

The Art of Persuasion:
A Critical Survey of British Animated
Information Films (1939–2009)

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Abstract

Comparatively little has been written about British animated public information film and this gap in knowledge led to research, which positioned my practice as an animator in the historical and theoretical contexts of British filmmaking. My research investigates how ‘animation’ creates distinctive approaches to information narratives and contributes to persuasive information communication. The *animated* public information film is one of several categories of information film, which are identified in my Glossary of Terms.

Volume 1 of the thesis contains theoretical and historical discussion and argument. Chapter 1 is an overview of my research which generated the first comprehensive filmography of animated British public information shorts, chronologically recorded and defined from 1939 – 2009. Chapter 2 uses my filmography to determine the core characteristics, role and function of animated information film in the interdisciplinary contemporary era. This in turn informs my own approach to making a contemporary information film, and I also draw on some informal primary research and my critique of the historical sources identified in Chapter 1. Chapter 3, on my practice (evidenced in Volume 2), identifies how a contemporary animation responds to my research questions: How is the art of persuasion manifested in British animated information films? *and* How can animation practice contribute to contemporary information films made for public distribution? I focus on the history of British animation information films to assess patterns and forms affiliated with information delivery. I examine media technology and methods of communications as they evolve in a cross-media era, consider how they facilitate the production of a contemporary information film, and evaluate how I developed *Tell Someone* to provide information on how children, aged seven to eleven, can remain safe while on the Internet.

My research establishes that British animation has been instrumental in contributing to social awareness by delivering important information to British society for over seventy years. My practice reveals that animation can make a contemporary contribution to information films. It proves to be adaptable to rapidly changing technology and capable of updating knowledge to meet new social challenges posed both by online access to technology and the new multiple platforms available for the delivery of information in the digital era.

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List of Abbreviations

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
GPO	General Post Office
MOI	Ministry of Information
COI	Central Office of Information
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
EMB	Empire Marketing Board
BFI	British Film Institute
IWM	Imperial War Museum
ARC	Animation Research Centre
MOR	Mass Observation Report

Glossary

Throughout the thesis I refer to a taxonomy of terminologies affiliated with information films. These are defined briefly below.

Public Information Film

The most documented and permanent category of information film is the public information film (Britain) or the public service announcement (elsewhere). Funded by the government, its agencies and taxpayers, the fundamental objective of this type of film is to inform the general public on safety, health, welfare and compulsory legal

responsibilities. Considered the third largest contribution to British advertising, Matthew Parris suggests that ‘only soap is marketed more vigorously than the government’s messages’ (Parris in Lannon, 2008: 1).

Propaganda Film

Closely related to the public information film is the propaganda film, commissioned and funded by the government and distributed predominantly during periods of conflict and war. Rhetorically dependent on the power of emphatic words and explicit imagery, propaganda is usually repeated constantly and dispersed via a wide variety of media in order to harden audience attitudes towards the ‘enemy’, and to increase support for the cause or message.

Independent Information Film

The independent information film is essentially a contemporary contribution to the information film industry. Determined by private funding, sponsors and other sources of finance, these films often focus on messages that introduce the work of charities and public organisations. For example, the Leonard Cheshire Disability charity worked closely with the British Aardman Studios to develop a series of short independent information films addressing issues of disability.

Information Film

Information films are commercially funded. For example, on British television, Channel 4 commissioned and funded information films as part of the young adults’ television series *Battleground* (discussed below).

Educational Information Film

These are explicitly made for schools, colleges and universities and are usually considered to be training and instructional films. Airlines sometimes use animated shorts on flights to highlight the procedures for exiting a plane during an emergency.

Volume 2

Practice Submission

01. *Tell Someone* Animatic Film (CD)
02. *Tell Someone* Animatic Film (Memory Stick)
03. *Tell Someone* Sketchbook
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Introduction

Information film is a mass communication tool produced to communicate messages to mass audiences. The general goal is to influence audience members so that they will act or think in a way to accomplish the goals established of the film – that is, what to do or think, how to do it, or why to do it (Shelton: 2004).

Animation studies have grown and developed in recent years and have created an increasingly significant theoretical and historical body of work (Telotte, 2010; Purves, 2010; Wells, 2009; Selby, 2009; Furniss, 1998; Leslie, 2002; Bendazzi, 1994), but there is still comparatively little written about the animated public information film, or its specific presence in Britain. This gap in knowledge offered an opportunity for research and led to the formulation of my research questions (outlined below), which could position my practice as an animator in the historical and theoretical context of British filmmaking.

Though more work has been done in recent times on animated documentary (see Skoller, 2012), which leans towards the information film with regard to the context of representation and forms of reality, the specific nature of animated information films remains relatively unexplored (Ward, 2005; Wells, 1998). Published contributions from Vivien Halas (2006) and Paul Wells (1995, 1998, 2006) for the most part focus on the history of the Halas & Batchelor studio, which, during the Second World War, produced government-sponsored animated public information films. Other contributions, which focus on American wartime animation (Shull and Wilt, 2004), offer a filmography but lend themselves more towards statistics and propaganda.

There is no clear definition of what an animated public information film is, or more formally, ‘public service advertising’, a term used by the Central Office of Information (hereafter COI) in its most recent publication (Lannon, 2008). As a result, this thesis investigates how ‘animation’, as a form, creates distinctive approaches to information narratives, and contributes to a particular form of public information communication and persuasion. What materialised, as my research developed, was the realisation that the *animated* public information film is one of several categories of information film (see short definitions in the glossary above).

The thesis is structured in two volumes. Volume 1 contains the theoretical and historical discussion and argument; this generates the context for my practice, which

is in Volume 2. Volume 1 is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is essentially an overview of what is the first comprehensive filmography of animated British public information shorts, chronologically recorded and defined, from 1939 to 2009. The chapter suggests that archival research and a critical evaluation of material offers valuable information about approaches to using film, rather than posters and leaflets, as a vehicle for delivering information to specific social groups within the general public.

Chapter Two uses the analysis of the filmography as a way of determining the core characteristics of the animated information film, in order to determine its role and function in the mass mediated and interdisciplinary contemporary era. This, in turn, informs my own approach to making a contemporary information film – an approach that draws upon some informal primary research and my critique of the historical sources identified in Chapter One. The third chapter focuses on my practice (as evidenced in the material in Volume 2), identifying how a contemporary piece can address my research questions.

My research questions are:

How is the art of persuasion manifested in British animated information films?

and

How can animation practice contribute to contemporary information films made for public distribution?

I focus on the history of British animation information films to assess whether there are any emerging patterns and forms affiliated with information delivery. I trace the variable stages of media technology and methods of communication as they evolve in a cross-media era and I consider how each of these facilitates the practice of producing a contemporary information film.

Historiography

To contextualise the animated British public information film it was necessary to establish a historically determined primary resource and a historiography, to present a comprehensive understanding of the place and presence of the animated public information film, and to define it within certain changing contexts and periods.

This contextualisation was important to achieve a comprehensive critique of the complexity and achievements of the animated British public information film and related genres. This has not been undertaken before and constitutes an important contribution to the overall history of British animation, as well as facilitating a research focus in my practice.

Timo Linsenmaier's essay, 'Why Animation Historiography? Or: Why the Commissar Shouldn't Vanish' (2007), discusses the importance of maintaining an historical agenda within animation studies. The paper acknowledges how contributions towards the history of animation remain limited by claiming that 'so far only a few animation scholars have thoroughly undertaken to explore how historical developments relating to their study of animation are registered and chronicled' (Linsenmaier, 2007: 51). In order to understand the responsibility of researching and writing about contributing to the history of British animation, I read books that discuss the importance of a historiography and the task of being an author of history (Sobchack, 1996; Green and Troup, 1999); while I make no claims to being a 'historian', this historiographic consideration remains fundamental to this study.

Although I felt that it was important to begin my research with the announcement of the Second World War (1939), information films began to surface during the First World War. For the most part they were considered commercials, contrasting with the Second World War public information films that were funded by the government (Ward, 2005). The Second World War could also be viewed as a period during which the term 'public information' and the function of the public information film become more prominent, and as a result this became a starting point for my research. For the most part, the term 'propaganda' within the context of wartime cinema has been widely researched and published, and I will refer only occasionally to the function of propaganda throughout the thesis. I have refrained from focusing too much on the term, not wishing to distract from the fundamental questions of the PhD research.

In relation to the animated wartime public information films, James Chapman notes the use of the term 'cartoon' in government films being commissioned by the Ministry of Information (hereafter MOI) (Chapman, 2007). Although 'cartoons' have had minimal recognition in comparison to the research published in regard to the function of live-action public information films, Chapman does acknowledge that the

animated public information film contributed to the government's objectives, and that animation was deemed suitable as a form of information delivery. Other wartime reference materials, although not directly related to the information film, do discuss the influence of British cinema and what impact it had in relation on raising morale and promoting wartime activities (McLaine, 1979; MacKenzie, 1984; Kirkham and Thoms, 1995; Hayes and Hill, 1999; Murphy, 2000; Gardiner, 2004).

In regard to more contemporary information films, there is a shortage of scholarly contributions, even more so in relation to the animated public information film, and it became an almost impossible task to establish any published contribution. Wells briefly discusses COI shorts from the 1970s, but this for the most part is in relation to the representation of animals within animation (Wells, 2009). At this point it became paramount for me to conduct primary research on filmmakers and contributors to the animated public information film who were still available to discuss their work. The findings became fundamental to my project, not just within a historical context but also within the development of my methodology and evolving practice. The COI released a publication of case studies from within their organisation, with contributors discussing information communications from varying viewpoints. Frustratingly, they only refer to live-action public information films; however, the book publication did offer a clearer understanding as to the function and thinking process of a campaign and the role of persuasive information delivery.

The National Archives supported the COI in celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2006 by maintaining a permanent online exhibition of public information films. The exhibition offers a timeline and a historical overview of the shifts that were taking place within society during the period of the films. Although the main objective of my research is not to evaluate social issues, it is important to have an understanding as to why public information films were commissioned and whether the films reflect on a current crisis within society, such as war, obesity, or a disease epidemic, for example, the relatively recent incidence of swine flu.

Characterised by a chronological approach as it progresses into the more contemporary era of the information film, my research also explored independent information films commissioned outside of government organisations. Animation contributes to leading charity campaigns from Amnesty International, UNICEF,

Oxfam, Greenpeace, NSPCC and environmentalist campaigns such as the Green Peace Party and MTV Switch. Throughout the thesis I will be addressing the cross-platform delivery, exhibition and reception of the information film, as it has had to adapt not only to advances in technology but also to the development of animation techniques. It is important to assess the impact this may have had on the function of the animated public information film.

Viewing animated information films has been made possible by DVD viewing and online sources. British Pathé houses a collection of wartime animated information films which, viewed online, offer a broadcast date, running time and film stills (<http://www.britishpathe.com/>); however, they do not include information about directors or production studios. My film research included work at the British Film Institute (hereafter BFI) and the Imperial War Museum (hereafter IWM). Throughout the duration of my research I documented and developed a filmography database, which has records of over 200 British animated public information films, commissioned both from within government agencies and by independent organisations (see Appendix 1).

In 2007, the BFI took possession of the COI film department and as a result have released a number of film box sets relating to the collection, which have been useful for the purposes of my own research. The collections include DVDs of *The Joy of Sex Education* (UK, 2008), *Land of Promise – The British Documentary Movement* (UK 2008), *Addressing the Nation – The GPO Film Unit Collection* (UK, 2008), *Police and Thieves – The COI Collection* (UK, 2010) and *We Live in Two Worlds – The GPO Film Collection Volume 2* (UK, 2009). Each of the collections contains a series of essays, and all refer to and include animation contributions. The BBC commissioned a three-part series *Animation Nation* (UK, 2005), which I worked on while I was based at the Animation Research Centre (ARC) at UCA (University College of the Arts). The episode ‘The Art of Persuasion’ discusses propaganda and the contributions made by the COI to animation and advertising.

Archive Research

I was awarded the John Guest Travel Scholarship by Loughborough University during my first year of study, which supported my primary research at a number of archives.

Sussex University Archive houses the Mass Observation Report (hereafter MOR), a paper-based documentary experiment that took place during the Second World War. I became familiar with the MOR project while working as an archivist at the Animation Research Centre, but had not yet had the opportunity to visit the collections. The project asked members of the public to document their everyday experiences of living in Britain while it was at war. Of more interest is the report, which also recorded the effects of wartime cinema. Discussed in depth in Chapter One, the collection made a valuable contribution to my research.

Initially I was unsure if the collection would hold any material with reference to the animated public information film but, after two days of trawling through a mass of archive boxes, I retrieved helpful previously undetected documentation referencing public responses to government animated information films from experimental filmmaker and animator Len Lye and documentary director Paul Rotha. I also visited the National Archives, based at Kew, which houses all government documentation and includes artefacts referencing the MOI and COI. My findings within the archives, in addition to the MOR results, proved to be a valuable resource with regard to wartime information films. However, some of the collections are legally bound under a 30-year non-entry contract, resulting in more current COI correspondence being inaccessible.

London's IWM also houses the permanent 'Home Front' exhibition. This was a helpful research tool, supporting my investigation in terms of the relationship between wartime public information films and the government's 'Home Front' campaigns. The museum has permanent exhibitions referring to the post-war and Cold War periods, which include screenings of animated public information films. Furthermore, the museum staged a 'War Posters: Weapons of Mass Communication' (2008) exhibition, which I visited to gain some understanding of poster design and illustration within the theme of persuasion.

Survey

From my overall analysis of the history of the animated public information film, I was clear about the kind of topic I wanted to explore in my practice – chiefly a project aimed at a child audience, dealing with an issue relevant to them, but also pertinent to

the contemporary era. However, as I developed my research, I realised that some informal enquiry and feedback about the social relevance of possible topics for a contemporary animated public information film might be useful.

I had already concluded that the ‘Don’t Talk To Strangers’ campaigns of the 1970s could be usefully updated to address Internet bullying and abuse. Nevertheless, I was living and working in an environment that allowed me the possibility of conducting a small primary research project with a sample of parents, to solicit information about contemporary issues that might be subjects for a contemporary animated public information film. This is discussed in detail in Chapter Three, but it is worthwhile noting my broad approach here. It was clear to me that many public information films had, in fact, been directed at children, and I decided that it would be helpful to determine whether contemporary British parents have particular concerns about dangers to their children. I also undertook a survey to obtain a clearer understanding of parents’ knowledge of current information films to which their children already had access.

The survey was distributed on the Royal Air Force base where I lived. Although geographically restricted to one area, the airbase is a hub of recruitment from around the country, with a family housing community of over 400 houses. As a result, the airbase contains varying levels of social class, background, race and ethnicity, generation and experience. The survey asked parents to suggest subjects and concerns for their children, from bullying to road safety. I also asked parents if they could remember public information films from when they were children. The results of the survey enabled me to consider my own practice and assisted me in choosing a subject on which to develop a contemporary animated public information film. It should be stressed again that, although this was a helpful investigation, it was only an aid in reinforcing the choice of a relevant topic for my practice, rather than a fully invested model of sociologically grounded research. I will discuss this in Chapter Three (examples of returned questionnaires are presented in Appendix 5).

The development of the information film as it progressed and adapted to the technical advances of media communications meant that I needed to situate the work within the context of media studies (Root, 1986; Stokes and Reading, 1999; Curran and Seaton, 2003; Branston and Stafford, 2006; Nicholas, O’Malley et al., 2007). The influence of

the Internet is explored in greater detail in Clay Shirky's publication, 'Here comes everybody: the power of organizing without organizations' (Shirky, 2000), and in Brigitta Hosea's essay 'TV 2.0 Animation Readership/Authorship on the Internet' (Hosea, 2008), both of which highlight the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet as a communications tool. Online video platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo enabled me to access a number of animated public information films, as did leading organisations such as Amnesty International, who broadcast online under the title Human TV.

The Internet was also fundamental in helping me to consider the consumer of the information film. This was primarily achievable due to the use of the 'comments' box on many websites. This enables the viewers of an online article to contribute their own opinions and responses. For the purpose of my research I found this most valuable and in some senses this could be viewed as a contemporary informal version of the wartime MOR.

Blogs, fan sites and social network sites such as Twitter, which have contributions from the National Archives, IWM, COI and Facebook, also offer accessibility to information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I myself set up a group on the social networking site Facebook to engage with discussions on the feature film *When the Wind Blows* (Jimmy Murakami, UK, 1986) to further enable my own analysis. These contexts, in themselves, contribute to shifting parameters in the context and definition of 'public information'.

Interviews

It was important to interview practitioners who have contributed to animated British public information films, not only in relation to government films but also those commissioned by other organisations. The interviewees were either visited or filmed, or shared correspondence via email, telephone and post, and they were asked to complete a questionnaire. Filmed interviews with animators Dick and Liz Horne, for example, gave me a valuable insight into day-to-day survival in working at the British studio Halas & Batchelor during the Second World War. They also discussed their involvement in working on the 'Charley' series released during the post-Second World War period.¹ Interviewing Iain Harvey at Illuminated Films, London, in

relation to the animated feature film *When the Wind Blows*, produced by Harvey, also assisted me in gaining an understanding of the influence of animation, and the impact that it may have when attempting to encourage social change.

I conducted a number of interviews with directors and artists. These included Sarah Cox (*Unravel*, Sarah Cox, UK, 2007), Ian Gouldstone (*Face the Music*, Ian Gouldstone, UK, 2008), Brian Larkin (*Sparkler Safety*, Brian Larkin, UK, date unknown), Mark Williams-Thomas (*Matters 2 Me*, Mark Williams-Thomas, UK, 2007), Tony White (*Prams and Pushchairs*, Tony White, UK, date unknown) and character designer Curtis Jobling (*Bob the Builder*). In addition, I questioned those responsible for commissioning information films, including: Peter Dickins of the Leonard Cheshire Disability organisation; Kez Margrie, the director of the animated film *The Wrong Trainers* (UK, 2007); Fiona Lydon of Action for Children; Nick Futchter at Oxfam; Dominic Edwardes of the Terence Higgins Trust; and Edward Waller at UNICEF.

More comprehensive correspondence took place with Richard Taylor (Richard Taylor Cartoons) who, over a period of twenty years, contributed to more than twenty-five information films for the COI and is one of the largest contributors to animated public information films made in Britain in the post-Second World War period. Another key contributor is the Leeds Animation Workshop, which produces animated independent information and education films.

It had always been my intention to conduct interviews and also to develop basic questionnaires, as I felt it important to understand not only the product but also the process of making an animated information film, in order to develop a possible methodology that could contribute to the practice component of the PhD.

Towards a Theoretical Approach

For the most part, the purpose of the government public information film is to address challenging issues in everyday life, such as road safety, smoke alarms, tax returns and being healthier. Charities commission films to portray their campaigns and attempt to encourage change and alter ideological stances. Even though both the government and charity organisations have their own agenda, what links them is the delivery and persuasive aims of their message, in that they need to consider the most suitable form

and means of mass distribution and ensure comprehensive coverage. During the Second World War the government was dependent on the cinema as a mode of delivering moving image information (see Chapman 2007, Grant 1999). This remained the case until the emergence of television and thereafter the widespread adoption of digital communications.

As public information films shifted from the cinema to broadcast TV and into the digital era, I needed to gain an understanding of the changing paradigms of mass communications theory to develop my methodology. To do this I investigated the three-step model of communication, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two, where I begin to explore how the trafficking of information has developed over the decades.

During the Second World War the government's campaigns had one focal, collective audience, placed within a cinema auditorium. Post-war public information exhibitions and the introduction of television can therefore be viewed as the beginning of a dislocation of the collective placement of the information film. This was to have its own advantages and disadvantages, as the information film was able to focus on a more niche audience. The further development of the mass media and new multiple platforms available for the delivery of information in the digital era needs careful consideration and evaluation, as the audience for the contemporary information film has fragmented yet further. This is especially significant to my own practice and the delivery of my independent animated information film, and part of a broader question considering whether the advancement of mass media communications is resulting in what appears to be a decline in the production of the public information film in general (Harrison, 2005; Steamers, 2009).

Although the main objective of my research is to evaluate the function of animation as a mode of communication within the context of the information film, it was also important, although within limitations, to explore the social psychology of the delivery and reception of information (Dunlop, Wakefield and Kashima, 2009; Caserio and Higgins, 2008). I also needed to gain further understanding of delivering public information within a consumerist culture and I focused predominately on the influence advertising has on children (Agnes, 2008; Goldberg, Gerald and Gibson, 1978). This further supported my own practice in gaining an understanding of what

age children begin to accept and use information guidelines when they are presented within the context of film and television, and at what stage they realise they are being sold an idea or product.

I also examined the field of animation therapy, which I believed would enable me to gain an understanding of the use of animation as a medium of communication. This was mainly due to the questions that I raised after watching *Matters 2 Me* (director unknown, BWT Productions, UK, 2007), an animated series based on actual events about how children are 'groomed', which is discussed later in Chapter Two. Grooming is a term used by the NSPCC to describe a potential abuser building a relationship with a child. I was interested in why animation was considered the most suitable form for communicating with children on such a serious subject, i.e. sexual abuse; this will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two, when I address the approach of criminologist and child protection expert, and creator of *Matters 2 Me*, Mark Williams-Thomas.

To support this further I explored the role of puppets within therapy practice and how this is successful within approaches to art therapy as a communicative tool (Astell-Burt, 2001; Waller, 2006). I interviewed art therapist Matthew Bernier and discussed with him his own developments and case studies of using puppetry to communicate with children at a refuge for women who had suffered domestic violence.

The practice of animation therapy is developing further within the UK, and my research includes contributions from animation lecturer Melanie Hani who, as a result of her own experiences, developed animation workshops focusing on bereavement. More recently, the newly developed and funded UK Animation Therapy group, headed by occupational therapist Helen Mason and animator Joan Ashworth, began offering workshops within the UK. The use of animation in therapy is gaining more recognition from within the animation community and discussion panels have taken place at the 2010 Society of Animation Studies conference, which was held in Edinburgh, Animated Encounters in Bristol (November 2010) and the Bradford Animation Festival (November 2010).

Chapter Two explores the use of animation within the context of sex education, and notes that animation has been used to promote safer sex in the wider public domain. Films have been made about this subject since the period of the Second World War,

for example *Six Little Jungle Boys* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1945), contemporary information films addressing AIDS (Nicolas Roeg, UK, 1986), and charity awareness campaign films like *Knobs in Space* (David Riddet, Luis Cook, UK, 1994) (Geary, Johnson, Liku, Castelnau, Neupane, Niang, 2006).

I briefly explore the use of animals within the context of the information film (Wells, 2009) by looking at the Leonard Cheshire Disability charity's deployment of Nick Park's approach in *Creature Comforts* (Nick Park, UK, 1990) and its subsequent series (Norris, 2008). I consider the impact of celebrity, which has been used by the COI since the 1970s, with contributions from popular children's presenters of their period, e.g. cartoonist Rolf Harris (*Rolf's Cartoon Club*) and DJ Jimmy Savile (*Jim'll Fix It*).

More contemporary participation comes from British actress Julie Walters (*Matters 2 Me*, UK, 2006), Dawn French (*The Animals Save the Planet*, UK, 2007), David Mitchell (*Highway Code Land*, UK, 2010), and Patrick Stewart and Joanna Lumley (*Audition*, Daniel Cohan, UK, 2007). Living in a more celebrity-informed culture, it is pertinent to ask whether the emphasis on the celebrity who is supporting the campaign has more of an influence than the message itself (Marshall, 1997; Rojek, 2001).

I considered it important to gain some level of understanding of consumer research and the impact advertising has on children, for the most part within the context of television (Roedder 1981, Hansen 2002, Agnes 2008). This enabled me to focus on establishing the most suitable age group for my information film and this is discussed in Chapter Three. I also discuss the debates within the media sector in relation to government information films. The most recent exchanges have been concerned with the *Change 4 Life* campaign. Addressing issues of obesity, the films came under much criticism due to the government influencing the weekday scheduling of broadcasting publicly funded films before *The Simpsons* on Channel 4 at 6pm. The government's campaign also came under criticism from the games industry because of the depiction of a child with a games console on its poster, with a slogan claiming 'Risk an early death, just do nothing'.

Practice

Chapter Three is devoted to my practice. I evaluate the decisions I made with regard to my own practice, which was focused on developing a contemporary independent animated information film based upon my findings from the first comprehensive historical survey of this film genre, and my informal primary enquiries and research. My film, which is to be produced for children aged seven to eleven, will provide information on how children can remain safe while on the Internet. The film (discussed in detail in Chapter Three) is designed for a child to view alone, or for the child and family to view it together.

