

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 is divided into six main parts:

- 1) The purpose of a literature review
 - a) Overview: Reading between the lines
 - b) The use of literature
 - c) Sources of literature: An open approach
- 2) Academic scholarship and performance evaluation of faculty work**
 - a) Overview: Reading between the lines
 - b) The use of literature
 - c) Sources of literature: An open approach
- 3) Characteristics of a performance evaluation system in higher education
- 4) Recognition of work by faculty in the field of film and digital media
- 5) Change in institutions of higher learning: challenges and obstacles
- 6) Summary

Part 1/The purpose of a literature review is divided into three sections:

a) Overview: Reading between the lines

The traditional template for defining, recognizing, and evaluating faculty work reveals many layers of submerged and unacknowledged meaning. By reading between the lines I see a landscape of implicit values that exist underneath the surface. I see that both the trilogy and the template emphasize scientism in higher education, a value system that prevails without conscious awareness of its implications. In literature that intends to explain or justify the status quo of performance evaluation I understand what has been expressed, but I also discern what has not been expressed---gaps within the main body of ideas. Critical inquiry facilitates and provokes a deeper understanding of the multiple layers of meaning that are found as I have openly questioned the terminologies and implicit values of the trilogy and the traditional template.

b) The use of literature

What is a literature review and what is its purpose? A conventional literature review is a detailed discussion of what has been published in a given area of study. It is intended to justify the approach of an inquiry and its selection of methods in relation to the research problem and

the research questions, and to demonstrate that the research will be a contribution to the body of knowledge in a given area of study (Hart, 1998; Levy and Ellis, 2006). It serves, in part, to affirm the credibility of both the dissertation and the writer (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996). The quality of a literature review should demonstrate “appropriate breadth and depth, rigor and consistency, clarity and brevity, and effective analysis and synthesis” (Hart, 1998, p. 1). Levy and Ellis (2006) propose that:

an effective literature review should do the following: a) methodologically analyze and synthesize quality literature, b) provide a firm foundation to a research topic, c) provide a firm foundation to the selection of research methodology, and d) demonstrate that the proposed research contributes something new to the overall body of knowledge or advances the research field’s knowledge base (p. 2).

A literature review that is informed by an understanding of systems theory and systems thinking will focus attention upon the *whole*, rather than upon the parts, facilitating an understanding that things, ideas, people and groups of people are systems within ever-larger systems, *ad infinitum*. An “open” approach in the use of literature can be characterized as purposeful and continuous sensitivity to the emergence of observable systemic relationships through broad based reading and other data collection; conversely, a “closed” approach limits the scope of input and inhibits the making of systemic connections, reducing the potential that decisions will yield benefits, change and action that solves a problem (Schockley-Zalabak, 1999, p. 43). I consider my approach to the literature as open. Chapter 3 describes further my open approach and method of inquiry with literature and other sources of data that have informed this dissertation research.

From a perspective rooted in systems theory, a literature review should also demonstrate that inquiry was a *process of learning*, a sequence of steps or activities (Levy and Ellis, 2006). Levy and Ellis (2006) recommend a three-step process for developing a “sound and effective literature review... 1) inputs 2) processing and 3) outputs” (p. 2). An effective literature review that follows this three-stage process will be able to demonstrate a thorough and systematic examination of the existing body of knowledge from literature (Levy and Ellis, 2006). Borrowing from systems theory and Levy and Ellis (2006), I am taking in new information by reading and gathering a range of data (inputs), transforming the incoming information with my own understanding (processing), and then giving back and sharing new information in the form of this dissertation and its embedded layers of ideas (outputs) (Levy and Ellis, 2006; Bloom, 1956). This is a continuous process and descriptive of my approach to the literature, and to my method of research inquiry.

