Interviewer: How would you rate yourself in terms of comfort with new media tools?

Consultant B1: Um, I'm comfortable with them... not that I necessarily know how to use them. But I'm fine with going and digging and into them.

I: Okay. Have you ever completed a new media project for a graduate-level course.

B2: Yes.

I: Okay. And how many times and for how many courses?

B3: Two... two different courses. Um, how many projects? I don't know. Four or five, probably...

I: Okay.

B4: ...six maybe.

I: Was it required that the project be a new media project?

B5: Yes.

I: Okay. In all of those cases it was required?

B6: Yeah.

I: Okay. Um, so have you ever completed a new media project as an option when it wasn't required?

B7: Uh, I don't know. I don't think so.

I: Okay. Um [pause]. How often outside a production-based course would you say you have the option to do a new media project. So, have you seen it on the syllabus or been given that option in other classes even if you haven't done it?

B8: Um, maybe in one or two classes actually. Um...

I: Okay.

B9: What comes to mind right now is, uh, Dr. Heller's class on popular culture.

I: Okay. Do your instructors generally offer that kind of an option explicitly on the syllabus or the course documents so you see it's there? Do they as they're kind of reviewing the things go, "Oh, well you could do a new media project"? Or, do they just wait and respond to the... if a student asks to do it?

B10: Uh, they usually wait and respond.

I: Okay. How comfortable do your instructors seem with regards to assigning or accepting a new media project?

B11: Um, I think, for the most part, they would be comfortable, um, if I were to ask to do a new media project... um, to do a website or something like that instead of... a web page I guess I'd say... instead of a regular paper. I just never ask.

I: Why? Why not?

B12: [laughs] I guess 'cause I want them to tell me what they... I don't know why. I guess, yeah... just tell me what you want and I will do what I can to get it to you. And also, I guess, the notion of... especially for doctoral students... the notion of publishing too. So, um, often times you think in terms of publishing a paper that you started on, uh, versus publishing a new media project. Um, which we really haven't had much conversation in any of our classes on how to publish new media projects.

I: I understand.

B13: None that I can think of.

I: Okay. So, tell me about your process. How do you plan for and get started on a new media project?

B14: Um [pause]. I generally, uh, go digging and see what other people have done. Um, definitely look at the assignment guidelines... and, um, and then just think a lot really.

I: Okay.

B15: So...

I: How does the process differ from when you're writing your paper?

B16: I have to say it doesn't differ that much for me personally. I actually have pretty much the same process of, um... sort of, digging and looking. Seeing what else is out there, what else has been done before. Um, yeah. I don't think the process is too very different.

I: Does it take, take you the same amount of time... same level of effort to do a new media project as it does a written?

B17: If the, if the new media is new to me then it takes me longer because I'm learning the, the whole process of how to use the, the media. So... but I guess it would be the same if I'm taking a, a statistics course. If someone wants me to do something in SPSS which is going to take me a long time to figure out the program.

I: Okay. Um, in completing these types of new media projects, what's been the biggest... what have been the biggest challenges or obstacles?

B18: Hmmmm..... [pause]. I don't know if it's been a... you know, a huge challenge but just the time that it takes to learn it; to learn the new... I mean that's... especially when you're crammed for time already. Um [pause]... Really I think that's... that would be the... you know, the part that's different then.

I: Okay. What do you like least about having to do a new media project?

B19: Hmmm. [pause] I, I don't think I dislike doing new media at all. I... I quite like it. Um, as long as I have clear guidelines... what I'm supposed to do or what's expected. Um, and training is always good.

I: Okay. In completing those types of projects, what's been the most rewarding? What do you... What you enjoyed most about the process?

B20: The final product really. Coming out in, uh, the end of it all... of the process and, um, seeing what I've done. And you know it's... it's a lot easier to show people new media projects... your final, uh, result... than it is to have them read it. Twenty... None of my friends would sit down and read... well, some of them would... but very few of them would sit down and read a 25-page paper. Whereas, I could say, "Hey. Check out my video." And, um, so it's... it's easier to show, actually, to people... which I like.

I: Okay. Um, do you think... you know, generally when you're writing a paper, you're making an argument. Ostensibly, if you're doing a new media project you're probably still making an argument. Do you think the argument suffers or benefits from one format or the other?

B21: No. I, I... I don't think so. Um [pause]. They're definitely... They're definitely you know different medias, but I guess I would say that... for example, what I just said. More people are going to look at your new media argument than they would your paper argument potentially. Um, so whereas you could put a new media argument out there... If you're doing video, you can put it on YouTube. Um, it's easier access for your... you know, for an audience. Um, so you... you might have a wider scope I would say with new media.

I: Okay. You... Obviously with a paper it's fairly linear... the beginning, middle, end... that kind of thing. You make your points in a certain order. That's not necessarily the case with new media. Now, it might be in terms of an audio project or a video project because, obviously, that's still linear.

B22: Right.

I: You have to watch from the beginning to the end. In terms of a web page or, or some other types of new media projects, that may not be the case. Does that make you more comfortable, less comfortable? Do you feel like that changes the way you make an argument?

B23: Um, no. And... I have to say oftentimes in my writing, too, I don't necessarily start from middle to end. So, I'll have a kernel of an idea... of what I want. And then I might go write the... I might not get my introduction until, until the end really. So I'm sort of... [pause]

I: Okay. So your process...

B24: Flip-floppy anyway. Right.

I: But in terms of somebody that either would be reading your paper or viewing or using your new media project... do you think it makes a difference to them in terms of the argument? In terms of whether it's linear or not linear?

B25: Ahhh... I see what you're saying. To my audience... I don't know, Vince. You'd have to ask the audience. [laughs]

I: So, you know, overall, if you're in a class, you're looking at the syllabus and it indicates, okay, the final project is a 20 to 25 page paper or you could do a new media project. What factors would dissuade you from doing the project? What would kind of steer you away?

B26: From new media?

I: Yeah. What would... what would make you worry about it? Or, what would make you say, "Yeah. I'm not going to use that option this time."

B27: Umm, training probably. If it's a medium that I'm not familiar with... that I don't know and if there isn't [pause]... because, because I'm strapped for time anyway, in general, each semester, uh, I would choose to go with what I know versus trying to learn something new... Unless the instructor offered training in how to... how to use the, um, the new, the new media... how to, you know, compose in the new media.

I: The, the... the time is generally... would that be the biggest factor?

B28: Yeah.

I: I mean, if you didn't know it on your own, it still comes down to the time thing. It's not that you're worried about the technology... It's not

B29: Right. Right.

I: Okay.

B30: So, if I... you know, if I had a choice and I had loads of time in the world... in my world, I probably would... probably love to do another video. So, because it's.. it's fun. I enjoy it. I enjoy writing as well, but I think time would be the most important factor.

I: Overall, what factors would persuade you to do a new media project? Or, what could a professor do that would make you more likely to do a new media project?

B31: Make it required. [laughs] Um, yeah. Well... [pause]. My humanities professor, um, said we could do a new media project and the idea of doing a web page for me just was, um, unquestioned because it was too time consuming for me. That said, I'm learning how to do a web page right now. So, um, maybe in the future it... it won't be, um, it wouldn't take as much time.

I: Do things like how it's going to be graded, length, those kinds of things... did that... does that factor into your decision?

B32: Versus paper writing you're saying?

I: MmmHmmm.

B33: Um, sure. I mean, I know that if I'm making a video that, um, [pause] it's, it's going to take me longer, probably, to do the video than the paper. Um, did I just wander off there?

I: No.

B34: No? Okay.

I: Um, I guess... I guess I'm just trying to get to... you know, basically if you see on a syllabus you write a page 20 to 25 page paper or you can do a new media project...

B35: Oh. Give me a rubric. I want a rubric. I wanna know... yeah, what's expected... what kind of argument I'm making... who my audience is. Um, I know that when I write a paper my audience is, um, other people out there in, in the academy... definitely the teacher, um... Who's going to be... yeah. Who's going to be my audience for the new media piece. What are the... and, yeah, a rubric is always nice. So...

I: Okay. Um, any other comments about new media that you want to make?

B36: I don't think so. I have fun with it. I have a good time with it. Um, yeah, that's all I can think of.

I: What do you... Do a lot of your classmates take the opportunity to do new media projects when it's an option?

B37: Hmmm.... Well, it's so rarely an option. So, I'd have to say no. Um, [pause] Yeah, I've only seen it a few times where someone has come and done a piece in new media in a class for a presentation that's not... you know, that goes beyond PowerPoint. I'm not really counting that. Yeah, so... it's rare, I'd say.

I: Okay. Thank you very much.