The choice of subject for my film emerged from my intention to update the ‘Don’t Talk To A Strangers’ campaigns of the mid-1970s for the contemporary era. Subsequently my intention was informally supported by concerns expressed by parents in my survey, and then by the current media attention on the need for further information for both children and parents about this topic. Over 50% of parents in my survey acknowledged they had very little understanding of how to ensure their children remained safe online. Seemingly further supporting the need for a film on the subject was the publication of ‘Safer Children in a Digital World: The Report of the Byron Review’ (2008), headed by Dr Tanya Byron, which was funded by the then Labour government. The findings of the research suggested that public awareness campaigns needed to be developed to protect children from any further dangers as the development of online activity by children increased (Brown, 2008: 4).

The development of the practice component of the PhD underwent a number of changes. I viewed past and current animated information films, and observed animation styles within children’s television. I was particularly aware of the advice suggesting the best means of delivering a sustainable message by the COI, who claim that:

In practice, the suitability of any tangible action depends on it being significant and straightforward in equal measure. Too challenging or stretching and it will be rejected as unrealistic. Too simplistic or familiar and it will be dismissed as nothing new (Lannon, 2008).

The development of an information film also needed to consider the methods of communication within creative practice and how an animated moving object, human,

animal or typography can communicate clearly and objectively to promote the film's message (Poster and Aronowitz, 2000; Bordwell and Thompson, 2001; Shelton, 2004, Male, 2007).

My own practice was to develop a series of information films focusing on a central female character, Sally Sense. Initially, I wanted to combine stop-motion puppets and 2D production design, as this would remove the familiarity of the CGI and Flash cartoon methods currently dominant in productions for children. To achieve this, I attempted to build my own puppets, which then underwent a series of test shots and still shoots. It was at this point that it became clear that the puppets and the armatures would not be able to withstand the weeks of shooting needed to develop a high quality animated information film.

I had the option of developing a 2D film, but felt that this would have a negative effect on the fundamental objectives of the film's message, which I believed were best communicated through a combination of puppets and illustration, and which would generate more awareness through its visual difference. I was acutely aware of the high production values that contemporary puppet animation has, and how this constitutes a dominant aesthetic in children's stop-motion programming and film. I did not believe that I had the proper resources or puppet-making skills to facilitate my planned film, or properly create a film that would speak effectively to my research enquiry.

At this stage it was agreed with my supervisor that I would develop Sally Sense as a professional project for an industry funding 'pitch'. This meant that I could present the concept of Sally Sense with finalised character designs, an animatic, completed scripts, production designs and storyboards in order to 'pitch' for commission and funding (all this material is presented in Volume 2).

I did attempt to seek funding for my film, and took advice from a number of leading studios, funding institutes and government bodies (see Appendix 6). For the most part, the response to the film, and its objectives, was very positive. However, the difficulties of obtaining funding were due to the fact that I wanted to obtain funding for what was fundamentally a 'student' film. In essentially being for 'research' purposes in the academic context, it was not accepted as being a project pertinent for professional funding and exhibition in the public domain. In some senses this was helpful, in that the proposed film can be seen more specifically within the context of

the research undertaken to achieve it, rather than the professional and social paradigm it provisionally speaks to.

Chapter Three discusses the development of the script and the characters as they underwent a series of changes. Curtis Jobling, one of the UK's leading children's character designers (*Bob the Builder*, *Frankenstein's Cat*), offered me advice on designing characters for children, and completed a questionnaire. When asked about the centrality of a main character communicating the core message within the context of animation, Jobling believes it to be 'Very important – there needs to be a connection there, whether it's the idiocy of Spongebob or the empathy of Rah Rah...' (interview, 23rd October 2008).

Throughout the chapter I refer to a number of animated public and independent information films as I evaluate the animation and film principles, and how this has contributed to my own practice development. It is pertinent to note at this early stage of the thesis that my practice has been influenced by the COI *Charley Says* series, created and directed by Richard Taylor, which attracted many votes in the BBC's online campaign to choose the COI's most popular public information film. The series features a little boy and his cat, Charley, who experience a series of situations children might find themselves in. Another influence on my practice was the *Tufty the Squirrel* under-fives series that was developed from Tufty's presence as a campaign mascot into a stop-motion series dealing with road safety. The films, and Tufty as a character, experienced phenomenal success in the 1970s and Tufty remains the mascot for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).

Also helpful in my preparation was Helen Jennifer and Diane Bray's case study of using an animated film to discuss bullying. They published their findings in 'Bully Dance': Animation as a Tool for Conflict Resolution (see Jennifer, Cowie and Bray, 2006). The study involved a group of children aged ten and eleven discussing the UNICEF film *Bully Dance* (director unknown, USA, 2006), and offered an insightful view into how children respond to animated information films. I also explored other films fundamentally developed for children in an attempt to generate awareness of child-centred issues. The children's BBC news programme *Newsround* commissioned *The Wrong Trainers* (Kez Margrie, UK, 2006), an animated documentary of children living with poverty. This approach was then followed with a documentary series

where children spoke of their experiences of knife crime (*Newsround on Knives*, Kez Margrie, UK, 2008).

To support my discussion in Chapter Three as well as the pitch portfolio, I provide a work-in-progress portfolio in Volume 2. This contains drafted scripts, initial character sketches and production designs, and storyboards. I intend the final designs to be presented at a level suitable to support a professional 'pitch' for commission or funding. This will include the final script, a complete storyboard, character designs and an animatic.

While researching contemporary public and independent information films, it became clear that more would be required than just a film. In addition, a website would be needed to support the film's message. The film would need to be viewed online; this may also be the only means of delivery. Furthermore, additional information for teachers and parents needed to be considered. However, without professional advice on educational materials at this stage, this is only a consideration and is not submitted alongside the practice.

The public information film, for all its recent 'dip' in production, is a constant presence and the potential for further research is evident daily. Announcements by the British coalition government, elected in 2010, that the current budget for government awareness campaigns is to be halved will most certainly have an impact on the production of future animated public information films. Moreover, the concerns within the industry of the decline in children's television and the development of the Save Kids' TV campaign is full recognition of the threat that at some point we may see the complete removal of the animated public information film from television. My research, then, is timely, in the sense that it is important to note the historical and social value of such films, and the significant, if often forgotten, impact the films and campaigns have had historically. My own practice is essentially a contemporary example of the relevance of, and requirement for, public information film, while also being an indicator of its past achievements and legacy.

Chapter One

The Animated Public Information Film

Since whatever is vivid is memorable, it seems certain that one of the important means of communication between Government and the public must continue to be the film (MOI: INF 1/634).

This chapter is a historical survey of the animated public information film as it progresses from the Second World War to the present day. Initially focusing on the wartime animated public information film, this chapter explores the beginnings of an alliance of the British government and animation. It looks at the impact of information films on the animation industry, which for the most part worked in advertising and had to adapt to producing films that were addressing the nation as it experienced fundamental change. The second half of the chapter discusses the post-war public information film as it begins to shift its exhibition context from the cinema to television.

What is a Public Information Film?

A public information film is a short film, from ten seconds to ten minutes, which is commissioned by the government to address issues that are having, or will have, an effect within society. Animated public information films, for example, have been used to generate awareness on issues of health and safety (*Road Hog, Don't be rude on the Road*, Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1983), improving one's health (*Activity*, Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2009) and sex education (*Teen in Love*, director unknown, UK, 2008). There are periods over the decades where the information film emerged to address a crisis, or changes in circumstances taking place within British society, for example the Second World War, the introduction of the National Health Service, the Cold War and the AIDS epidemic. Animated films contributed to these and other issues of social concern. The public information film also evolved from being utilised primarily by governing bodies into a persuasive communications tool embraced by the private sector and charity organisations, all of which use animation at one time or another. Although these films are shown publicly they can be termed 'independent information films'. Practitioner Martin Shelton suggests that the

Information film is produced specifically to communicate a message to audiences with the prospect that at some time in the future, audience members will think or act to the predefined level of satisfaction necessary to solve the communication objectives defined for film (Shelton, 2004: 66).

During the Second World War (1939–1945) the British public information film remained a constant factor in the dissemination of government policy and became a day-to-day part of wartime living. This period remains a unique moment within the context of the history of the public information film. During a period of five years, the public information film focused solely on addressing one issue – the war effort. This period was, in addition, the only time that an information film was dependent on one mode of communication delivery, i.e. the cinema. There were other means of information delivery – press, posters, radio etc. – but due to the popularity of the form, which reached weekly attendances of over twenty million during the 1930s, use of the cinema enabled the British government to communicate with the collective public mass of society (Reeves, 1999: 147).

Wartime Public Information Films

On 3rd September 1939, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announced that Britain was at war with Germany. The British government, already prepared for the announcement, had predicted that there would be over a million casualties during the first six months of the war; in addition, ‘psychiatrists anticipated over three million cases of acute panic, hysteria and neurosis’ (Reeves, 1999: 138).

Wartime information films, both animated and live action, contributed to the government’s ‘Home Front’ campaign, encouraging those who did not join the armed forces to participate in the war effort.² However, the government’s propaganda messages were fundamental in maintaining high levels of morale within British society. Changes enforced by the government upon the announcement of the war proceeded instantly and the use of media communications was invaluable in getting messages across quickly. Crucial, for example, was the immediate mobilisation of household scrap in the creation of munitions, presented in *Bones...Bones...Bones – Save Bones* (director unknown, UK, 1944), or disseminating information on feeding pigs in *Compost Heaps for Feeding* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1944). The government’s initial delivery of propaganda films, and public information overall, faced difficulties with negative responses from audiences. The MOI failed to have an

understanding of propaganda delivery without patronising audiences or causing offence.³

The Ministry of Information

In 1935, the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) had begun preparation for the likely outbreak of war by producing documentation outlining the fundamentals of a new department incorporating all government media correspondence. As a result, the MOI was instigated with distinctive departments, each of which would be responsible for the delivery of government advice through film, newspapers, radio, posters and official news.

The MOI film unit will be the main focus of discussion during this chapter as it was responsible for the production and distribution of films both within Britain and overseas. MOI films, for the most part, were dependent on presentation in British cinema chains, but had the addition of the government's mobile film unit, which screened films at factories, schools, youth clubs and community centres. Television broadcast was discontinued in the latter venues upon the announcement of the war, but this had very little impact as few of the population owned television sets, and pre-war broadcasting was only available within the London area.⁴

The British government was already using film, both live action and animation, to promote the Post Office. The General Post Office (hereafter GPO), previously the Empire Marketing Board Film Unit (EMB), with John Grierson as head of film, gained a reputation for producing innovative, and experimental documentary films⁵ *Night Mail* (Harry Watt, Basil Wright, UK, 1936) was a live-action documentary that combined live-action footage and poetry and received critical acclaim. Animation contributions from the GPO came from Len Lye (*Rainbow Dance*, UK, 1936), Norman McLaren (*Love on a Wing*, UK, 1938) – which was given limited distribution due to the heads of the GPO believing it to be too erotic – and female animator Lotte Reiniger (*Heavenly Post Office* or *H.P.O.*, UK, 1939). In 1940 the GPO became the Crown Film Unit and produced up to eighty documentary films for the MOI, both features and shorts (Chapman, 1998: 114). Additionally the MOI commissioned films from independent documentary film units, which included Realist Films and Paul Rotha Productions.

Documentary had not been popular with the cinema's pre-Second World War audiences, and the films produced by the GPO and Shell received limited distribution. As a result they introduced a mobile film unit and the GPO claimed that, in 1936, up to five million people had viewed their films, although often involuntarily, as the films were screened at workplaces and schools. The audience perception of documentary films improved however during the war, as the films began to reflect events affecting the audience and majority of the country.

Even with the established film units already in place, the MOI still struggled to gain acceptance for a number of reasons. Initially the use of propaganda and the representation of society came under criticism, not only within the context of film but in all media communications. The early years of the MOI, and their unpersuasive use of propaganda and delivery of information, came under fire for being prejudiced, with accusations of only focusing on addressing the working class.⁶ Due to conflicting and unclear objectives, the MOI demurred in the delivery of clear and precise information to the public. In-house fighting, a high number of resignations and the confusion faced during the first few months at the MOI resulted in the ministry being referred to by the press as the 'Ministry of Dis-Information'. One observer wrote:

At the end of the printed instructions as to what to do in an event of an air raid, a Victoria newsreel cinema place card read "Don't Panic. Remember you are British". That's the official mind for you. It either makes you feel sick or just [makes you] laugh like hell according to your temperament, but it won't help win the war (MOR: 17/9/C).