A postmodernist approach justifies, compels and encourages the inclusion and consideration of readings and sources of data that do not necessarily reflect mainstream perceptions or expectations about the particular topic of this dissertation. From a postmodern and post-positivist perspective, “reality can never be apprehended, only approximated,” and this idea allows the de-centralization of source(s) that inform the research and the use of methods for inquiry, placing great value upon a juxtaposition of perspectives, contexts, and methods as a way of capturing as much of reality as possible (Guba, 1990, p. 2). It places great value upon the emergence of ambiguities, discrepancies and alternatives, rejecting traditional, artificial and imposed frames of order such as conventional expectations of structure and literary style (Guba, 1990; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). I have prioritized some sources that reject, sharply criticize, or deconstruct the status quo in many contexts; and have integrated some theoretical writings that

emphasize *self*, honoring the first-person voice as a source of data. Postmodernism permits the crossing of boundaries that define the breadth and nature of everything that is presumed to be knowable---including reality, existence, culture, power, authority, meaning, causation, knowledge, ethics and more. Borrowing from postmodernism and with reference to grounded theory, I have taken the liberty to read and consider *everything* as data, then to determine afterwards how it fits, or not (Barthes, 1977; Glaser, 1976).

Lippman (1989) coined the term *granularity* in relation to interactivity in new media to define the point at which the interaction with a new media text (e.g., a word, a page, a video or audio segment, a part of computer game) can be interrupted by a reader (Voithofer, 2005). In planning a study, researchers determine the data granularity that they require to answer research questions, as well as determining, with dissemination editors, the depth to which the reader should be allowed to enter into the data (Voithofer, 2005). A simple example can be the use of a digital camera to capture visual documentation from a school. A digital camera is capable of recording more detail than is generally offered through a graphic on a website or a photograph in a book or journal article. Often this means reducing the size and resolution of a digital image or cropping it to better fit it on a Web page or printed page. These processes remove visual information that the reader may find useful. Through selection the researcher decides what data are relevant to a study based on the research questions, theoretical framework, and available research resources, including time, materials, funds, and researcher training. The increasing capacity and lower cost of the computer to store large amounts of information can tempt a researcher to capture large quantities of data. Data oversaturation can be prevalent in the process of studying online learning environments or in the learning that occurs on the computer where screen movement, typing, and time on computer tasks can generate large amounts of detailed

information. A way to approach the design and selection of new media data is through theorizing data granularity (Voithofer, 2005).

Knowing when to quit gathering, organizing and analyzing of incoming research data, including the reading of literature, is a skill developed through experience, and this important aspect of the research process is implied in a literature review. According to many theorists, the literature review continues until the study is completed; throughout the course of input-processing-output (Levy and Ellis, 2006; Glaser, 1976). The usual processes of research inquiry, including the input-processing-output of research data from literature, involves changes in methodology, addition of new constructs, and the reconciliation of conflicting data from literature that requires further research. Borrowing from the method of grounded theory, the general rule is to gather data until each category is saturated and develops properties of the conceptual categories (Glaser, 1976). As a category reaches a point of theoretical saturation, the researcher moves on to other categories. In this way, the literature review is an organic system that is constantly growing and changing as the study develops (Levy and Ellis, 2006). Therefore, I consider the literature review as a process, and it was not completed until all the research associated with the study was completed.

This chapter intends to be consistent with the intentions and expectations of a conventional literature review---yet is inclined toward the openness of a postmodern approach---illustrating the scope and nature of literature relevant to the area of study, demonstrating important gaps in knowledge for further inquiry, and convincing the reader how this research makes a contribution to the body of knowledge for the purpose of solving the problem. The literature cited in this chapter emerges from my construal of what is related to the research problem and the range of questions that frame the inquiry of this dissertation; and has influenced

my personalized writing approach and method---all of which serve in some way to inform my proposed solution to the problem. This chapter also provides a framework for Chapter 5 where I relate my ideas and findings that that have emerged from inquiry with previously established data.

c) Sources of literature: An open approach

The literature review reflects an aspect of the process of learning that I personally experienced, as a participant, and that I observed, as a scholar. An important aspect of this research has been informed through analysis of a broad range of qualitative data found in literature. This has facilitated the emergence and intersection of pertinent themes that have informed the research problem and research question(s). The process has included:

- Comparative analysis of traditional and alternative notions of what constitutes scholarship and academic research as a activity by faculty members;
- Comparative analysis of performance evaluation practices in the field of film and digital media with academic disciplines outside the field of film and digital media;
- Analysis of court records and legal writings about issues raised by faculty members in courts of law pertaining to perceived injustices in connection with negative performance evaluations in colleges and universities;
- Analysis of text-based statements, briefing papers, monographs and other pertinent documents generated by national and international organizations, educational institutions, agencies and specialized professional associations that provide detailed analysis and recommendations for standards relevant to the evaluating academic performance practices and theoretical underpinnings from diverse disciplinary perspectives;

- Analysis of scholarly, historical and theoretical writings about emergent and relevant themes that have included ethics, creativity, power, leadership and change;
- Integration of theoretical and practical notions about auto/ethnography as a form of scholarly research writing.

My open approach to the literature has addressed the scope and nature of the emergent themes from a variety of perspectives and media. Through reading and analysis this study has reached out to films, books, articles and on line sources that provide practical, theoretical, legal and historical perspectives, published in the proceedings of professional organizations; scholarly journals in the field of education, law and other scholarly areas; trade publications; and a variety of online documents---in addition to my own self-reflective writing and survey query of interviewees (Methods are discussed in Chapters 3).

Certain scholars have emerged as key experts that have substantially informed my inquiry from various perspectives, including: Boyer (1988, 1990), Diamond (1993; 1999), Braxton, Luckey and Helland, (2002); Braxton, (2006); Diamond and Adam (2000), Bukalski (2000), Friere (1998; 2000), Glassick, Huber and Maeroff (1997), La Pelle (1997), Four Arrows (2008), and Denzin and Lincoln (2000); but there are many other scholarly writings (described in this Chapter) that I have studied (input-processed-output); and each source has contributed greatly to the building of this dissertation. I am very grateful for each work and each scholar that has shared knowledge that has informed my inquiry, but I feel obliged to specifically highlight the above-listed scholars as they have had the greatest influence and impact upon my ability to think and frame the complexity of ideas as I have developed this dissertation. To them I am very grateful as they opened doors for me as I searched for new ideas and possible solutions to a big (yet specific) problem that faces faculty in the field of film and digital media.

Specific mention should also be made about the literature that has been published and disseminated by professional associations such as the University Film and Video Association (UFVA), National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), College Arts Association (CAA), and others. A wide range of publications by these organizations have been helpful for defining new and old institutional and traditional priorities, and also have been helpful in determining what gaps and omissions exist in current practices for performance evaluation in higher education, particularly in the context of faculty work in the field of film and digital media. Faculty priorities are strongly influenced by the statements and agendas of professional disciplinary associations, at national and international levels, because:

...faculty tend to identify themselves, first, as members of the community with whom they share scholarly interests. In the competitive marketplace of higher education, the statements and agendas of professional disciplinary associations articulate the current climate and relevant concerns affecting faculty in higher education, and provide critical perspectives about promotion and tenure guidelines (Diamond, 1993c, p. 15).

A broad list of organizations, institutions, agencies and associations that have published papers relevant to the question of what is constituted as research activity by faculty include:

American Association of University Professors (AAUP; USA)

American Association for Higher Education (AAHE; USA)

National Association of School of Art and Deisgn (NASAD; USA)

NASAD Working Group on the Arts in Higher Education (NASAD; USA)

University Film and Video Association (UFVA; USA)

Broadcast Education Association (BEA; USA)

American Anthropological Association (AAA; USA)

Council for Arts Accrediting Associations (CAAA; UK)

College Art Association (CAA; USA)

Policy statements that have been published by each of these organizations have facilitated an understanding of the implications inherent to the traditional template as it continues to be used to measure and define scholarly work, despite significant evidence in data of its irrelevance in many contexts. Organizational statements have been useful for contextualizing my own experience as a participant in this research, and the phenomenological writing of project interviewees to this project, serving served as a starting point that affirms and solves the problem that has been posed in this dissertation.