Overview of the Use of Faculty Research Grant

The Faculty Research Grant was awarded to me in order to further develop the current research project over the summer 2013. The project focuses on the comparative examination of obscenity decisions from the court systems of the U.K., the U.S. and Japan. Since this research project as a whole will not be concluded for another few years, and this fall semester I am working as a visiting researcher at Goldsmiths College in London, the grant was provided as summer salary to support the time when I prepare to improve my understanding of the U.K. laws on pornography, to advance my understanding of British history, and construct a theoretical framework in communication and culture.

Accomplishment over the Summer 2013

I spent the month of June in South Bend, Indiana. Because of the health condition that my mother faces in Japan, I needed to return to Japan in order to be with my parents in the month of July. During these two months, I have read the following books:

- **ALDOUS HUXLEY, SUBARASHIKI SHINSEKAI [BRAVE NEW WORLD] (2013).**
- **ERIC SCHLOSSER, KYODAIKASURU AMERIKA NO CHIKA KEIZAI [REEFER MADNESS] (2003).**
- **IMMANUEL KANT, DOUTOKU KEIJOUGAKU NO KISODUKE [GRUNDLEGUNGZUR METAPHYSIK DER SITTEN] (2012).**
- **LOUIS ALTHUSSER, SAISEISANNI TSUITE: IDEOROGII TO KOKKANO IDEOROGII SHOSOUCHI [SUR LA REPRODUCTION] (2010).**
- **MARIKO HARA, KOKYO HOSO BBC NO KENKYU [AN ANALYSIS OF BBC PUBLIC BROADCASTING] (2011).**
- **MASAYOSHI AKAHORI, BOSTON KOOKY HOSOKYOKU (WGBH) TO SHIMIN KYOIKU: MASSACHUSETTSU SANGYO ERITO TO DAIGAKU NO RENTAI [BOSTON PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEMS (WGBH) AND CIVIC EDUCATION: INCORPORATION BETWEEN ELITE INDUSTRY AND COLLEGES IN MASSACHUSETTS] (2001).**
- **NOBUHIRO MINOBA, BBC IGIRISU KOKYO HOSO: PABURIKKU SAHBISU HOSO NO DENTO [BBC BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION: THE TRADITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING] (2003).**
- **TIM CROOK, COMPARATIVE MEDIA LAW AND ETHICS (2009).**

Many of them were Japanese translations of originally published manuscripts since I had to acquire the available versions of these titles in Japan. Some of them may not appear to be related to the topic of comparative analysis of obscenity decisions in these three nations, but the overall
goal of the current research project is to understand the cultural and historical contexts of each nation that influences the construction of law and ethics regarding sexual expression. In this perspective, my research involves the understanding of not only law, policies and ethics but also the social, political, economic and religious systems that facilitate our everyday practice to generate the social consensus of cultural ideologies and historical experiences. Therefore, readings of Althusser and Kant are highly influential to acknowledge how we can theorize ideologies and moralities as a tool to limit our praxis, while books on the BBC contributes to the better understanding of the British approach to the concept of public welfare through the use of mass media.

Reading these books has led me to wonder about the category of media philosophy. Media philosophy may be a part of media theories, but as Dr. Nick Couldry of the London School of Economics has recently told me, not many scholars discuss the philosophical aspect of mass media, and the area of philosophical discussion of mass media may need to be further investigated. I find his statement very inspiring since the discussion of ethics requires philosophical thinking, which I find interesting as well as important in developing the analysis of my research. Luckily, Professor Tim Crook, the faculty member of the Department of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths College is an expert on this subject, and he is my supervisor during my residency in Goldsmiths.

So far during the discussions with Prof. Crook, what was most striking to me was that the difference of possessing a written and federal constitution as well as 50 state constitutions (in the case of the U.S.) versus not possessing a written constitution which is unitary and requires arrangement with Europe (in the U.K.) creates a philosophical gap between the U.S. and the U.K. in understanding what freedom of speech is about. The U.S. constitution is fixed and has referential authority guaranteeing power and rights in the relationship between those governing and those governed. With this, according to Prof. Crook, important concepts provided by the U.S. Supreme Court, such as the Clear and Present Danger Test to define the limit of the government’s power in curtailing free speech becomes rather easy for the public to understand, while without the fixed authority, the Clear and Present Danger Test does not translate well in the U.K. I see that such differences are what I need to analyze by examining the contexts and environments that associate with praxis of free speech.