Media negativity towards the MOI increased and it was difficult for the department to hide from their mistakes. As James Chapman notes, 'in the case of the MOI it became all the more serious because its mistakes were made in a public domain'. Early attempts of propaganda film received no more than sniggers, as one such film viewed by the cinema audience '...in terms of laughter, nearly equals an indifferent Disney', (Chapman, 1998: 117). In fairness, however, there was very little for the MOI to inform the country of and, although the ministry was preparing the country for war, very little, aside from evacuations and rationing, was changing.

The enforcement of the blackout, however, was a cause for concern. No light was to be seen during the night from houses, vehicles or streetlamps; there were heavy fines imposed on those who failed to follow this instruction, and this became a key subject

for the films. A reported 4000 civilians died due to the darkness during the first five months, in comparison to four military related deaths during same period (Chapman, 1998: 123). Animated film contributions came from Len Lye's *Musical Poster No 1* (UK, 1940) as part of the 'Keep it Dark' campaign. The film *Blackout Sense* (director unknown, UK, 1945), combines live action and animation, highlighting the dangers to both drivers and pedestrians when the blackout is in place.

Mass Observation Report

The MOR was initiated in 1939 by Humphrey Jennings, a documentary filmmaker with the GPO's film division, who proposed a unique social experiment recording the effects on British society during the Second World War. The concept of the report was to 'invite the cooperation of voluntary observers and will provide detailed information to anyone who wants to take part' (Richards and Sheridan 1987: 2). Poet Charles Madge and anthropologist Tom Harrison later joined Jennings, though Harrison was the only member involved until its completion in 1945.

The report, funded by the government, remained unpublished. However, during the war it became a valuable reference for both the MOI and directors and producers of film. Paul Rotha, a supporter of the MOR and approving of the notion of submitting feedback confidentially, refers to cinema managers claiming, 'They would be frightened stiff to inform the M.O.I that their films were not well taken; on the other hand they might be more truthful if approached by a stranger' (MOR: 17/9/C). The headquarters of the MOR were in Bolton – an ideal setting for the survey as at one point 'no fewer than forty-seven cinemas' were situated in and around the city (Chapman, 1998: 3). The MOI referred to the report to gauge the morale of the country and as a result acted upon the report's conclusions.

During 1942 and 1945, Home Intelligence relied heavily on the reports supplied by the mass observation regarding the state of the nation's morale. A kind of moral 'barometer' was created, based on indicators which only the MOR could have invented: numbers of people carrying gas masks, dreams about Hitler, rumours, jokes, graffiti and, inevitably, the behaviour of people at the cinemas, especially their response to government films (Richards and Sheridan 1987: 6). Reference to animated MOI films was limited, because the majority of films were focused live-action

government films, arguably propaganda films. Questionnaires and observations of animation, referred to as cartoons, for the most part relate to the popularity of Disney, although this was mainly in relation to surveys of audiences' favourite films, with occasional references to experimental animator Len Lye.

However, a screening of *A Few Ounces a Day* (Paul Rotha, UK, 1941) by Paul Rotha, an information film addressing the need for salvage, was observed on 25th November 1941.⁷ The film, an experimental five-minute short, combines illustrations and Isotype, a form of graphic design, which was used in a number of Rotha films.⁸ Rotha also worked with cartoonist Carl Giles, who animated short sequences for Rotha's *Worker and War-Front Magazine Issue No 11* (1944) and who worked as a war correspondent cartoonist from 1944 to 1945. Giles also produced films for the MOI, including *One Pair of Nostrils* (Carl Giles, UK, 1944) and *The Grenade* (Carl Giles, UK, 1944; see <http://www.cartoons.ac.uk/article/giles-full-biography>).⁹

With full commentary throughout, *A Few Ounces a Day* uses symbols and moving graphics to show the sinking of American ships carrying salvage to Britain. The losses reflect factories being unable to work and to contribute to the war effort. As a result, talking factory lorries search for salvage. Using illustrations of everyday household items that are salvageable, paper, light bulbs and tins are displayed as a family disposes of them. The discarded items are then weighed, amounting to one pound of salvage. The film continues with graphics of 100 homes, housing some 500 people, showing how they would accumulate filled sacks of salvage. This then extends to 2000 streets, demonstrating how one million people could fill 2000 sacks. The film finally illustrates a day's salvage making up for the loss of one ship, with the slogan: 'Fill up the gap – a few ounces a day' (MOR: 17/9/C).

The film received predominantly positive feedback; however, as one observer suggests, this could be due to novelty of the film's concept. Slightly critical of the film were women who suggested that the use of a cartoon was unsuitable for such a serious subject. Others resented the similarities to Disney and the *Silly Symphonies*.¹⁰ Two forty-year-old females thought the film a 'very bad English cartoon, trying to copy Walt Disney', and claimed 'It didn't have the effect it was meant to have; people looked on it as a comic strip' (MOR: 17/4/C). More positive comments came from female audience members praising the novelty of the film, with another female, aged

thirty-five, noting that it was ‘One of the best MOI films I’ve ever seen’. Others thought it good propaganda, while another audience member felt ‘inspired’ and the need to ‘clear up everything and throw out all my own books’. Sterner negative responses came from what the observer refers to as ‘well-off people’, who commented that the film was ‘rather silly’ and ‘Rather bad. Why not do it by good photography, it would mean more than a joke then. This almost made fun of the whole thing’ (MOR: 17/4/C).

More in-depth analysis from experienced observers notes a high degree of attention from the audience, with laughter at the bombing and sinking of the cargo ship. One cinema observer records a high level of laughter, but adds a caution that there was a risk of humour deflecting from the film’s message. Those questioned associated the film with the Disney output and made references such as: ‘I liked it. It made me laugh. It was like a Donald Duck and I like Donald Duck.’ Although they failed to note if the film had made an impact, it was described by the investigating observer as ‘striking’. Overall, the film achieved some level of success but the report suggested potential problems with the use of diagrams.

This is an important and highly desirable effect, but general experience of propaganda suggests that these effects are obscured by the lack of people really associating the message with themselves, and with trivial detail of their own family salvage. Thus there is an underlying tendency for this film to make people think “It’s marvellous what can be done”, which they hadn’t thought of before, without necessarily thinking that they could do something themselves (MOR: 17/9/C).

The report recorded no objection to the use of diagrams by those questioned, and recognised the future potential of the technique. However, the investigating observer closed the report by suggesting the inclusion of more serious commentary and photography, to eliminate future references to Disney. This could imply a reluctance to accept the use of animation as a proven successful medium in addressing important issues (MOR: 17/9/C).

Rotha produced over twenty films for the MOI, with Isotype graphics contributing to a number of his films. Recognised as part of the British Documentary Movement, Rotha advised the MOI on propaganda, maintaining his own understanding of documentary suggesting, ‘I do not believe – and I may be in a minority in this – that

documentary just has to be the actual to be documentary. I think it is the social purpose that matters' (Sussex, 1976: 154). The MOI's film division was dependent on the cinema to exhibit films and newsreels; however, this too was problematic, with the cinema owners only reluctantly agreeing to the screening of MOI films due to their unpopularity. Reports recorded that cinema audiences would groan or continue in conversation when the MOI logo appeared on the screen (Chapman, 1998: 87).

British Cinema and Propaganda

During the 1930s Britain had 4967 cinemas, and a recorded 903 million tickets were sold in 1934 (Mackenzie, 1984: 88). Numbers visiting the cinema increased during the war, with many visiting more than once a week. This was primarily as means of escapism and entertainment, but also to view updated war newsreels.¹¹ The increase was also partly due to rationing and the availability of some disposable income. However, assuming the popularity of the cinema and its potential as a suitable means of communicating to the masses, the MOI needed to overcome a number of obstacles to ensure they achieved their fundamental objectives of delivering propaganda and maintaining morale.

Imported glamorous American feature films and comedies were popular with cinemagoers. For example, the epic feature film *Gone With the Wind* (Victor Fleming, USA, 1939), screened at cinemas for the whole duration of the war, over a period of five years, ending in 1945 (Chapman, 1998: 61). Animated films were also hugely popular with all ages, with the majority recognising the Disney studio, which experienced unparalleled success with their shorts and feature films. Initially the government closed all cinemas and music halls as they predicted air raids at public venues in the main cities but the ban lasted only a few weeks and for some only a week, due in part to pressures from cinema managers. Concurrent with the closures, the government announced that all British feature films were to cease production, believing imports from overseas, from America and a small quota from Europe, would be sufficient entertainment to support MOI films and newsreels (Murphy, 2000: 11). The feature ban was lifted as the MOI commissioned a number of feature films during the war, largely for propaganda purposes.

The first six months of wartime cinema reflected the initial effects of a country at war. Slapstick comedy, often mocking Hitler, became the main focus of propaganda. Newsreels struggled to broadcast factual wartime events so compensated by including amusing sketches and interpretations of wartime activities. Furthermore, the MOI's delayed and failing understanding of propaganda information began to have a negative effect on society, leaving audiences frustrated and confused. Chapman suggests that the use of propaganda was unfamiliar within British society by noting, 'One reason why the MOI at first had no clear idea of propaganda policy was the distaste for the very idea of propaganda felt by the western democracies.' He continues, 'Particularly in Britain, there was a deep antipathy towards the idea of propaganda, which was widely considered an "un-British" practice' (Chapman, 1998: 42). The British public understood the potential effectiveness of propaganda; nonetheless, what they objected to – a point noted by Mass Observation observers – was that propaganda was carelessly constructed or even too obvious.

The introduction of public information films, which were to be screened during the early stages of the war, did little to compensate the cinema audience with regard to the lack of newsreels. Information films that ran appeals for National Savings, and the government's anti-gossip campaign, 'Careless Talk Costs Lives', did little to fill the gap of informative newsreels, as an observer notes: 'for the most part, such trailers last no more than half a minute and help only a small degree to solve the problem of no news' (MOR: 444). As important as the newsreels were to the cinema audiences, the MOI also needed to balance that with the requirement of those wanting to experience a degree of entertainment and the opportunity to forget the effects of war. As the war developed and information and newsreels were broadcast at a much quicker pace, the MOI were to receive both positive and negative responses. The effects of the war portrayed in film, especially in newsreels, was beginning to cause discomfort for some female audiences. A published letter appearing in the *Picturegoer*, dated 15th June 1940, after a disturbing newsreel, writes:

This week we went to the our local cinema to see ADVENTURE IN DIAMONDS and SPATS TO SPURS, a light programme calculated to make you forget what might be happening over there. But did we enjoy our programme? No, because we viewed it through a haze of tears and the horrible quickening of nerves as we saw our boys moving up the Belgium front (MOR: 215).

The letter continues to suggest that newsreels with this kind of subject matter needed to be isolated to news theatres, and notes that the writers will refuse to visit the cinema claiming they have the support of ‘thousands of women who feel the same’. Another observation records an elderly female, described by the observer as working class: ‘Gertie and I cried all through the newsreels, those poor boys out there and all that. The pictures were terrible’ (ibid.). The cinema auditorium, in addition to the films themselves, displayed the public emotions of wartime Britain.¹²

British Animation and the Second World War

For the duration of the war, the British public lived constantly with governmental instructions, including the ‘Coughs and Sneezes Spread Diseases’ campaign (*More Hanky Panky – Use your Handkerchief*, director unknown, UK, 1945) and the ‘Make Do and Mend’ campaign, with animated contributions from *From Rags to Riches* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1944), *The Skeletons in the Cupboard* (director unknown, UK, 1943), *Cold Comfort* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1944) and *Sort Paper Salvage* (director unknown, UK, 1943). Government communication was constant, and as wartime activities intensified, so did government information. With information activity at its peak, it became more difficult to be free from government intervention: ‘[there was] scarcely an aspect of the individual’s life [about] which the state did not have something to say’ (McLaine, 1979: 252). The Blitz, which took place from 4th September 1940 to 10th May 1941, was a period of the Second World War during which Britain was continuously bombed by Nazi Germany. It was to be a difficult period of time for the MOI: not only did they have to continue to produce public information films during a period of constant bombing but they also had to deliver information and news items at a much quicker pace. The radio assisted in this and was hugely popular, but it was the cinema that the public turned to, to have access to moving images (newsreels), which showed wartime activities.

