**Leeds Animation workshop talk – cataloguing animation archives/utilising terminology and subject terms**

**Background**

I’m Rebekah Taylor, Archives and Special Collections Manager at the University for the Creative Arts. The University for the Creative Arts, is a specialist creative arts university, with courses including animation, film, Photography, Graphic Design and Illustration, with over 150 years’ experience in arts education. It was formed in the late 19th century through the 6 art schools of Guildford, Farnham, Maidstone, Canterbury and Rochester. Through further subsequent mergers the University for the Creative Arts was formed in 2008.

In my role as Archivist, the most prolific collections that we manage in our Farnham campus are our animation archives, including Tandem Films and Bob Godfrey Films, Britain’s first Oscar winning animator. The animation archives we hold are 2D animation, consisting of a vast mixture of material, including acetate cels, scripts, correspondence, character design and colour design records, and research materials. Animation archives are catalogued by guidelines we have written internally, based on ISAD(G), International standards for archival description, which involved discussion with animation academics, and the film archivists at the BFI. Material is arranged by pre-production (including research material and first draft scripts), production, and post production. It was also important to undertake a list of 2D animation terms, such as dope sheets, and detail how acetate cels are produced, as in teaching we find this is alien to students in the digital age

As well as being relevant for specific animation, graphic design, and illustration techniques, it is very important for all art students to learn about historical background – and how art is impacted by this – for example I undertake workshops related to gender, including discussing issues that black women may have compared to white, politics, class, economic status, and how today, is influenced by our history. We also have a flickr account of images for these subject sets that students can see for their work, which is of course available to the public. Material is scanned by the Digitisation Unit on archivally suited flatbed scanners. This is of course copyright dependent – copyright being a real issue within arts collections, due to third party interests.

Our collections are open to everyone – the descriptions about the collection accessible via our catalogue. If you can’t travel please ask us how we can help in terms of digitisation

**Leeds Animation workshop archive- importance of archive**

I was thrilled when Terry contacted me regarding working together with UCA for cataloguing and housing the Leeds Animation Workshop archive (described on the website as a ‘not-for-profit, cooperative company, which produces and distributes animated films and films on social and educational issues’). There were already links with UCA and the Leeds Animation Workshop – as members of the workshop lectured there when in one of UCA’s former art schools. The workshop highlights how art, animation can be used to look at equality and diversity – with areas such as childcare, with the initial film being ‘who needs nurseries- we do’ 1978 , violence against women with ‘Give Us a Smile’ 1983, how language can marginalise women with ‘Out to Lunch’ 1989, equal work opportunities including ‘through the glass ceiling’ 1994, harassment at work, with No Offence, 1996, and equal opportunities in science and technology . The animations use engaging themes – for example use of fairy tale settings in Through the Glass Ceiling, No Offence, Working with Care, Did I Say Hairdressing? I Meant Astrophysics’ – animations focusing on work, including harassment, equal opportunities, and balancing work with family life, with Queen Ella (useful for anyone doing research into alternative fairy tales, particularly in terms of female protagonists). Terry will talk in further detail about the animations, but I would like to talk about areas of material in the archive that has gripped me

The archive holds the artwork from the animation, include acetates and cut outs. Leeds Animation Workshop used cut-out animation with all films after 1990- few there cels were involved except for overlays on backgrounds. This is intriguing in terms of highlighting animation possibilities to our students, who are used to using digital.

I love the draft to complete scripts and storyboards, showcasing different techniques, language used within scripts and development. With my English Literature hat on, this is absolutely fascinating in terms of seeing the artist’s mind in motion, their journey, where they might have got their inspiration from.

Other records include the research material behind producing the animations, including correspondence, newspaper clippings, real events, which also highlight ‘society’ and the media’s reaction to equality and diversity issues, such as feminism. This is particularly pertinent in the case of ‘Give us a smile’ using real life quotes from written reports or personal experience regarding violence or harassment .

I really enjoy looking at the reviews, such as in magazines and newspapers of the animations are also collected, providing views into different media perceptions at this time, which articles would provide positive views, which outlets would not. This is also tremendously important for Journalism students, or intend students studying politics at the time

Funding applications records are important for highlighting the funding climate time, and which different grants were likely to support the workshop, such as Daphne women’s funding – can use to look at history of funding organisations and possible to use to compare how different women organisations fared/film organisations. Records relating to international distribution highlight the workshop as internationally acclaimed, and looks at women in film internationally. Ensuring that students understand happenings internationally is also a key part of our university’s vision.

The workshop has also kept records relating to activities that they have created and supported, such as educational projects, and organising screenings of films by women and black directors, vital to show how communities can inspire and support each other. This also highlights how the workshop markets and advertises itself – interesting in terms of language.