In the meantime, I also worked on a proposal for the National Endowment for Humanities. Originally when I submitted a proposal for a Faculty Research Grant in March 2013, I was planning to submit a proposal for NEH’s Research Program Fellowship and the Fellowship Program for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan of the Japan-United States Friendship Commission. But my mother had been taken to Intensive Care Unit in Japan in April, and I was asked to fly back there before the end of April; therefore I could not meet the grants’ deadline, May 1, 2013. Since there were other fellowships and grants available from NEH, I decided to apply for the 2014 Summer Stipend from NEH. This grant required the applicants to have a recommendation by the institution, and I was notified recently that I have been chosen to be one of the two faculty members who will receive the recommendation by IUSB. In conclusion, I am currently working on the revision of the proposal to be submitted to NEH in late September, 2013. NEH’s theme for the 2013 competition is Bringing Cultural Initiative, and I consider that

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1Tim Crook, Comparative Media Law and Ethics 22-25 (2010).
my research has a strong connection to this theme. The following is the excerpt from the proposal in this regard.

Within the framework of the NEH’s Bridging Cultures Initiative, this project contributes to its commitment to “understanding the historical and cultural forces that have shaped and continue to shape our world”. Throughout the history of the world, sexual expression has been continuously produced and distributed while authorities have always struggled to control some forms of sexual gratification and sexual expression. Art and literature depicting some degree of eroticism have been often considered as acceptable expression for its aesthetic and literary values in the U.S., Japan and the U.K.; yet, even such valued expression can be the subject of debate, and conflicting views originated from society’s sexual mores as well as individual rights for free speech arise. In this respect, comparing different nations’ histories and cultures to analyze and understand their values and traditions that contributed to the establishment of law, policies and morality is an ideal case study for exploring similarities and differences in different nations’ historical and cultural forces that have shaped and continue to shape our world as a whole.

While revising the proposal for NEH, I have become more informed about other grants that NEH provides. I consider that my research project can qualify to apply for other grants from NEH in the near future; thus, I am planning to further investigate possible funding opportunities from NEH.

Current Development

I am currently in London, working as a visiting scholar in Goldsmiths College. So far, I have been introduced to the faculty members in the dept. of Media and Communications, have been given access to the resources in the University of London System, and have been scheduled to give a guest lecture in Media, Law and Ethics in November 19, a course offered to upper division undergraduate and M.A. students (the enrollment is approximately 120), in which I will be presenting a talk regarding the comparative analysis of Japanese and U.S. obscenity law, and the film censorship in Japan and the U.K.

I will also attend the annual conference of the Institute of Communication Ethics on the topic of After Leveson in London in October 2013. In this conference, I will not present my work since the conference will be on the topic of the Leveson Inquiry, which is a judiciary public inquiry into the culture, practice and ethics of the British press. But my participation as an audience member will provide me with vast knowledge about the way the British media operates under the regulations and ethical responsibilities given to them. In addition, I have been accepted to present my research at the International Conference on Theatre and Cinema Censorship scheduled to be held in Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal between 13 and 15 of November 2013.

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3 See, i.e., Cincinnati v. Contemporary Arts Center, 566 N.E.2d 214 (Ohio Mun. 1990).
The proposal of my presentation at this conference is about the comparative analysis of the film rating and censorship systems in Japan and the U.K., utilizing the case study of the 2012 film “Shame.” I am also asked to write a paper on the topic of online abuse and threats to present at a one-day conference for the National Union of Journalists and the Media Reform Coalition at Goldsmiths College in October 26, 2013.

In terms of the product of this year’s research work, I will be producing an article to be submitted to the law reviews published in U.S. academic journals such as the Columbia Journal of Asian Law, the Journal of Comparative Law, and Comparative Law Review by the summer of 2014.