Animation remained a constant throughout, with the majority of animation contributions to the MOI film unit being made by Halas & Batchelor Cartoon Films. Headed by Hungarian immigrant John Halas and his new British wife, Joy Batchelor, the studio produced seventy animated public information films during the war. The Disney studio, a much larger organisation than Halas & Batchelor and working in conditions much more conducive to producing animated films, made seventy-three

films during the same period (Wells, 1995: 63). Other films were made by Analysis Films and animator Anson Dyer, and the W.M. Larkins Studio, with contributions from émigré Peter Sachs.¹³

All studios faced the unpredictability of trying to produce films during a war. Halas & Batchelor, for example, were bombed, with Joy Batchelor sustaining back injuries (Halas and Wells, 2006: 89). The studios continued working for the MOI for the duration of the war, in extreme conditions. Joy Batchelor remembers ‘working day and night to the point of total exhaustion, under most difficult circumstances: shortage of paper, pencils, film stock and cell materials’ (Halas and Wells, 2006: 90). The practicalities of travelling to and from work during the war were recalled by animator Liz Horne, who worked for the studio, saying how it could take up to three hours to get to work one morning and having to climb over rubble as a result of night-time air raids (Liz Horne, animator, interview 16th May 2008). Eventually the studio moved location from London to Hastings, which enabled them to continue producing information films. One of the first animated public information films the studio produced was *Dustbin Parade* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1941). The ten-minute film supported the government’s salvage campaign, explaining how everyday household waste could support the war effort.¹⁴ The studio was comfortable with producing films of this length due to their previous work for advertising agency, J. Walter Thompson; *Train Trouble* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1940), advertising Kellogg’s Cornflakes, was eight minutes in length.

There was an evident relationship between animation and documentary during the Second World War. Animation was already a familiar contributor to the GPO films, and Grierson, who believed film was a principle means of communication, was an advocate for the animated information film. Paul Wells believes Grierson supported animation as he ‘recognised animation could become an important educational tool precisely because it seemed ideologically innocent and was also instantly accessible’ (Wells, 1995: 65).

Whilst at the GPO, Grierson commissioned Len Lye’s experimental short *Colour Box* (Len Lye, UK, 1935) and this was to be the beginning of Lye’s wartime contributions.¹⁵ Upon seeing the film, Grierson initially thought ‘marvellous’ and told Lye to ‘Go away and paint the new rates for the parcel post on the last sequence of the

film, and then we'll put it out as an advertising film' (Sussex, 1975: 53). The same year Lye produced *The Birth of the Robot* (Len Lye, UK, 1934/5), an animated film for the Shell Film Unit, headed by Jack Beddington, who later became head of film production at the MOI. Grierson and Beddington evidently encouraged animation production.

However, having the support from within the foundations of the British film industry and the government, British animation studios had other hurdles to overcome, and that was the British public's perception of what animation should do and the cinema-going public's admiration for the Disney output. British studios were aware of this and the difficulties this could cause when developing an animated public information film of which the fundamental objective was to generate enough awareness for it to persuade the observer to listen, learn and understand. Halas acknowledged that Disney was hugely popular, and as a result 'also had its drawbacks. It located animation as a form predominately associated with children and consequently, a form that remained innocent, innocuous and lacking in artistic seriousness' (Wells, 1995: 62). Some of the MOI animation films did come under criticism, with the public referring to Disney, which I will discuss further in this chapter. Yet there were animated information films that took the audiences by surprise. Len Lye's experimental *Musical Poster No 1* (Len Lye, UK, 1940), an MOI film dedicated to generating awareness about the need for the blackouts, was noted by the MOR. The report stated:

This film consisted of abstract colour rhythms synchronised to swing music. The theme was continually battered into one by visual and aural means and to my mind was far more effective than any propaganda film showing the ordinary scheme of 'Keep it Dark'. When this brief film was over the audience sat back and recovered from their battering, there were many gasps and comments (MOR: 17/1/A).

The Short Film Project

The introduction of the short film project, supported by Kenneth Clark who at the time was the head of the MOI, predicted that shorter films of only five minutes in length would 'help people remember government messages by putting them in dramatic form' (Chapman, 1998: 95). The shorter film also enabled information to be produced much more quickly, therefore allowing current and approaching issues to be addressed. However, ensuring that the shorts were exhibited at cinemas was, for some

directors, cause for concern. Paul Rotha, in a confidential letter to Tom Harrison dated 24th March 1941, requested that his new short *You're Telling Me* (Paul Rotha, UK, 1941) be considered for observation. Rotha felt that having no means for official governmental departments to assess the use of propaganda was 'terrifying'. In addition, what the MOI films divisions recorded were 'reports from cinema managers who are the most unreliable of people' (MOR: 17/9/B).

As a result Rotha took it upon himself to obtain his own feedback, writing 'In my own experience of questioning managers, they regard the MOI films as a necessary evil', with cinema managers being forced to screen MOI films as 'part of the national war effort' (MOR: 17/9/B). The MOI films were screened in between features and documentaries, but without the MOI enforcing scheduling timings for the films this resulted in them being exhibited early in the day – the quietest period of the day for visitors to the cinema. Rotha also became aware of cinema managers being completely unaware of the five-minute film, or of any distribution to their cinemas.

Rotha regularly complained about the shortage of screenings and the MOI's unwillingness to gain feedback independently from audiences about MOI shorts. He also implies a level of frustration towards the MOI, highlighting to Harrison that the film title *You're Telling Me* (Rotha, UK, 1941), which was part of the government's anti-gossiping campaign, was not Rotha's choice of film title, suggesting that the MOI had the final say about the film and its title. The film also included animation by Anson Dyer, although he remains un-credited (see <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/465215/credits.html>).

It is clear that the MOI's film division came under criticism from not only the general public but also those who worked within the film industry. Frustrating and problematic as it was for directors and producers during the Second World War, the government was the only option available to them if they wished to continue to produce films. Rotha's main objective was to produce social documentaries that focused on the effect of the war upon society, noting that he would steer away from portraying the military, claiming 'This was accepted, and all the films we made in the subsequent years were about such things as day nurseries and public health and schools and education and so on. Never once did we make a film about any of the [armed] forces' (Sussex, 1975: 137). Although there is no indication of this being an

option for animation studios, which required script approval from the MOI, they essentially had control over the technique and look of the film. The guidelines set by the MOI for the introduction of the five-minute film was that the films had to contain elements of either documentary or storytelling.

Considering animation for the five-minute film, when the government's objective was to deliver information at a much quicker pace, was unpractical due to the lengthy production process and *A Few Ounces a Day* (Paul Rotha, UK, 1944) appears to be the only animated film produced under the guidelines.¹⁶ Halas & Batchelor had submitted a proposal, *Fables*, and, although initially approved at script level, the government, due to funding cutbacks, later cancelled it (INF: 1/205). Halas & Batchelor did produce longer animated information films – *Jungle Warfare* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1943), which was eight minutes long, and *Dustbin Parade* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1941), of ten minutes, but for the most part animated information films during the war were no longer than two to three minutes in length.

A MOR questionnaire asking 'What kind of short films do you like best?' was undertaken, with 'cartoon' being the most popular category, and only 'travelogue' being the preferred short of men and women aged 40–60 and over 60. However, in both of these age groups 'cartoon' was second. The report concludes that, 'The very substantial liking for cartoons is a response not unexpected' (MOR: 17/2). The MOI films did begin to improve. This was indicated by audience responses, with Home Intelligence recording that 80% of the public were satisfied with the government's representation of the war (McLaine, 1979).

This was due in part to the British public's need to access information, and accepting that propaganda was becoming a useful tool in raising morale. The MOI short film programme in total screened 1400 films, with contributions from the Crown Film Unit and independent documentary studios (Chapman, 1998: 86).¹⁷ Historian James Chapman, referring to the short film, suggests that the 'short term objectives made them disposable and quickly out of date' (Chapman, 1998: 113). The short films produced by animation studios could only be pertinent throughout the duration of the Second World War, due to them focusing primarily on the Home Front and the war effort.

Joy Batchelor remembers that ‘While everything else is rationed, ideas and work were not. If you want an audience don’t send them to sleep’ (Ireton, 1999: 2). Journalist P. L. Mannoock, writing in 1941 for the *Daily Herald*, suggests: ‘You cannot exclude the war from film stories; but entertainment value must remain the primary test’ (MOR: 17/1/A). However, before praising the abilities of animation in being able to influence change, it is important to note that an observer for the MOR claimed that, ‘No short film by itself can have any major effect, in our experience’ (MOR: 17/1/A). This statement emphasises that film can address change, but it is the spectator who has the responsibility to carry out the change, not the government.

Animation overcame its comparisons to Disney and the public’s distaste for animation became irrelevant when representing the seriousness of war, and remained part of the MOI’s approach for the duration of the conflict. Even in extreme conditions the animated public information film contributed to the history of British cinema and film during the Second World War, which is referred to by film historians as the ‘golden age of British cinema’ (<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1361819/index.html>).

Post-war Public Information Films

There was no indication during the latter stages of the Second World War that a government film unit would remain open and the down-sizing of the MOI was announced during parliament in 1945 (Grant, 1999: 55). Discussing the function of the newly formed Central Office of Information (COI), Mariel Grant suggests, ‘No mention was made of any future central organisation, which perhaps explains why the COI was mistakenly seen as the brainchild of the post-war Labour government of Clement Attlee’ (Grant, 1999: 55). It was believed that changing the title from ‘Ministry’ to ‘Central Office’ demonstrated that the newly elected government ‘was clearly determined to ensure that the new bureau was recognised as being quite different from the MOI’ (Grant, 1999: 60). As a result, on 1st April 1946 the MOI was replaced by the Central Office of Information, and so began the Labour government’s attempts to use animation and film to help Britain recover from a five-year war.¹⁸

Housing was of concern, rationing remained in place, women who had been working in the factories needed to return to the home, schools needed to be rebuilt, and those who had been separated by years apart required help to live together again. There was

also the need to support the injured and the widowed. The new government introduced new legislation, and created the NHS and Income Tax, all of which were explained in animation. Such was the need to re-develop the country that from 1946 to 1947 the government commissioned more films than at any other period of time, with '30 and 35 films, each focusing on an aspect of the economic situation' (Shaw, 2001: 145).

'Charley' in the 1940s and the 1970s

There are two references to a character called 'Charley' within the history of the COI animated information film. The first *Charley* films, created by Joy Batchelor, featured a working-class, overall-wearing, male protagonist, who was to become the spokesperson of the nation, as he questioned the introduction of new policies and the rapid social changes that were being enforced by the new government between 1946 and 1948. Dick Horne, who worked on the series, remembers that eight Charley films were made, but only seven are ever referred to (interview, 16th May 2008). The films are *Charley in the New Town* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946), *Charley in 'Your Very Good Health'* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946), *Charley's March of Time* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946), *Charley's Black Magic* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946), *Farmer Charley* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946), *Charley Junior's Schooldays* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946) and *Robinson Charley* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946).

Halas and Batchelor's Charley is an adult and, for the most part, was developed to speak to an adult audience. The films would also have been dependent on cinema release. Even though television resumed broadcast after Britain claimed victory in 1945, it wasn't until the 1950s that ownership of televisions became more popular. The series was produced in the traditional style of 2D and drawn directly onto cell, with painted background layouts.

Unlike the Halas & Batchelor information films produced during the Second World War, which were in black and white, the *Charley* series was in colour. Developing Charley as a series of films focusing on one character was something Halas & Batchelor would have aspired to. John Halas recognised that Disney's success was due to the popularity of the characters, and that their films 'had to have immediately recognisable figures, like Donald or Mickey, to sustain the customary warmth and

appeal associated with Disney's creations' (Wells, 1995: 64). The film's dialogue was conducted between Charley, who asked the questions, and the narrator, who answered them.

The other Charley made his first appearance in the 1970s and is from the series of public information films entitled *Charley Says*. The films' target audience was children, and the films focused on issues such as the dangers of playing with matches and not talking to strangers. The creator and director of the *Charley Says* series was Richard Taylor who, like Halas & Batchelor, produced the majority of the government's animated public information films at that time.

Charley Says features two characters. Charley is not human; he is a cat, who speaks only the language of a cat (in that he meows), which in turn is translated by the little boy character who owns him, speaking directly to the audience. Halas & Batchelor's Charley communicates with the narrator of the film – 'the voice of god' – which answers and explains the reasoning for the issues Charley raises. Further analysis of *Charley Says* will follow in Chapter Three.

