Chapter 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter is divided into four parts:

Part 1: Rationale
Part 2: From theme to theory
Part 3: Recommendations from theory and outcomes
Part 4: Concluding Thoughts

The purpose of this chapter is to suggest implications and make specific-recommendations for

actions by all concerned parties; and to suggest topics for future research.

Part 1: Rationale

This qualitative and auto/ethnographic study has explored a broad range of factors that

have emerged from a wide range of data sources, demonstrating that the research problem is

being perpetuated and that solutions are needed. A wide range of data--- the introduction to the

problem in Chapter 1, literature was reviewed in Chapter 2, interviews and personalized writing

in Chapter 4. I have demonstrated that artistic, scholarly and professional work by faculty in the

field of film and digital media is not being adequately recognized or rewarded as scholarship.

This fact serves as the rationale in this chapter for presenting an alternative perspective that

facilitates change.

Part 2: From theme to theory

Six themes emerged from data, delineated in Chapter 4. Those have been consolidated

into three theories in this chapter.

Theory 1: The importance of *difference* among the disciplines
Theory 2: The importance of recognizing attributes that are *unique and specific* to the field of
film and digital media.
Theory 3: The importance of considering the faculty member's welfare *before and after* the

evaluation.

The three theories expose fundamental problems that are experienced by faculty in the field of film and digital media when facing the gauntlet of performance evaluation. The three theories listed below constitute an important aspect of my response to the research question of this dissertation---what work and activities by faculty in film and digital media should be recognized and rewarded as scholarship during a performance evaluation in an academic setting? (Recommendations are at the end of this chapter, completing my response to the research question). The three theories that address the research problem are:

Theory 1: Recognizing *difference* among the disciplines.

Faculty members in the field of film and digital media are marginalized in institutions of higher learning by a monolith of tradition and convention that fails to recognize *difference* among the disciplines, and a significant extent of work by faculty in the field of film and digital media remains unrecognized, undervalued, or dismissed during performance evaluation.

Theory 2: Recognizing attributes that *unique and specific* to the field of film and digital media.

Attributes of an institutional system for recognizing and evaluating faculty performance in film and digital media should include relevant criteria that honors and makes eligible all processes of work in the field of film and digital media for recognition and evaluation. To achieve that objective, it is important that a performance evaluation should be conducted by knowledgeable, qualified and experienced committee members using written and relevant criteria for the intended purpose; and that the evaluation itself should welcome a broad range of evidence

demonstrating *approach and artifacts*.

Theory 3: Considering the faculty member's welfare *before and after* the evaluation.
Significant and complex problems affect faculty before and after a performance evaluation, particularly when formal criteria are vague or irrelevant, or when the result of an evaluation is unsuccessful for the faculty, and the human factors affecting the faculty member must be considered.

The following sections analyze each theory in the context of its relevance to the research problem, with careful attention paid to the research question, relevant literature, the methods for inquiry that were used, and the auto/ethnographic approach that was employed to write this dissertation.

Part 2/Theory 1: Recognizing *difference* among the disciplines.

There is a *difference* in the scholarship activities of faculty members in film and digital media, in comparison with the traditional and conventional expectations of activities for faculty members in other fields and disciplines. Even within the field of film and digital media itself there is a great *difference* in the scope and nature of work that emerges. There is an historical pattern of applying mismatched criteria during performance evaluation of faculty work in the field of film and digital media, but there is no logical, epistemological, or ethical basis for the continuing marginalization of alternative approaches, forms, and methods of work. The difference of artistic, scholarly and professional work by faculty in the field of film and digital media from other approaches must be recognized and evaluated on the unique and specific

merits. As one professor wrote:

> I do believe valuing creative expression is crucial and often misunderstood in our field (film and digital media), especially by those with orientations to publication and scientific research (Respondent #9).

What is the meaning of *difference*, and what are the differences between a text-based work and a creative work in film or digital media? Difference is the antonym of equality and sameness, and difference is determined by comparison. But, a complete comparison of objects, things, or ideas is almost impossible---being limited to mere, random and subjectively selected attributes. There is an eternal murkiness and an irreconcilable postponement of finality, in an effort to finalize the concept of difference that is based upon perceptions of equality, because there are no words to adequately express the vast terrain of *difference*. I argue that change and *difference* are interconnected, and that change and equality (or sameness) are not.

