

**2007-2008
Ithaca College
Excellence in SCHOLARSHIP Award**

Patricia R. Zimmermann

**Professor, Department of Cinema,
Photography, and Media Arts**

Roy H. Park School of Communications

Ithaca College is proud to honor the Excellence in Scholarship Award recipient for 2007-2008. The criteria for scholarship are those given in the *Ithaca College Faculty Handbook*. This award recognizes continued accomplishment in the broadest sense, that is, traditional research and publication in a discipline as well as scholarly, professional, and creative activity (i.e., musical and artistic works; performances; film and other media; presentations at conferences; pedagogical scholarship) and other activity associated with disciplines at Ithaca College. Qualitative as well as quantitative measures of the work are considered in the review of the candidate's work.

Candidates for the award are nominated by a member of the College community. The documents that accompany the nomination include a statement from the candidate; a nominating letter by a faculty colleague; three support letters from faculty or professional colleagues, at least one from Ithaca College and at least one external; and a curriculum vitae. The recipient is selected by the faculty members of the Ithaca College Faculty Development Committee and recipients of the Excellence Awards from the previous year.

Patricia R. Zimmermann has taught at Ithaca College since 1981 and was promoted to professor in 1995. Her scholarly work explores film, video, and digital media theory and history. She has published three books, three scholarly monographs, edited a series of five books, and published over 125 articles. Dr. Jan-Christopher Horak, Director of the UCLA Film and Television Archive and Professor at UCLA, writes that Patricia Zimmermann “has consistently broken new ground in the field of film and media studies, whether in her research on amateur film, digital cyberspace, or independent documentary.” Her other external reviewer, B. Ruby Rich, Professor of Community Studies and Director of the Social Documentation Graduate Program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, cites in particular “her influential volume *States of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracies*, [in which] she incisively investigated and analyzed the phenomena of grass-roots and oppositional documentaries, prophetically spotlighting the increasing role of media in military propaganda and foreign policy...”

Not only has she contributed importantly to scholarly discourse, her early work created a new area of inquiry for film scholars. As Dr. Horak says, “The importance of her book on amateur film, *Reel Families: A Social History of Amateur Film*, cannot be over-estimated. That book single-handedly not only influenced a whole generation of younger film scholars, but actually created a whole new agenda for film archives and the national agenda on film preservation.” He also stresses “her own work in recent years as a media producer, [including] her 2005 multi-media project, “Within Our Gates Revisited and Remixed,” which is the subject of a major special section of *The Moving Image: the Journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists*, [which] has been perceived as a truly seminal reconceptualization of the way historical media can ...[allow modern audiences] to discover previously hidden connections and contexts.”

Perhaps most important in recognizing Patricia Zimmermann as an excellent scholar at Ithaca College is the range of her influence. She has been invited to lecture in 15 countries, has presented at the Sundance Film Festival, has collaborated with the Smithsonian Institution, and has had archival film/live music work performed at the Museum of Modern Art. B. Ruby Rich, identifying Professor Zimmermann’s many other contributions to the international sectors of film/media/digitality, notes that through her leadership as a trustee, programmer and moderator of the Robert Flaherty Film Seminars “Zimmermann has influenced generations of documentary filmmakers, students, and scholars.”

In her nominating letter, Professor Zillah Eisenstein, Department of Politics, says that “Professor Zimmermann has been an intellectual force at Ithaca College since she arrived in 1981.” Professor Eisenstein echoes the remarks of the external reviewers and also emphasizes Professor Zimmermann’s local impact. Her leadership as codirector of the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF) propelled the festival into new areas such as digital arts, gaming, locative media, music, and commissioning original archival film/live music projects. Professor Eisenstein observes that the festival reflects “another extraordinary achievement in which she enriches the multi-disciplinary of film and the environments they reflect and create for the Ithaca College campus as well as the larger Ithaca Community.”

Professor Patricia Zimmermann’s work represents the best in the Ithaca College tradition of scholarly achievement. The Ithaca College community extends its congratulations and appreciation to Professor Zimmermann for her outstanding commitment to excellence in scholarship.