Following Halas & Batchelor's *Charley* series came the *Shoemaker and the Hatter* (Joy Batchelor, UK, 1949), which was commissioned for the Marshall Plan to explain how reducing export and import restrictions within Europe would improve the countries' economies. The studio also produced other films for the COI on the same issues, these were: *Export! Export! Export!* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946) and *Export or Die* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1946). It was during this period that Halas & Batchelor were approached to produce an animated feature film of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.¹⁹

Post-war animated public information films reflected the changes that were taking place within society. The delivery of information films was also changing as television became more popular. The 1960s witnessed an increase of families taking holidays and, with the increase of car ownership, camping became hugely popular (*Britain Goes Camping*, Brian Henry Martin, UK, 2010). The COI re-published a booklet in 1971 explaining the 'Countryside Code' (Merriman, 2005: 342). One animated contribution to this campaign was *Joe and Petunia – Acceptance of the Countryside Code* (Nicholas Spargo, UK, 1971). This was re-made in 2004 as part of a campaign by Aardman – *The Countryside Code* (Richard Webber, UK, 2004) –

clearly drawing upon baby boomer nostalgia for the original film, updating the style but still using the core approach of laughing at ignorant if iconic characters, in order to both feel superior to them and recognise how to avoid such failings. The retrospective acknowledgement of the success of the first film was instrumental in promoting fresh engagement with the new one, and the attendant hope was that parents who remembered the original would promote the message to their children and new generations unfamiliar with such codes and conventions of behaviour outside the urban sphere.

In 1964, the COI launched the drink-driving campaign as car ownership increased. During the 1970s and 1980s information films leaned more towards health and safety, for example *Airbeds* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1972) and *Baby Walkers* (Tony White, UK, 1974). There was an increase in government films about sex education, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two. For the most part, during the 1970s and 1980s animated public information films primarily addressed children and how they and their parents should protect themselves. It was during the 1980s, under the Conservative government, that the COI reduced its number of public information films and films were instead produced within individual departments. These included the National Health Service (NHS), the Department for Transport (road safety), and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), who were responsible for the popular ‘Tufty Squirrel’ road safety campaigns of the 1970s. As a result, fewer government public information films were directly products of the COI.

The Cold War and Animation

As Britain began to repair its foundations from the effects of Second World War, the political hostilities between America and Russia intensified. As a consequence, there was an increased risk of nuclear war and a period referred to as the Cold War ensued. Cinema, television, posters, radio and propaganda assisted in the government’s campaigns generating awareness about the possible risks of nuclear attacks to the country. Shaw writes; ‘All wars, especially cold wars, are fought in part through words and images. Information – and its concomitant, propaganda – was central to the 40 year battle fought between the “East” and the “West” after the Second World War’ (Shaw: 2001: 1). Between the late 1970s and the mid-1980s there were a number of

both animation and live-action films, not necessarily government films, which frightened and moved the British public.

The government's public information films included Richard Taylor's series of animated short films *Protect and Survive* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976), narrated by Patrick Allen. There were eight films in total: *Choosing a Fall-Out Room* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976), *Refuges* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976), *Action after Warnings* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976), *Sanitation Care* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976), *Water Consumption* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976), *Food Consumption* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976) and *Casualties* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1976).

Although never released, the films leave no doubt that the government felt that there was a genuine threat of attack. If the risk of a nuclear attack were to increase to an imminent threat, the films would have been broadcast on television and published leaflets distributed (see <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/724975/>). In addition to the films and publications, the government also had in place pre-recorded announcements, which would be broadcast hourly on the radio in the event of a nuclear attack (HO/322/775). As for the information given, and the likelihood of surviving a nuclear attack with the suggested protection guidance given, it was clear that such approaches were naive.

Author and illustrator Raymond Briggs exposed this further with his graphic novel *When the Wind Blows* (1982). The story follows elderly married couple Jim and Hilda who, having survived the Second World War, attempt to adhere to the government's instructions. The information given in the leaflet, which Jim picks up from his library, was to remove doors to build a safe haven, to store food, to ration water and to paint the glass in the windows. Briggs' novel was then developed into an animated feature film in 1985, directed by Jimmy Murakami, with Sir John Mills and Dame Peggy Ashcroft as the voices of Jim and Hilda.

The film remains true to the novel except for one part, which is the opening scene. The scene is a live-action sequence (documentary footage) of protestors outside the Greenham Common nuclear plant, as they transport nuclear weapons. Roger Mainwood, who was an active CNN supporter, was working as an animator on the film and suggested the sequence (Wells, John Coates Documentary, UK, 2007). Richard Kilborn, writing about the adaptation from novel to film, suggests that the

live-action sequence was beneficial in contributing to the film's overall message, noting, 'the audience is made poignantly aware that the fictional events about to be played through are in no way worlds removed from the scenario in which, through a swift and unforeseen chain of events, mass destruction would be unleashed' (Kilborn, 1986: 82).

The feature film gained worldwide success and genuinely moved people. The use of live action in the opening sequence challenges the idea that animation, used from start to finish, is able to portray a storyline about war without referencing actuality to enable it to feel authentic and provocative. *When the Wind Blows* is not a documentary: it is Briggs' interpretation of the activities that were taking place within government sectors and society at the time. The film is more about the protagonists, Jim and Hilda, and the spectator witnessing the effects of a nuclear attack and their eventual deaths that sustain emotional engagement.

Even in relation to the MOI public information films, it was suggested that cartoon films, which sometimes received negative comments about being 'Disneyish' during the Second World War, would benefit from using 'epilogue of real photography and serious voice' (MOR: 17/9/C). It is clear, though, that *When The Wind Blows* enables the viewer to engage with a scenario that it would not be possible to portray without animation. It further dramatises the absurdity of the way in which the government was advising upon the issue, long in advance of its potential occurrence. Either way, the film pointed out both the inadequacy of the response and the finality that would actually occur if the world were to pursue its course towards destruction.

During the same year, the BBC broadcast *Threads* (Mick Jackson, BBC Production, UK, 1985), a dark and disturbing docu-drama focusing on the city of Sheffield as it experiences a nuclear attack and, for those who survive, a grim view of life after a nuclear attack. The series became a talking point, 'attracting praise and protest in equal measure' (www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour/cinema.features/threads.shtml). The subject of the Cold War, and the impact of a nuclear attack, was not only solely dependent upon the government's output. Shaw writes: 'In a period of information and entertainment overload, stretching from the heyday of radio to the birth of satellite television, it was almost impossible not to be touched in some way by the barrage of official and unofficial Cold War publicity' (Shaw, 2001: 10).

Health, Safety and Fireworks

Aside from the Cold War, animated public information films during this period tended to lean more towards depicting issues of health and safety. Some of the public information films, notably the live-action versions, were quite disturbing. If you ask an adult today if they have any memories of public information films from their childhood, they may remember one or two, often recalling being scared by what they had seen and comment that this has remained with them since (parent questionnaire, 2008). Internet discussion groups and subscribers to YouTube discuss public information films, highlighting the fear that they experienced when watching COI films during the late 1970s early 80s. *Say No to Strangers* (director unknown, UK, 1981) was a live-action film made for schools, narrated by television presenter Keith Chegwin. The film follows a man who pulls up towards the school gates and attempts to entice a young girl into his car by offering her sweets. *Firework Safety* (director unknown, UK, 1987) combines live action and animation with a computer-generated character, similar in style to *Tron*, as he watches the activities of Bonfire night. When witnessing a boy return to a 'dud' firework he appears, explains the firework safety code and hands the boy the leaflet.

Though the impact of such films was often profound, social change offered no guarantee of a substantive audience or a collective response. All public information films still assumed a common moral and political framework, but this has increasingly 'loosened' as the years have passed. Between 1959 and 1969 the British government changed some key areas of legislation, abolishing the death penalty (1965), and introducing the Abortion Act (1967) and the Divorce Act (1969). These changes 'separately and together offer evidence of a loosening of moral certainty, a loss of confidence in the right of the State to rule on how individuals shall live and, in the case of the abolition of the death penalty, how they shall die' (Watson, 2009: 118). Watson also suggests that 'the twin processes of industrialization and urbanization, which led to secularization have made it impossible to speak of an audience as a whole and impossible to identify any moral voice capable of gaining general acceptance' (Watson, 2009: 117). This has significantly informed how public information film has developed.

Television in this period replaced the function of the cinema as a means of communication broadcast. The number of domestic televisions had reached 15.6 million by January 1956 (www.barb.co.uk/facts/tvOwnershipPrivate?s=4). In my correspondence with him, Richard Taylor, director for some of the most memorable COI shorts, discussed the process of producing a film for the government. For the most part, the process was similar to working in advertising. Directors would be approached by the COI and asked to submit a storyboard and a script, which would be viewed by them and then agreed upon by a COI producer and government officer. At that stage the studios were left to develop the film, with the COI producer perhaps joining the process of recording the voices, or viewing the films as they progressed. Generally the studio was left to finalise the film, with little interference from the COI. Taylor remembers, ‘We were given a fairly free hand overall. I think they realised that we weren’t being paid enough to justify closer interference’ (interview correspondence, October 2008). In some senses, there was recognition that the animated public information film might still be useful, but directors were allowed more creative intervention – a process that would continue as public information films moved from being didactic to discursive: less ‘top down’, more ‘bottom up’.

My overview of the public animated film suggests that the MOI was correct in its assessment that ‘Since whatever is vivid is memorable, it seems certain that one of the important means of communication between Government and the public must continue to be the film’ (MOI: INF 1/634). In Chapter Two, I consider the influence and persuasiveness of information films, including the government-financed public information film.

Chapter Two

Animated Information Films: Influence and Persuasiveness

This chapter explores the fundamental structure of the animated information film (public and independent) and its application within the contemporary era. Having concentrated on the public information film in Chapter One, in this chapter I begin to investigate the other classifications of information film affiliated with the public information film. This chapter also considers a shift in the perception of animation and I explore the function of the animated public information film as it progressed from the cinema to multiple digital platforms.

Of all models of media progression, the biggest shift for the delivery of the information film was the advancement of television. Replacing cinema and radio, fundamental tools of communication during the Second World War, television offered the opportunity for the information film to not only address society en masse but also be pre-emptive in focusing on reaching its target audience, for example, during children's programming, or broadcasting during the advertisement break of a popular television programme. In 2010, Ofcom, the UK government-approved regulatory and competition authority that regulates television and radio, announced that society spends 'almost half (45 per cent) of their waking hours watching TV, using their mobiles and other communications devices' (Ofcom press release, 19th August 2010). These include mobile phones and personal computers as these platforms also deliver broadcast material. The consumer has also adapted to being able to use a number of tools at the same time and as a result is compressing '8 hours 48 minutes of media consumption into just over seven hours during the average day' (ibid.). The report concluded that television remains the most dominant part of everyday life, with television viewing making up almost half of daily activity.

Over the decades there has been a shift in how television is viewed in the home. During the 1940s and 1950s television was, for the most part, viewed in complete silence (Root, 1986: 27). In 1985, an experiment where families were filmed watching television concluded that varying activities took place within the living room. Half of those were people 'slumped' in front of the television, focusing on what was being

broadcast, while others remained ‘oblivious to the fact that the television is on at all’ (ibid.). James Watson, discussing the varying activities undertaken while watching television suggests that:

It seems that we as audience do an amazing number of things while watching TV, from eating dinner to knitting jumpers, from listening to music or doing homework to kissing and vacuum cleaning. On the face of it this would seem to indicate that, because we are not concentrating hard – at least some of the time – we are not being strongly influenced (Watson, 1998: 61).

Watson claims that it is possible that when an item of interest to the viewer is broadcast the response may be different from what is anticipated and could, in fact, be influential. Television or radio may be ‘switched on’ to generate background noise or to pass the time whilst doing other activities around the home. Although, that is not to say that the viewer is not taking in information, as Root suggests:

That we are doing other things in front of the set doesn’t necessarily mean that we aren’t taking in anything from the programmes. Everyday experience tells us that it is quite possible to keep an eye on a meal and watch the news, or even to stand in the kitchen and follow a drama showing in the living room from what is said on the soundtrack (Root, 1986: 27).

In contrast to the 1950s, where silent viewing of the television was undertaken, the television has become a part of family life. It ‘speaks’ over other conversations, is listened to from another room, and offers some relief to parents of young children as a babysitter. Live television can now even be paused to allow the viewer to answer the telephone. As a result of its popularity, television is deemed one of the most suitable means of communicating information through film. However, television has to compete with the advancement of other communication tools. Smart phones, the Internet, radio and online viewing services, such as the BBC’s iPlayer and Channel 4’s ‘4onDemand’, which enable a viewer to watch television online, are just as popular. All of this raises elements of complexity in ensuring that information deemed appropriate or necessary for the public even reaches its target audience and can fulfil its persuasive aims.