To make an analogy with mathematics---two objects are equal only if they are precisely the same in every way. Equality, denoted by the equals sign, "=", indicates a binary relationship where two (or more) objects are precisely the same. For example, "$x = y$" means that x and y are equal. However, in artistic, scholarly or professional work that is time-based in nature there will never be mathematical equality, not within the field itself and certainly not in comparison with works outside the field. The analogy of fitting a square peg into a round hole is appropriate. Any attempt to apply criteria that is relevant for one will not be relevant for the other, and such an attempt is unfair, unwise, and imbalanced.

In some cases, in the field of film and digital media, rather than developing unique and appropriate criteria for the purpose of recognizing the differences in faculty scholarship and

evaluating the work for its *approach and artifacts* (Diamond and Adam, 2000), data in Chapter 4 shows that some institutions have arbitrarily decided to concoct a scheme to *equate* a publication with a film, as if a film and a research paper are equal, comparable and measured on one all-encompassing scale; as if they are two forms of the same thing. This scheme is contradiction with all notions that define *difference* in scholarship and faculty activities. Chapter 4 describes an institution that decided to implement a scheme (unwritten) to *equate* one text publication with one film or video, but only if the film/digital media work had been publicly exhibited in a film festival. No other aspect of the faculty's work on that project was recognized for evaluation, but the one-to-one formula prevailed on the absurd basis that public exhibition of one film somehow equated with one journal article publication.

Faculty in the field of film and digital media who responded to the survey have described the external perception of their work with many negative terms, including: "*suspect* for being motivated by profit rather than inquiry, *undervalued*, often *disparaged*, *disregarded*, *dismissed*, *vocational*, and entirely *off a personnel committee's radar*." Data indicates a glaring gap that separates work by faculty in film and digital from their peers in other disciplines. Common sense dictates there is a significant, perceived and empirical *difference* between text-based research methods that reflect the traditional and conventional expectations of scholarship---whether qualitative and quantitative---in comparison with the artistic, scholarly and professional work by faculty in the field of film and digital media, despite some similarities and some comparable aspects.

Each successful work of creative expression (sometimes called art), including a film or other media production, is a microcosmic universe held together by its own internal logic, or illogic (NASAD, 1990). Unique characteristics of a film or media production can be identified

and compared with conventional research output according to a new model, but the internal logic of one work probably will not be the same internal logic of another, even when the two works are crafted by the same artist using the same tools, techniques and subject. A creative work in film or media production, like any other form of scholarship output, is certainly intended to contribute to the knowledge base in the field, but the work is likely to be intended as a creative, symbolic expression that abstractly represents that knowledge to others, namely, audiences. Using an analogy from the field of linguistics, it is arguable that all forms of language are symbolic attempts to abstractly communicate, and the visual and aural communication that is done in film and media production emerges in this way as a new language for expression.

The performance evaluation process in the field of film and digital media is inconsistent, irrelevant, and inappropriate for its intended purpose, and this fact compels a call for change that recognizes *difference*. Important scholarly work by faculty is being dismissed, unrecognized and unrewarded. In the words of one faculty member, "The development process, as arcane and opaque as it may appear to us, is completely off the radar of most academics" (Respondent #3). Referring to post-production work that goes unrewarded, one professor wrote:

> With the proliferation of film festivals and competitions, there needs to be some clearer guidelines for what represents a significant (in terms of tenure) screening or award…Similarly, some forms of digital distribution need to be taken into account; and again, some digital distribution/exhibition is more valuable than others (Respondent #11).

