the concept of performativity because in recent years there has been a trendiness to that term, to that concept of performativity and even performance as a way of knowing and I think that trendiness has, in some ways, given them a bit of over-use and also a kind of muddiness, so I think we're continuing to try to work through those issues and make them clear, as the basis for what we do.

So what do you look for when considering articles?

I think, at a very basic level, I look for something that is smart, that is provocative, thoughtful, well-argued, well-written, advancing and extending theory or providing new applications to existing theory and work that has clear relevance to performance studies specifically. I think that would be the foundation.

So what are the most common mistakes made by authors submitting to the journal?

What I've discovered so far, it sounds, in some ways, so basic, but people not following directions that are provided on the online submission process. So sending in work that still has their contact information, their author identification when we use a double-blind review process and that just holds up the review process. Or sending

in the piece without careful proofreading and, in fact, I think that this is something that I'd like to discuss with other editors and with the whole membership at some point, that I think that the ease of submitting work online seems to have, in some ways, made people maybe a little bit more careless. It's so easy to say, 'Okay, this is done, I can send it in,' and then not realise that it has actually a number of typos or maybe it is not ready. So work that is just not ready and not citing relevant sources from performance studies scholarship and that's another thing that I see and I think that that's evidence to us having a wider appeal and a wider readership now because issues of performance do cut across disciplinary boundaries, which is really wonderful, but at the same time, I will often receive pieces where the author has clearly not addressed scholarship that comes from *TPQ* when it would be relevant.

So what are the aspirations for the future of the journal?

I would love this to be the absolute 'go to' journal for performance studies across multiple-disciplines and internationally. I think that what *TPQ* offers is different from other performance related journals that I've read that come out of associations related to theatre or drama studies, that we, in being the heart of the communication discipline and in really looking at these issues related to both text and performance and their kind of bridging of aesthetics and poetics and rhetoric, I think that we offer something that others don't. I am thrilled that it has developed more of an international readership and I'm really delighted when I receive more and more submissions internationally, so that means that people in other places are reading it, which is great! I think my hope is that it becomes the 'go to' journal for performance studies. I think that still our face-to-face networking has no substitute, so it's been wonderful for me to meet people in other areas of communication and then other related fields, in theatre and I think that the arbitrary, well arbitrary in some ways, politically driven in other ways, the academic divisions that happened in the United States in the early 20th Century, where speech and English and theatre are separated and then we've moved apart, we've come together, we've moved apart, we've come together and I think now I know the language. At my university and a number of others that I've been in touch with, it's all about really pressing forward the inter-disciplinary kinds of connections and, of course, we all still have our own histories and our own areas of precision, but the conversation should be happening across the disciplines and I think the journals are a place to let that happen.

So how do you see communication studies developing in the future, are there any particular areas which you feel are going to come to the forefront?

I think that the most obvious is just the explosion of technology and how we connect with people and all the multiple implications of that and, again, both inter-personally and from a more public rhetoric based place. So all the implications of Facebook and what that's done and what texting has done and the way that face-to-face communication functions now and the way relationships are developed and built and maintained and how we communicate publicly and I think that those questions being connection to national and international crises and disasters and the kind of access that we have and so, so many things. Even, I think, our field is going to be at the forefront of all those big questions.

Well actually that's one of the building bridges themes isn't it, one of the themes is the technological impact and one of the questions I'd like to ask you, is how do you think the journal addresses the conference theme, building bridges as a whole?

Well, yeah, I think performance studies, the way that it has evolved is by very definition a bridge builder because looking at performance as so central to many aspects of human communication, we can see it links in, certainly, all of the little sub-fields of our discipline and in a lot of the qualitative kinds of methodologies that we use, performance has become central. So it's a link, it's an interesting link among a lot of them and I think that in the same way that we run the risk of being able to clearly define what it is, we can't say that performance is everything because then it's nothing, of course, but it can create connections among people in our field, who come from different areas and if they're now beginning to understand how performance functions as communication, then that becomes sort of a point of contact from which more can be built.

And how do you feel the NCA journals benefit the membership of NCA?

Absolutely as a place to engage in dialogue, in the written form; I'd really, really like the opportunity to create forums. I think that obviously it's a place for established scholars to continue to make their voices heard. It's a place for new PhDs to get their feet wet and to explore big questions and get their work published, but I think that NCA is so, so, so big and these journals are a place for us to read each other's work, to comment on each other's work, to build off each other's work, while still engaging scholarship from other disciplines too. So it's a place to define ourselves and I think that we're finally doing better in having readers from other areas pay attention to what we're saying. So we need to continue to get readership from outside the field and continue to make this a central place for us to communicate with each other.

Many thanks for taking some time out to talk to me today, Heidi. Those people who want to find out more about *TPQ* and the other NCA journals can visit www.communicationarena.com.

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