Other considerations within the context of an information film are the shifts in how an information film impacts its viewers. During the Second World War, and within the confinements of a cinema auditorium, the public information film would have been understood as a ‘stimulus-response’ model (Chapman, 1998: 3), also known as the

‘hypodermic needle model’ or ‘magic bullet’ method of communication. Chapman suggests that the spectator is ‘affected not only by what he or she sees on the screen but also by the behavior and reactions of other audience’ (ibid.). Spectators will accept the information being screened to them, as it remains the only form of information available.

Collective viewing of a public information film may also result in peer pressure to act on messages and make the changes being asked of them. Due to the fact that a cinema audience would vary in age, sex, race and social and cultural attitudes, this method of communication carried the risk of limited success. This was certainly reflected in the results recorded by the Mass Observation Report, which for the most part documented the fact that the public either acknowledged and supported or became insulted and frustrated by the information film they had recently viewed.

In shifting from cinema to television, Root suggests ‘the hypodermic needle’ model is sustained, claiming, ‘Television, it says, is like a drug; a one-way process affecting those it is administered to in a similar and predictable manner. There is no room for thought or resistance and no space for the viewer to make creative use of television’ (Root, 1986: 13). Root adds that ‘ideas are *injectable* into a *subject* in much the same way that a chemical can be injected into a laboratory rat’ (ibid.). However, Root’s observation that television disables any form of ability to assess and decide how to react when viewing is problematic. To begin with, television offers more of an opportunity than wartime cinema to focus information films directly on their intended audience. For example, an information film that is specific to children crossing the road has the opportunity to be broadcast on a dedicated children’s television channel. Additionally the progression of television as a model of communication has resulted in society shifting its expectations as to what they will accept. Watson suggests:

Hardly anything captures the change in the moral logic of television from the 1950s to the present better than the rise of audience research, a central feature of which was the realization that television could no longer reference the audience as if it were a unified and uniform whole (Watson, 2009: 122).

Furthermore:

Neither could it exercise moral authority without exposing itself to charges of representing only a particular elite stratum of society. Put simply, broadcasting had lost the right of cultural imposition on its audiences and was increasingly obliged to investigate and understand them (ibid.).

This suggests that the information film, within the context of television delivery, is dependent on the viewer's assistance and understanding to achieve success, challenging the 'hypodermic needle' model of 'one size fits all'. To communicate successfully the information film needs to adopt the 'two-step method', as follows.

Firstly, the film needs to consider 'precisely who we are attempting to influence' (Shelton, 2004: 100), fundamentally ensuring that the message is 'relevant to audience understanding and acceptance, based in large measure on audience background, attitude, comprehension, motivation, need and approval' (ibid.). Shelton also discusses the use of empathy, which will be explored later in the chapter.

Secondly, the two-step method is dependent on the 'opinion leader', who will relate information they think is useful to others. For example, celebrities or teachers may speak on behalf of a campaign to generate further awareness, and public spaces such as libraries and swimming baths might display posters or loan DVDs of broadcast media.

Shifting from the 'hypodermic needle' model and the 'two-step' method, a third paradigm, the 'multi-flow' pattern, properly reflects the contemporary landscape of media communication and the complex environment to which the information film must adjust. The ability to enable an information film to reach its exact target audience, engage with individuals and encourage innovation is problematic. The Internet and the development of social networks paved the way for information to be provided all the time. YouTube, a video platform that enables instant broadcast and response, has become a valuable communication tool. Individuals can share information and answers to questions become available in an instant, with opportunities for a group or individual to communicate to a global mass.

Contemporary animated public information film and independent film work within the context of the 'two-step' and 'multi-flow' methods. Animation has certainly benefited from advances in exhibition platforms as related websites, commercial pop-ups, digital picture books and virtual edutainment all play a major part in everyday living now.

Contemporary Animation

Developing technologies, advances in software and new digital arts have re-defined animation in recent years and its identity as a film medium has grown considerably. Contemporary animation has evolved to become an equal counterpart with live action. Wells and Hardstaff claim: ‘In the contemporary era animation has been reabsorbed into debates about filmmaking in general. It is no longer considered a “second cousin” to live action, or merely understood as “the cartoon” or “the experimental film”’ (2008: 6). Wells and Hardstaff may be correct, but this may only be the case in relation to discussions within film studies and among film critics and film historians. The majority of the population may still consider animation to be a ‘cartoon’ and merely children’s entertainment.¹

Animation remains predominately a form of entertainment in children’s television, with multiple channels dedicated to the ‘cartoon’ 24 hours a day. Other contributions from the animation industry for the most part remain within the context of television advertising, feature films, special and visual effects, music videos and the games industry. Such is the popularity and growth of animation during the last decade that in 2001 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced a category for the Best Animated Feature, which was followed by a similar BAFTA category in 2006. The larger American studios have had phenomenal success, with Dreamworks and Disney/Pixar leading the way with winning features. Disney/Pixar was awarded the 2010 Oscar with their feature *Up* (Pete Docter, Bob Peterson, USA, 2009). There has also been some British success, with Bristol-based studio Aardman Animations winning in 2006 with *Wallace & Gromit in The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (Nick Park, Steve Box, UK, 2005).²

The development of 3D stereographic films has become a key aspect of Hollywood cinema, and requires the viewer to wear specialist glasses, with recent animation titles including *How to Train your Dragon* (Dean DeBlois, Chris Saunders, USA, 2010) and *Coraline* (Henry Selick, USA, 2009). Initially the only place to watch a 3D film would have been at one of the specialist screening theatres with the IMAX format; however, multiplex cinemas are now able to screen 3D.

In addition to the success of such films is the related merchandise, which has been created for series such as those featuring The Simpsons, Beavis and Butthead and Wallace and Gromit, which have all achieved high levels of fandom. High street stores sell items such as socks, ties, boxer shorts, t-shirts and mugs, all of which acknowledge the individual owner as a supporter of an animated character and their ideologies. There is also the huge level of success for merchandise related to children's animation figures, such as Dora the Explorer, Peppa Pig, Postman Pat and Shaun the Sheep, with roadshows and live events attended by over-excited dancing children. Most shopping malls house Disney stores selling merchandise and fancy dress costumes of leading animated characters. Essentially there is no doubt that animation is currently a successful and popular medium, and an accepted part of society's enjoyment of the moving image. However, audiences of families and the children fundamentally drive, for the most part, the success of animation.

The Contemporary Animated Public Information Film

Adding to the popularity of animation within society, animated public information films are still commissioned by the COI. However, there has been a drastic decline in the number of productions compared to the period of the Second World War and the 1970s, with live action now being the most common approach. In relation to animation this could be due to a number of reasons.

Firstly, there is the cost of producing animation. Even though animation techniques have progressed, animation still remains an expensive medium to produce. Secondly, animation remains a lengthy process, making it a difficult medium to be considered by the government on issues that must generate information quickly, for example, the outbreak of swine flu or hazardous driving conditions due to bad weather. However, animation remains a popular contributor to information delivery.

Independent Information Film

Independent information films differ from public information films, in that they seek funding outside of government departments. This category of information film lends itself more towards charity and privately funded campaigns and, alongside government agencies, leading institutes, charities and broadcasting bodies such as the

BBC, Nickelodeon, MTV and Amnesty International all use animation successfully to support their campaigns.

The independent information film, which is often funded by a charity, promotes (or advertises) the charity, with the hope that it can persuade the viewer to donate. Animation director Sarah Cox, who has made a number of films for charities, states: 'I think animation can be a very effective visual communication tool. It often works without the need for dialogue and that can be very powerful' (interview, 29th April 2008).

As with the government public information films, some independent information films choose to attach their campaigns to the voice or appearance of a celebrity. Leeds Animation Workshop, which needs to produce at least two films a year, seek funding independently, with everyone involved in attempting to raise funds, from the scriptwriter to the background artists. They have used celebrities to narrate their films, including: Alan Bennett in *No Offence* (director unknown, UK, 1996) and *Through the Glass Ceiling* (director unknown, UK, 1994); actor and comedian Lenny Henry in *Teenage Grief* (director unknown, UK, 2007); actress Alison Steadman narrating *Not too young to grieve* (director unknown, UK, 2005); and children's poet Michael Rosen voicing *Grief in the family* (director unknown, UK, 2002).³

Hector's Home, a campaign sponsored by Texaco, was commissioned to generate awareness of road safety to children aged six to sixteen. The films involved Aardman Animations, Arthur Cox Productions and advertising agency VCCP. The first stage of the campaign was to produce books, which were later developed into animated films, five in total: *Hector and the Gang of Ghastly, Ghostly Ghosts* (Sally Arthur, Sarah Cox, UK, 2008), *Hector and the Bewildering Strange Road Signs* (Sally Arthur, UK, 2008), *Hector and the Cross, Cross-eyed Zebra* (Sarah Cox, UK, 2008), *Hector and the Hairy, Scary Tarantula's Tentacle* (Sally Arthur, Sarah Cox, UK, 2008) and *Hector and the Talking Telepathic Helmet* (Sally Arthur, UK, 2008). The campaign began in November 2006 as the company felt this was the most suitable time of the year to release a road safety campaign, when the clocks had gone back and the nights became darker. In addition, the company released 'The Ghostly Gowns' which were reflective jackets for children (of course you needed to purchase some fuel). The campaign also includes a website, www.hectorshome.com, which is interactive and

encourages the user to follow Hector as he travels around his hometown on his bike learning about road safety. The website also allows the user to download the episodes (see Figure 01).



Figure 01: *Hector's Home* website (www.hectorshome.com)

Other charities have also used animation in their campaigns, for example Oxfam's *Face the Music* (Ian Gouldstone, UK, 2008), UNICEF's *Best Interest of the Child* (director unknown, UK, 1980), Amnesty International's *Audition* (Daniel Cohen, UK, 2006), the NSPCC's *NSPCC Hands* (Caroline Melis, UK, 2008), and Action for Children's *Emily* (Dan Sumich, UK, 2009). In 2008, Oxfam's 'Injustice' campaign was supported by a forty-second animated short directed by British studio Passion Pictures. The film *Roar for Humankind* (Marc Reisbig, UK, 2008) shows a granny walking along a street, slightly dark and gothic. The granny turns a corner to witness a monster filling the street with the wording 'Injustice'. The granny figure confronts the monster by roaring with light streaming from her face. Other human characters, witnessing the granny, do the same, while the narrator asks the viewer to 'Be aware, be moved, be involved'. The film's fundamental message is a request for the viewer to get involved, to shout out when they may find an injustice. Witnessing an elderly

figure, at first alone in her fight, but then joined by those around her, is a call for arms. The charity is illustrating their fears, and believes animation is persuasive in its method to communicate that.

Even in an era when people confront animation on a daily basis, online, in games and in advertising, as well as in specific film and TV environments, animation is still considered a preferred method of communication by leading organisations. This could be in part due to the ability of animation to re-invent itself and re-engage in sensitive or on-going themes, such as the environment and road safety.

Awareness Limitations

It is important to consider whether there are any particular limitations in making an information film, either in relation to content or aesthetics.

Unquestionably, there have been claims that the government's public information films initially compartmentalised society during the Second World War. Some years later the government came under criticism with the live-action film *The Finishing Line* (John Krish, UK, 1977). The film, which rather gruesomely warns children of the dangers of playing on railway lines, was removed from television broadcast in 1979 after public concerns about the effect the film was having on younger viewers.⁴ This raises the question – is there a limit to how much a viewer is able to accept without being offended?

There have been animated awareness films on domestic violence, for example; one of the most recent was commissioned by Amnesty International, called *The Audition* (Daniel Cohen, UK, 2006). The film is a non-traditional model of animation, using pixilated hands as the main action.⁵ Voiced by well-known British actor Joanna Lumley, playing the part of a female casting director, the film begins by referring to the clenched hands as the 'fist face of domestic violence' and reminding them that they are there to audition to be the 'next poster boy of painful abuse' (see Figure 02). Patrick Stewart voices one of the hands; at first he appears polite, which deems him unsuitable for the role according to Lumley, even though he claims to be 'classically trained'.