A significant range of the qualitative, alternative and creative work by faculty in the field of film and digital media remains largely unrewarded, marginalized or obstructed by the narrowness of the traditional template---and largely because there is scant respect for *difference*

and minimal clarity about what is constituted as scholarly work when it deviates from normative expectations. Faculty work in film and digital media poses particularly difficult challenges in higher educational settings because it is highly collaborative and integrative in scope and nature, the result of diverse yet interrelated efforts and activities in a plethora of contexts. It is not imitative of conventional faculty scholarship activities, nor does it prioritize a need for replication, empirical truth, verifiability and other values from scientism. Simply, it is different and cannot be comfortably reconciled or easily judged by using a template that is intended for more measuring conventional kinds of qualitative or quantitative inquiry.

Part 2/Theory 2: Recognizing attributes that *unique and specific* to the field of film and digital media.

Artistic, scholarly and professional work by faculty in film or digital media has *unique and specific attributes* that cannot be recognized and must not be evaluated by using the same criterion as text-based research publications. Data shows that the criteria for recognizing and evaluating text-based research output has been arbitrarily, inconsistently and incoherently applied to the recognition and evaluation of many forms of creative work, a process that moves forward without any logical basis for its continuation. The result is a mismatch of expectations, values, priorities, and outcomes---and potential conflict.

Successful work in film and digital media is that which achieves goals that have been set at the beginning or in the course of development, rather than following strictly a set of universal principles or rules. A goal is often based on certain conceptualizations or processes that are created or selected by the creator of the work, and these are combined with techniques and mediums to create the end product, an artistic, scholarly or professional work in film or digital media (Wait and Hope, 2009). An understanding of the goal and intent of the work by the faculty member who created the work enables an evaluation against the best things that can be known about the work. The evaluation should be interested in the unique and specific mode of thought that motivated the work and the faculty member who created the work; or upon the development of knowledge, skills, experiences, habits of mind, and so forth that has led to its highly sophisticated achievement (Wait and Hope, 2009, p. 7).

The most commonly found templates that are used for assessing or evaluating qualitative research in higher education are neither relevant nor appropriate for the intended purpose; and discrepancies in the criteria of the traditional template are fueling unresolved conflicts in

institutional settings. As discussed in the previous chapter, data from this study demonstrates that many institutions of higher learning have not recognized that artistic, scholarly and professional work by faculty in film and digital media should co-exist alongside text-based research publications in the pantheon of what is considered to be faculty scholarship.

A new paradigm for recognizing and evaluating faculty work in the field of film and digital media should honor the *approach and artifacts* (or products) of work*,* rather than the conventional notion that emphasizes artifacts *over* approach (Diamond and Adam, 2000, p. 6-8; Matusov and Hampel, 2008). This shift in priorities, in comparison with the specialist-practitioner ontology of scientism, places greater value on the interconnectedness and interdependence of systems and processes. It rejects a traditional and conventional ontology of performance evaluation that strictly prioritizes artifacts *over* approach (Diamond and Adam, 2000; Matusov and Hampel, 2008).

The evaluation of individual achievement in an arts discipline such as the field of film and digital media should prioritize the unique and specific characteristics of individual achievement, reflecting and explaining the nature of achievement and quality beyond basic thresholds for entry level; even though they are present at entry level, at least to a fundamental degree. Developing these capabilities is the work of a lifetime, and there is virtually no limit to the levels of achievement and quality that can be reached. Because the specifics associated with each characteristic vary among disciplines and specializations, the list can be addressed in terms associated with departmental programs, and areas of specialization. The characteristics can be used to address the specific work of individual faculty members (and students too as the model is applicable to the evaluation of student work)--what they have achieved and their potential, evaluated in terms of specific accomplishments at a particular time.

Borrowing from models that pertain generally to the evaluation of artistic work in its many forms, important attributes and characteristics of unique, specific and individual achievement in film and digital media should prioritize:

1) Basic knowledge and skills in the discipline and any area of specialization, including fundamentals of the field in terms of practice, history, analysis and their applications in various areas of specialization.

2) The faculty member's success in developing a personal vision and/or purpose (sometimes called artistic voice) that is evident in terms of work produced in the discipline or specialization.

Verbal articulation of the vision or purpose is virtually immaterial if the vision is not manifested in the work produced. Vision or purposes are realized in terms of content or process in one or more of the following fields: artistic, humanistic, scientific, pedagogical, therapeutic, and so forth. Visions or purposes can change from work to work.

3) Borrowing from Bloom (1956), conceptual acuity and ability to:

- create, sustain, realize, and evolve personal vision and purposes;

- identify and achieve specific and associated ideas and/or goals at various levels of scope and complexity;

- work creatively with relationships among ideas, structure, and expression;

- understand multiple perspectives;

- create using the process of discovery inherent in making a work.

- use imagination as a means of creation and discovery with regard to specific content or subject matter and as a means for communicating through the art form what is created or discovered;

- channel imagination to reach specific artistic goals;

- apply imagination to all aspects and levels of a work in ways that enhance its communicative power.

5) Technical ability to:

- create, sustain, realize, and evolve a personal vision and/or purposes;

- realize specific works or projects or elements of concepts at an advanced or professional level;

- analyze one's own work with sophistication using various methods and perspectives.

- Ability to combine knowledge and skills, personal vision and/or purpose.

6) Conceptual acuity and clarity, imagination, and technical ability to function independently in the creation and production of high level work in the area of specialization, including but not limited to the capability and capacity to:

- define, analyze, and solve problems;

- make effective choices;

- evaluate critically and effectively work in process;

- critique and learn from work of others;

- understand and work with layers of structure and meaning;

- combine, integrate, and synthesize elements into works with internal conceptual and structural integrity.

A new and appropriate evaluation system for this group of scholars should be consistent with the four domains of Boyer (1990). Boyer's (1990) panoramic view of scholarship is relevant to research activities by faculty---extending from traditional and conventional notions of

discovery-based inquiry to the application and integration of skills and knowledge, to the sharing of knowledge through teaching. Boyer's (1990) notion of scholarship facilitates a view of service by faculty as socially involved and socially responsible, in contrast to the common and narrow notion that is limited to committee participation and a few other mundane campus-based activities. The range of possibilities offered by the four domains of Boyer (1990) are relevant to the artistic, creative, scholarly and professional work by faculty in the field of film and digital media, but require the implementation of unique and specific criteria for measuring, assessing and evaluating such work in performance review.

As argued by Boyer (1990) and applied to the unique and specific field of film and digital media, the practice and outcomes of work in film and digital media emerge in similar ways as that which is common in conventional practice and outcomes---from the *discovery* of new knowledge and the gathering of new information to a review of existing data (including literature), to the building of greater understanding of other forms of expression that have expressed what is known. *Discovery* in film and digital media is a form analysis and synthesis with the use of a script, camera, microphone and montage. The process of work in film and digital media is constantly reliant upon the *application* and *integration* of many kinds of knowledge and skills, for technical, artistic, professional, and other purposes. Faculty who collaborate with others on the development and production of work in film and digital media are engaged in application and integration of knowledge and skills for social, educational, developmental, and organizational purposes. The fourth of Boyer's (1990) domains, the sharing of knowledge through *teaching*, can also be meaningfully compared with the public exhibition, broadcast or presentation of a work in film and digital media.

Artistic, creative, scholarly and professional work by faculty in the field of film and digital media can emerge in the context of Boyer's (1990) four domains of scholarship, and can include any of the following kinds of work:

- Films, videos and other electronic/digital media productions for creative and artistic expression;

- Creative or artistic works in film, video and/or electronic/digital media that emerge from a range of research methods or approaches--conventional, unconventional, personal, self-reflective, or multidisciplinary;

- Creative works in film, video and/or electronic/digital media that are intended for advocacy and outreach purposes for a particular cause, including public awareness, organizational development or other intra-organizational communication, and other purposes;

- Creative works in film, video and/or electronic/digital media intended for television broadcast or theatrical distribution;

- Creative works in film, video and/or electronic/digital media that are intended for educational applications in schools, libraries, media centers and other relevant venues where media programming serves to enhance learning, training and other forms of information dissemination;

- Creative and innovative works in film, video and/or electronic/digital media that are specifically intended for broadcast or presentation on the internet for commercial, entertainment or other purposes;

- Creative and innovative multimedia works for commerce, entertainment, and promotional purposes in a variety of contexts;

- Scholarship action in a broad of contexts that is produced and distributed in film, video and/or electronic/digital media for the benefit of local and global audiences.