The archive is an important opposite to the Bob Godfrey animation archive, where we hold records from the 1970s, which holds animation which can certainly be classed as sexist, including the self-proclaimed misogynistic film Biowoman in the 1980s, and Dream Doll, about a man’s relationship with a blow up doll. Leeds Animation Workshop provides a vital counter view to these ‘sexist’ adult animations in the same period.

**Importance of preserving women in film**

The importance of ensuring diversity in archives, including the female voice, has been documented within archival literature. For example, in a 2002 article in the Collection Management Journal ‘Fostering Diversity in Archival Collections: The Iowa Women’s Archives’ Karen M. Mason mentions that when there was research of the suffrage movement in Iowa archival collections were difficult to locate as it was ‘in an era when historians (and many archivists as well) still believed there were insufficient stories by and about women to support the study of women’s history’. This is why oral histories are often so popular for women in archives ‘The feminist embrace of oral history emerged from a recognition that traditional sources have often neglected the lives of women, and that oral history offered a means of integrating women into historical scholarship, even contesting the reigning definitions of social, economic and political importance that obscured womens lives’ (Telling our Stories: feminist debates and the use of oral history­ 1994 JOAN SANGSTER Women's History Review)

The importance of preservation of women in film archives in particular is important for highlighting women can and do succeed in film. Working behind films are often seen as ‘men’s jobs’ as in for example a 2013 Guardian article was entitled ‘meet the women doing mens work’, one of the jobs being a film Grip, and a 2010 article asking ‘why are there so few female filmmakers?’ <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013/apr/26/meet-women-doing-mens-work>. Articles such as these can be both negative and positive – even though its focus is on women, it’s still saying it is a male role (implication of ignoring women filmmakers in the past). It’s important to highlight the female filmmakers there are, and the Leeds Animation Workshop is particularly pertinent with this, with animations such as ‘did I say hairdressing?, I meant astrophysics?’ looking at equal opportunities in science and technology, and ‘through the glass ceiling’, looking at barriers in the workplace in 1994 – engaging with collections like this means you can discuss whether things have actually changed.

**Cataloguing processes**

For the cataloguing process of the Leeds Animation workshop I, as the archivist is working in collaboration with Terry with the collections. An initial plan was made – scoping the extent of the collection, collating a box list of material, and looking at what should or should not be kept for permanent preservation. Information gathered includes date, title, description of the contents, synopsis of the film, type of the material (acetate, cut out)- extent, and biographies of any organisations, or any contextual information around that. Records are then organised via our guidelines for cataloguing animation archives (based on ISAD[G]), and person and organisation biographies that link to LAW are created. Next steps would be to see if any other organisations archives have links to individuals and organisations mentioned within ours, to provide links to our students in catalogues – it’s important that these filmaker archives don’t just exist in an institutional vacuum, but is part of a network of the wider history of filmmaking, and also links into organisations such as Daphne. (Grants for preventive measures against all forms of violence and for support to victims and groups at-risk (children, young people and women). Daphne is the European programme for projects to assist victims.)

Records are then made available with our online archival catalogue- accessible both internally and externally.

Collaboration with the creator is vital – one of the joys of contemporary collecting – and is not a new area in terms of archives. This helps in terms of specific animation terms, how the material is or isn’t ordered together, and contextual information about material. In an organisation where there are several individuals working on different animations, It’s also useful to see how individuals organise animation records – how its organised, e.g. if orderly filed, or otherwise, can tell you how individuals or the organisation works, or in terms of how the material is preserved whether the material was intended to be kept permanently or seen as ephemera (link to reading records as material culture – ala rekrut-archavia journal). Dialogues between archivists and artists, are vital in terms of both archivists advising what to be kept and artists talking about why they feel material is important to be kept , or not – useful to archivists to understand barriers around why material may not be retained by artist. (This is particularly pertinent as, as before mentioned there is archival literature about importance of ensuring collections are retained in terms of diversity). Developing guidance in this area would be of interest. Archiving the Arts, an initiative from The National Archives, celebrating and promoting arts archives, and the importance in our heritage, does provide guidance for artists in terms of looking after digital records and how to manage your current resources.

We also ensure preservation issues are noted, and requirements, which is particularly an issue with acetate cels, which require cold storage – there are also possibilities of creating microclimates with conditioned silica-gel. Archivists have guidelines on storage - PD5454: guidance for the storage and exhibition for archival materials

In terms of actually cataloguing the material having the actual people involved doing a whole catalogue would be too problematic- too close to the subject (although no catalogue can be completely objective depending on the person cataloguing interests). This is the same reasons organisations are flagged up for writing their own Wikipedia entries. Joan sanger also notes issues within oral history due to being ‘objective’ – ‘Consideration of whether oral sources are objective, it appears, still worries the profession even for those using oral history’, and asking depositors for their memories for collections can be construed as oral history.

**Classification/subject terms**

However no catalogue can be completely objective depending on the person cataloguing interests. In terms of cataloguing description and in terms of free or controlled vocabulary it is important to look at what is suitable in terms of feminist vocabulary, or vocabulary for female filmmakers. Although this is looking at libraries and library classification as opposed to ISAD[G] – international standards for archival description- the Feminist Library has its own Feminist Classification System for library books, due to ‘inherent bias’ - ‘structure of classification systems such as Library of Congress (LOC) are not aligned with feminist values’. For example a classification system has ‘women as accountants’, but not ‘men as accountants’. http://www.nationallibrariesday.org.uk/2015/02/feminism-and-libraries-knowledge-is-our-superpower/

Although archives do not have classification structures as in library systems, records being arranged by original order Inherent biases in terms of cataloguing are important in archival description as well – as the background of the cataloguer or societal norms at the time will impact on how the records are described. How we are influenced may be through the media – the Guardian’s 2010 article with the title – ‘meet the women in men’s jobs’ for instance. The Archives and Record Association records diversity amongst Archivist staff in terms of their membership – 2013 findings (updated 2-14) highlight that there are few ARA members of Black. Asian or Mixed Race, and although there is a considerable amount of diversity absolute numbers are small

*General trends: • Results are broadly stable, with little change between 2012 and 2013 • Women outnumber men among the membership by more than two to one • Very few ARA members are Black, Asian or Mixed-race • In other respects, there is considerable amount of diversity among ARA members, particularly in regard to disability, but absolute numbers are very small http://www.archives.org.uk/images/documents/Diversity/ARA\_DWG\_Equality\_monitoring\_summary\_for\_2013\_-\_revised\_May\_2014-2.pdf*

This is particularly important with the Leeds Animation Workshop which covers ranges of issues such as disability, sexism, climate change, race, homophobia – there is a danger of unwanted description –e.g. how an artist identifies themselves very much depends on the individual – a dyslexic artist may or not identify themselves with a disability.

How the archive is described will impact on how its researched and how much it is accessed. The power of description can be seen within Shelley Stamp’s work on ‘Forgetting Lois Weber’, American Film maker – from 1910s, presented at the Society of Cinema and Media Conference, March 2015, Canada which I attended. This also looks at the importance of language in how an individual is remembered, or forgotten - *‘Once the top director at Universal Pictures, she was eventually cast solely as a “woman’s filmmaker,” then (erroneously) as Hollywood’s “only” female director’*. (The language here seems to imply that only females would be interested – and that would be a bad thing- difference between men and female filmmakers. Important to note how female filmmakers wish to describe themselves. Language is so very important-e.g. what does a collective or workshop tell you).

https://www.uea.ac.uk/documents/429551/0/DWFTH+2014+conference+programme.pdf/318fcb4f-7298-4e5b-a6ee-9dea21d16433

The Collections Trust has produced a toolkit called ‘Revisiting Archival Collections: A toolkit for capturing and sharing multiple perspectives on archive collections’, I will be looking to utilise this to explore viewpoints of female filmmakers, and different groups also featured in the Leeds Animation Workshop today and historically, in terms of description.

http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk/images/documents/c1/a520/f6/revisiting\_archives\_toolkit.pdf

**How these archives can be used in research – linking data to ongoing events**

A large part of my job is to promote collections for learning, teaching and research, by workshops, or outreach, such as social media, including blogs. During cataloguing I feel it’s useful to highlight how our archives, including our animation archives, links to topical events occurring (providing information on our ‘related material’ field), to show how it can be used within research or education. This highlights how it is ‘relevant’ to students today, and it is important to look at feminism today throughout the perspective of the past.

A few examples:

Give Us a Smile 1983, highlighting harassment against women on an everyday basis can be compared to today’s everyday sexism project, existing to catalogue instances of sexism on a day to day basis <http://everydaysexism.com/>

Leeds Animation workshop links issues that black women have as opposed to white females, with Out To Lunch, 1989. This can link into the SlutWalk, which started in Torronto, which protests against the notion that rape can be caused by appearance – this was responded to by an open letter to the SlutWalk, by black feminists, arguing that black feminists have been excluded <http://www.blackwomensblueprint.org/2011/09/23/an-open-letter-from-black-women-to-the-slutwalk/>

Science and Technology, STEM, links to Did I Say Hairdressing? I Meant astrophysics 1988, and equal opportunities within the workplaces

The first production We Need Nurseries, 1978, an eight-minute film promoting day-care provision for the under-fives – the cost of childcare today, and provision for families to ensure they can work, still very much in the forefront