

# FILM/VIDEO

MASSACHUSETTS  
INSTITUTE OF  
TECHNOLOGY

May 26, 1987

MassProductions  
Massachusetts Council on the Arts  
and Humanities  
80 Boylston Street  
10th Floor  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Dear Panelists:

Ever since I began teaching filmmaking at MIT in 1969, I have hoped that a student filmmaker knowledgeable in the sciences would attempt the extraordinarily difficult task of portraying the nature of scientific research. No one tried to do this until Mary Jane Doherty took the challenge. I must admit that I was skeptical when she told me what she had in mind, because she chose such an immensely difficult subject: an experiment that is complex and hard to understand and one that will probably take years' more work to come to a definitive answer (if ever!).

I now realize that I was wrong to be skeptical, and I am delighted to be wrong. I think that this film is going to be perhaps the most important film that has come out of this program--and some very good films have been made here.

In terms that are most meaningful to me, this film makes clear to an intelligent lay audience the group nature of most modern physics experiments, the overall meaning of the physics involved, and the personal dilemmas faced by young scientists involved in the field. M.J. Doherty's "Gravity" beautifully exemplifies a contemporary form of ethnology, raised to an art form.

However, M.J., as we affectionately know her, is faced with a problem in raising money to complete her work, mostly because

this film does not fit into the usual slots that can be funded by "science funding agencies."

I earnestly hope that you can find your way to assist in the completion of this most deserving project.

Sincerely yours,



Richard Leacock  
Professor