The diverse outputs listed above can emerge from any of Boyer's (1990) four domains (Discovery, Application, Integration, Teaching), and can effectively meet the three-point model of Schulman and Hutching (1998) for defining the scope and nature of scholarship activity by faculty; further, work by faculty in the field of film and digital media can satisfy the six-point criteria of Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff (1997) for defining and assessing the quality of scholarship in the four domains of Boyer (1990); and the six-point criteria of Diamond (1993) that pertain to the recognition of faculty work as scholarship is also consistent with the scope and nature of work by faculty in the field of film and digital media (see Chapter 2 Literature Review).

A reductionist or Newtonian view assumes that filmmaking is composed of specialized functions, that the technical, creative, business and legal aspects are important yet distinct from each other; that the specialist areas of practice and knowledge are to be performed by different persons with different sets of responsibilities---and that in the end the parts will fit together to form a whole under the guidance of a singular leader. In many ways this view does reflect a reality in professional and educational arenas, being true and consistent with the way that most of the conventional work in film and digital media that we commonly experience through television, in cinemas or elsewhere in the mainstream media---particularly the works that emerge in corporate, commercial, industrial and entertainment contexts. It is also common to find that specialization is advocated and taught in many schools and programs of higher learning in the field of film and digital media, following the specialist-practitioner model that encourages specialized mastery as a pre-requisite for participation with other specialist-practitioners to

accomplish shared goal(s). The problem is that notions of reductionism and specialization are not entirely useful for describing, recognizing or evaluating the scope and nature of work in the field of film and digital media.

In the context of specialization, an analogy from music is helpful, where musicians in an orchestra, for example, a violinist or timpanist or clarinetist, very likely will have minimal knowledge of the trumpet, oboe or contrabass, or some other instrument in the ensemble if it is not their own specialty. Together, music emerges from this group of harmonized specialists, most commonly under the direction of a leader (conductor, concertmaster, or other). These each musician-specialist is able to peacefully co-exist as an expert practitioner within the team, yet doing so without any detailed knowledge of the other. A similar model of self-reliant specialist-practitioners working in co-operation with other self-reliant specialist-practitioners is a norm in conventional forms of filmmaking practice, although it is evident that collaboration is not commonly recognized, fairly evaluated, or equitably rewarded in the university setting during a performance evaluation. As described in Chapter 4, in the words of one professor:

> Film production's collaborative nature, however, might invite the filmmaking scholar to a position of responsibility as, say, a gaffer. While lighting is essential to the medium, the gaffer's credit seldom satisfies a tenure committee as a sufficiently creative contribution. Leadership positions in Directing, Writing and -- to lesser degrees -- Cinematography, Editing, and Production Design are thought by publishing scholars to be more analogous to their own academic tasks, and are thus more likely to be rewarded as scholarly (Respondent #4).

Institutional paradigms for performance evaluation subscribe to reductionism, isolating and focusing upon an important function in a specialized area. The assumption is that the

filmmaking process has leaders and followers, and that a leadership role can be recognized and rewarded, but that other roles have decreasing value. A further assumption is that systemic integration is beyond the grasp or capacity of sole individual, so holistic approaches to the process of filmmaking are also not rewarded, and not considered to be as valuable as a specialist approach to the process. The conventional model for defining and evaluating work in the field of film and digital media arbitrarily places greater value on some aspects of the work responsibility, yet diminishes the value placed upon other work.

A traditional and conventional approach to performance evaluation of scholarly work in any field will commonly focus on the dualistic vocabulary of morality, with dualisms such as good-bad, fair-unfair, right-wrong, did-did not, will-will not, and many more. Using moral terms in a performance evaluation can easily lead to bias, errors in judgment, conflict and lots of other bad results as a work is subjectively judged on moral terms. Simply discussing how good or bad, how right or wrong, or how beautiful or ugly a work of art or scholarship may or may not be, does not compel reflection upon the merits of what the work is, what are its *unique and specific attributes*. The continuing application of irrelevant and narrowly conceived criteria is unfair and will remain so until change has emerged.

