

20 minute Paper Submission Proposal

by

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20 min conference papers: 300-word abstract + 3-5 bibliographic references + 100-word biographical statement

Society of Animation Studies

Theme: Women in Animation

Title: Absent women? Where are the key women in the UK animation industry?

Abstract:

I produced and directed a documentary to celebrate women working in the animation industry for Sky Showcase Channel 192 on 13th October. The women interviewed in the documentary were from a range of backgrounds – animators, directors, commissioners and writers. These women all stated that there are less women in key creative roles than men, yet UK Screen Alliance, recently published a report that revealed that 51% of workers in animation were women – 89% in production, 55% in senior creative production and 49% in creative artist roles. At first these figures seem very exciting, but on further examination, the categories seem rather vague. Were these women in key creative roles or were these figures obscuring the reality of the kinds of roles women were actually engaged with.

Out of the total number of animation series commissioned or co-produced in the UK between 1990 – 2018, only 6.5% were created by women (En.wikipedia.org.2018). The cultural and creative industries including animation, are usually seen as ‘cool, creative and egalitarian’ (Gill, 70-89, 2002). Yet when conducting my research by interviewing women across the industry, there appear to be clear paradoxes with inequalities in gender and race. In the animation industry, networking and word of mouth are key methods of gaining employment. ‘There is evidence that this may have different outcomes for men and women in the creative industries’ (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2012.2) This appears to put women in animation at a disadvantage for a variety of reasons; women with children will find it hard to network, people from the same ilk tend to stick together and there is little transparency in recruitment.

This paper asks the question, ‘Where are the key women in the UK animation industry?’ and attempts to create a possible framework to answer it.

Bibliography

Animated Women Breaking The Mold. (2019) <https://www.britishanimationwomen.com/> Password to watch the documentary is crapston

Animated Women UK. (2018). *Animated Women UK Supporting Women in VFX & Animation*. [online] Available at: <http://www.animatedwomenuk.com/> [Accessed 12 Nov. 2018].

Gill, R., (2002), ‘Cool, creative and egalitarian? Exploring gender in project-based new media work in Europe’, *Information, Communication & Society*, 5 (1): 70–89.

Grugulis, I. and Stoyanova, D. (2012), ‘Social capital and networks in film and TV: jobs for the boys?’ *The British Sociological Association Annual Conference 2012: Sociology in an Age of Austerity*.

Wreyford, N. (2015). Birds of a Feather: Informal Recruitment Practices and Gendered Outcomes for Screenwriting Work in the UK Film Industry. *The Sociological Review*, 63(1_suppl), pp.84-96.

Biography

I have worked as an animation academic for the past 13 years at University of Central Lancashire, having previously worked in animation series for 20 years. My credits include creating, writing and directing an adult animated soap opera for Channel 4 called Cragston Villas, writing and animating a 5 part animated love story called Nights for Channel 4, writing and directing a five minute short Family Favourites for Channel 4, as well as writing for children's shows such as Peppa Pig, researcher on Eastenders and playing Dolly in Pond Life for Channel 4. I still voice Miss Rabbit for Peppa Pig and Nanny Plum for Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom