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PROPOSED PAPER

***Making It Up As We Go Along: The Future of Animation Archives***

This paper addresses the development of the 'Association of British Animation Collections' (ABAC) and its developing narrative in attempting to collect, preserve, conserve and exhibit British animation production holdings. It discusses the particular complexities and difficulties in collecting 'animation', and the current challenges in trying to prevent the catastrophic loss of British animation pre-production materials and production artifacts.

As in many areas of cultural life, the lack of funding or infrastructural support, is leading to the loss of 'heritage' and aspects of legacy, and in the case of British animation inhibits its already limited recuperation for academic research and social recognition. A variety of initiatives including the Animation Academy / National Media Museum documentary series has been established to raise awareness about this issue, but more informally, improvisation in regard to collection and use has characterized the development of a virtual archive.

This analysis seeks to speak to current debates in such fields and seeks to encourage correspondent responses and collaborative initiatives, suggesting that animation is a highly significant mode of practice and record in many disciplinary areas, most notably in 'films that work', i.e. industrial training films, public information films, institutional and charity based films, as well as in significant productions made for art and entertainment that are equally neglected. Inevitably, such arguments rest on the understanding of cultural worth, political economy and ideology, and the historical and instrumental value of the arts.