Gatekeepers in higher education expect a symbiotic relationship of originality, compliance and mastery over that which previously existed. It is logical to assume that the uniqueness, merit and worth of truly original work could remain unrecognized or undervalued because, by definition, an original work would deviate greatly or entirely from all that preceded it. The potential for contamination of the evaluation process for original work through unawareness or unintended unfairness from preconceived bias by evaluators, caused by unmet expectations for mastery and referential linkages, is also always of concern.

Faculty perceptions of the performance evaluation process in institutions of higher learning, specifically in the field of film and digital media, have been described with the following terms:

> …deliberately vague, a double jeopardy, difficult, silly to imagine, an uncomfortable fit, a major battle, limiting, problematic, off the radar of most academics, a yearly or biennial torture, leading to abuses when faculty and administrators are unfamiliar within the given discipline, not encouraged, tragic, an exception to the rule, disregarded, disconnected" (combined data from several Respondents).

In the words of one faculty member who responded to the survey, institutional policies for performance evaluation are "mismatched" with the scope and nature work of faculty in film and digital media; that the approach to work in film and digital media is expected to "mimic" that of publications; and that the number of films expected for promotion or tenure is often "unrealistic," and that faculty themselves in the field are "seldom able to select the kinds of work that they would like to do"---if they want the work recognized and rewarded in the academic setting (Respondent #4).

The non-recognition of the unique and specific attributes of work in the field of film and digital media opens up several problem areas that are facing its faculty. The attributes of faculty evaluation systems should include relevant criteria, and a qualified and experienced evaluation committee should be using written and relevant criteria for the intended purpose. The data demonstrates these problem areas remain unresolved. The problematic nature of faculty performance evaluation emanates from the fact that reductionism, scientism, and the traditional template continue to prevail in many institutions, almost entirely disallowing the fair and relevant recognition, evaluation and reward of alternative forms of faculty work. Artistic,

scholarly and professional work by faculty in the field of film and digital media has unique and specific attributes but these fall off the margins when traditional and conventional modes of measurement and evaluation are applied.

If and/or when an institution does consent to allow and consider faculty work in the field of film and digital media, surely those works will be scrutinized and measured by selected faculty colleagues and administrators who serve on an internal committee panels inside the particular College, perhaps also by upper administrators whose expertise is entirely outside of the College, perhaps also by outside expert judge-evaluators from other institutions, and perhaps also by faculty colleagues outside the College who serve as promotion committee members. The unfortunate fact as demonstrated in data presented in Chapter 4 is that not all the persons who may be evaluating the work of their filmmaking peers or colleagues are informed, knowledgeable or experienced enough to evaluate the scope, nature and possibilities of artistic, scholarly or professional work by faculty in the field of film and digital media. As an analogy, I am sure that chemists would not want a sculptor to evaluate the worth of their research, so why does it continue that chemists are evaluating our work in film and digital media? Because the academy is a bastion of a traditional and conventional ontology of scientism, it is also entirely possible that none of the persons in the evaluation process have considered, and certainly not challenged, the notion that a new definition of scholarship is feasible, necessary and ready for implementation.

Data has shown that many faculty members in the field of film and digital media share a perception that some evaluators in a faculty performance evaluation do not have expertise with the specific and unique aspects of scholarship and activity in the field of film and digital media. Further, this negative perception is exacerbated by an absence of written criteria that clarifies the

scope and nature for performance evaluation. This negative perception is supported in instances when aspects or examples of scholarship performance remain under-rewarded or unrecognized during a performance evaluation (Diamond, 1993, 1995, 1999). Evaluators could be tempted to revert to reductive, dualistic, and pre-conceived views (self-other, good-bad, right-wrong, accepted-not accepted, and so on) to supplant their void of knowledge when they are not familiarized or experienced with the specific and unique aspects of work in the field of film and digital media. It can be demonstrated that if evaluators are not provided with relevant criteria upon which to judge in a proper and complete way the artistic, scholarly and professional work in film and digital media, then unfounded or irrelevant assumptions will emerge and render the performance evaluation process as non-constructive (Holt, 2003).

Some faculty evaluator-reviewers who have minimal to nil knowledge or appreciation of those relevant strategies might not understand the scope and nature of creative processes for developing and making a film, video and related creative media work, including the key events and processes for disseminating the creative work for public viewing, and many others aspects. Therefore, it is essential that those who are tasked with the responsibility of evaluating creative scholarship in any field, including film and digital media production, be thoroughly familiarized with the scope and nature of work under review. Further, institutions must reconsider their organizational systems for evaluation of faculty work, and at the same time it is essential that the faculty member prepare a complete dossier that defines, describes, explains and justifies the work for the understanding of evaluators (Bukalski, 2000; Bloom, 1956).

During the process of evaluation at those institutions that are willing to accept a dossier of faculty work that emerges in creative ways, including filmmaking, the work might be subject to evaluation upon unwritten or improvised criteria. When the intellectual foundations of

creative work in film and electronic/digital media are not known or not considered, important

aspects of the whole work that are inherent to the development, production and exhibition of the

creative work remain unnoticed, undervalued and unrewarded, in comparison with scholarly

work that exists in more conventional forms. For example, a lengthy and comprehensive grant

proposal, program treatment, or many versions of a program script may go unrewarded. These

elements of work may have emerged in a collaborative creative environment, the result of an

extensive range of traditional research methods such as data/information gathering, literature

review, synthesis of data/information, and critical analysis---but according to the tradition and

conventional approach, none of that work would have any value. If an institution does not have

clear and specific criteria that pertain directly to creative work output in film and

electronic/media, the broad range of scholarship that relates to that creative work would have nil

value in a conventional review of faculty performance. Instead of being considered as the

scholarly output of an scholarly researcher, the value of the work that occurs during pre-

production of a film and/or electronic/digital media project---such as grant writing and research,

pre-production scripting---oftentimes largely based on traditional research methods, and other

complex research---none of this work would be valued on its own merit. The only thing that

might matter, if at all, is the existence and public presentation of the final film, and data shows

that even the threshold of public exhibition is vaguely defined in most institutions. This problem

is symptomatic of the conventional notion that good research is deemed credible *only* when the

faculty writes and publishes the research findings and conclusions in a particular manner. The

narrowness of this demand negates the unique and specific attributes of work in film and digital

media.

Many grant proposals are hefty examples of intellectual rigor and action that is done thorough both a traditional and creative approach to action research, covering a range of relevant perspectives including program content, business and legal aspects, production management plans, and more. The grant proposal for a film project is similar in scope to a full business plan for any private enterprise, with an orientation toward creative expression and the sound management of funds. Further, a film or digital media work that is produced for the specific benefit of a commercial or non-commercial client---for example, a social development agency, a public charity, an association with any specialized purpose, or other institution with a specific in-house need or interest for the production of media programming that benefits the public outreach efforts of the organization---would have no value in the context of faculty performance evaluation for research, for no other reason than this kind of activity is not considered to be scholarly according to the traditional and conventional template for faculty work. An erroneous comparison might be made in any area such as Sociology, Ethnic Studies or Cultural History---for example, a faculty in one of those disciplines or fields might write a cookbook, perhaps a cookbook about a particular culinary culture—and perhaps this cookbook is commercially published and the professor makes a profit from the project. The common reality is that the cookbook would not be considered to be equivalent as a form of scholarship, instead, it would be considered a commercial project with no academic or research relevance. However, what happens if the historian who writes the cookbook is interested in the sociology of culinary culture (for example, Yemeni culinary culture), writes a cookbook about traditional Yemeni cuisine, produces a film about Yemeni culinary culture that is based upon his research? At this time, in my observation, the professor would receive no value for any of the above actions, unless there was a scholarly paper that is published in a peer-reviewed journal for professionals

in the field. The inconsistency, discrepancy and vagueness of the response in academe to the question what is good research is sorely apparent and blatantly unfair.