Figure 02: *The Audition* (Daniel Cohen, UK, 2006)

Lumley makes some suggestions as to how they can improve their performances after the other hands fail their auditions but is then interrupted by an impatient Stewart, who notes: ‘Did you know that on average you can beat a woman 35 times before she calls the police?’ His temper increases, and Lumley becomes more apologetic. The film changes tone and becomes grey as the fist of Stewart thumps the wooden stage floor in anger. Once calmed, the fist releases a finger and with a circular apologetic motion Stewart says, in an unpleasant manner, ‘I’m so sorry, I don’t know what came over me, can we do another take ... dear?’ The film is not pleasant to watch, and the sound effects of scraping wood, scratching and banging enhance the animation. The film is currently only available to be viewed online as part of Amnesty TV and has been viewed over 35,000 times. Additionally the viewer can stream a short direct-to-camera piece from Patrick Stewart who talks about his time as a child growing up with domestic violence. In the film he asks that the government focus on domestic violence awareness as much as it does on smoking and drinking campaigns.

The children’s charity the NSPCC uses animation for a number of their campaigns, for example *Hands* (Caroline Melis, UK, 2008) and *Bubble* (director unknown, UK, 2005). One of the most successful was *NSPCC Cartoon*, alternative title *Children Don’t Bounce Back* (Frank Budgen, UK, 2002), which combines animation and live action. The film has only two characters – a male adult figure and a child cartoon

character. The film shows the cartoon character being either thrown across a room and hitting the wall or having a cigarette burnt into his face. Each of these actions has an animated consequence. Hitting the wall results in a large comical bump forming on the top of his head, which the cartoon character pushes back in. The cigarette sets the boy's head on fire, and in a Tex Avery comical style the cartoon boy races from the kitchen and flings his head into the kitchen sink to extinguish the fire.

The film concludes with the adult entering the cartoon boy's bedroom. He picks him up and begins to violently shake the cartoon boy, who through fear begins to wet himself. Disgusted, the adult drops the boy, who runs out of the room, chased by the adult who then flings the boy down the stairs. The character bounces; hitting the wall to sound effects like comical 'boings' and springs uncoiling. The figure falls behind the back of a chair. Panning up and over the chair, we see that the cartoon figure has been replaced by a real young boy, with the wording 'Real Children Don't Bounce Back'.

The film, which is only forty-five seconds in length, and is filled with comical sound effects and animation performances that would not look out of place in a Tom and Jerry short; but here animation is the most suitable method for the NSPCC as it would seem far too disturbing for the charity to broadcast the physical abuse of an actual child.

It is clear that animation is used in some instances to shield the viewer, but to maintain some level of persuasive awareness of an issue without causing discomfort during viewing, which in turn would have resulted in a negative, and potentially dismissive, response.

The Younger Audience

Animation can address disturbance and difficulties faced by children and families. *Matters2Me* (director unknown, UK, 2007) is a series of animated films produced by the UK's leading children protection experts, Mark Williams-Thomas, David Wilson and Marilyn Hawes, for children aged between six and sixteen years. The films' main objective is to speak to children about the dangers of grooming – a term used in cases

where children are at risk of sexual abuse from an adult they either know already or develop a friendship with. The films' storylines take place within a community and relate to real cases. The animation is basic and visually leans towards a comic book style, with very little actual movement in place (see Figures 03 and 04). This allows the viewer to focus on the action and vocabulary, and not be distracted by any action/movement that could be taking place in the background.



Figures 03 and 04: *Matters2Me* (director unknown, UK, 2007)

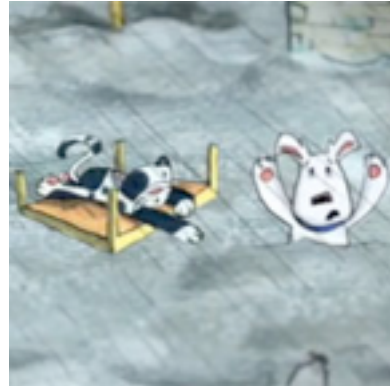
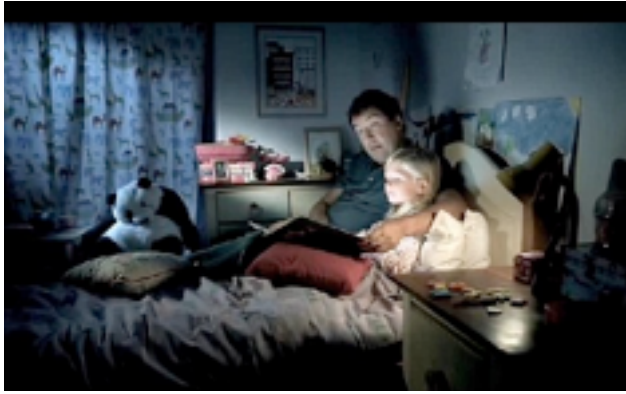
British actress Julie Walters initiates the spectator to a heightened awareness in *Matters2Me* with an introduction at the beginning of the films, and this is the only human interaction on the DVD. Mark Williams-Thomas, who fully funded the films, found using animation a 'huge learning curve' as it was something they had never attempted before (Mark Williams-Thomas, email correspondence, October 2008). He also suggested, when asked about the current need for information films, that *Matters2Me* 'would be perfect to be running on a weekday evening, or on a weekend'. He recognised there was also a decline not only in information being available to children on television but, more importantly, in television viewing where all family members watched together.

Williams-Thomas also speaks about very little on child protection and grooming being taught within schools. He argues that what was being discussed in the schools was deemed too difficult for some children to understand, and he felt that teachers were unclear of the correct procedures of instruction and information delivery and, as a result, he hoped that *Matters2Me* 'would bridge that gap'. The deciding factor as to

why *Matters2Me* was commissioned as an animated film project was due to ‘the sensitive nature when dealing with child protection issues; it’s far easier to transfer across to people when you use animation rather than faces of individuals they may recognise and associate with, and may be someone they know’ (interview by email and voice recordings, 6th February 2008).

The animated action never shows abuse actually taking place, and can be watched in its entirety or as individual storylines. *Matters2Me* endorses the use of animation when addressing children on the serious issue of abuse for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is no risk of revealing the identity of the children who are speaking about their experiences; even though the film might have been commissioned as a live-action film, actors would have played the characters, and animation can remove the risk of stereotyping a real child accordingly. Additionally, the simple design of the characters and the visual narrative, with its variety of cars, houses and clothing, removes the risk of debate and criticism resulting from focusing on one representative class or culture.

There is a necessity to be sensitive to children and how they might receive information films. The government’s environmental ‘Act on CO2’ campaign produced a public information film, *Bedtime Story* (director unknown, UK, 2009), combining animation and live action. Broadcast on television, the film addressed the issues of climate change and predictions of what could happen if action wasn’t taken. The films played upon how the family would be affected by climate change and the dim future for the next generations. The film begins with a father reading a night-time story to his young daughter. Using the images from the book, the animation begins to show how there is no water in some parts of the world, and how houses and animals are drowning in the rising waters and the rain in others. The story promotes the idea that adults must make a change or the children will live with the consequences. The story continues to explain how changes can be made, with one image showing an animated child turning off a light (see Figures 05 and 06).



Figures 05 and 06: *Bedtime Story* (director unknown, UK, 2009)

The final line of the film is of the daughter asking the father ‘Is there a happy ending?’ The film closes with the voiceover saying ‘It’s up to us how the story ends.’ The government short received 939 complaints claiming that ‘the ad was political in nature’ and that ‘the theme and content of the ad, for example, the dog drowning in the storybook and the depiction of the young girl to whom the story was being read, could be distressing for children who saw it’.⁶ (ASA, Advertising Standards Authority, 17th March 2010). The animation is not documenting reality, but is being used imaginatively to visualise the future. The film received complaints for being scientifically incorrect and, although those making the complaints might have limited knowledge of science, the number of complaints received raises the question of how far a public information film can go and still be accepted by the viewing public. This suggests that other issues need to be addressed concerned with ensuring that the information film focuses on its target audience, without causing offence or discrimination, and that for the most part it remains factual. Even in as metaphoric a form of expression as animation, this remains problematic.

Documenting Reality and Information Impact

The British government continues to commission animated public information films, for the most part focusing on issues experienced by children, for example, the road safety film *Tale of the Roads* (director unknown, UK, 2008) and the firework safety film *Bright Spark* (director unknown, UK, 2009). However, as noted again by Williams-Thomas, very little public information delivery is in schools.

This view is supported by the results from questionnaires completed by parents in my informal sample. When asked to comment on what information their children had

access to, parents found that they had no knowledge of any information/awareness campaigns. When questioned further on specific subjects discussed within the classroom, such as online safety or healthy eating, 50% of parents were unsure.

One such subject in my questionnaire – I will address this later in my methodology section – was ‘stranger danger’, the contemporary address of the long-established ‘Don’t Talk to Strangers’ campaigns of the past. The results returned with an almost unanimous ‘yes’ to a question about whether this issue was still relevant, and parents strongly supported the making of an information film on the subject. Not since the 1970s animated series *Charley Says* has the COI commissioned work that focused on stranger danger and the series includes the only COI films that address the subject. In the contemporary era of mass media and access to varying platforms of communication, it is assumed that all topics are readily covered, but it is clear that there is a need to update some public information films to raise awareness and stimulate further discussion.

Contextualising Practice

In 2002, two ten-year-old friends, Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells, went missing, and their disappearance became one of Britain’s most high profile investigations, referred to as the Soham Murders. News channels broadcast 24 hours a day, and to some degree employ the notion of ‘storyness’, which is described in media theory as a term for communicating news that resembles a storyline, ‘employing narrative forms and techniques’ (Watson, 1998: 306).

This informed the Soham case. Members of the public who knew the families involved were interviewed, as were schoolteachers, shop owners and any other community members who could talk about the on-going case. Consequently, the news channels developed a narrative, seemingly lending accounts a documentary authenticity.

It would have been difficult for children not to have witnessed the events due to the mass media interest in the case. The attention would have raised concerns with parents, and may have offered them the opportunity to speak to their children about the dangers of speaking to strangers, or of strangers entering homes without consent.

I witnessed this myself with my friend who had a daughter the same age as the Soham girls. The child wanted to go and play in the park opposite to where I lived. Normally this would have been fine, but on this occasion my friend would only allow her daughter to visit the park if her elder brother went with her. We discussed the case and the reasons why my friend felt concerned about her daughter's safety. Aware of the safety issue, BBC *Newsround*, a current affairs television programme for children, offered online advice to their younger viewers who may have become upset or frightened by the events. The representation of such events through the wide variety of media platforms available brought the issue of stranger danger to prominence. The topic of 'stranger danger' is of specific interest in my own practice, but first I wish to address the role of children in animated information films in general.

BBC *Newsround* commissioned a series of films, which explored 'hard hitting subjects' relating to children's lives (Kez Margrie, interview, 21st April 2008). The first was *The Wrong Trainers* (UK, 2008), a series of five three-minute animated documentaries of children living in poverty. Each of the films has its own distinctive style as Margrie commissioned four different animation studios, largely due to the closure of BBC Animation.⁷ The studios worked with an audio track, which Margrie had recorded with the children. This was then animated. The fact that the commissioner at CBBC wanted to introduce tough issues to children suggests that they could view, accept and deal with such ideas. The decision to use animation was mainly due to the fact that the films were for children, and Margrie was insistent that she didn't want to use any adults or experts in the films. Furthermore, she had no desire to use blanked out faces, preferring to use animation. The films were screened in schools and youth and community clubs, and charities have used the films for training purposes (ibid.).

Is 'Common Sense' a Dirty Term?

The term 'common sense' in the English dictionary is defined as 'good sense and sound judgment in practical matters: [as in] use your common sense' (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/common-sense?q=common+sense>). David Mellor, a government MP, declared that the depiction of violence on television had an influence on viewers. Despite admitting to limited quantitative research on the subject, he suggested that 'common sense leads us

to suspect that a constant diet ... of violence ... can encourage repetition and encourage young people to engage in violence themselves' (Root, 1986: 13). Moreover, the Central Office of Information is not afraid to use the term, with a recent press release saying 'We want to promote a common sense approach to health and safety' (COI press release, 8th July 2009).

The wording 'sensible' is also used within the context of public information films. *Brenda's Poisonous Pastime* (Ian Bell, UK, 2009), dealing with a health issue, concludes the film with wording 'Sensible with the sauce – this public information film has been brought to you by NHS Choice' (see Figures 07 and 08). The 2D animated film uses humorous animation to illustrate how Brenda exceeds the weekly alcohol units recommended by the NHS. Animated and directed by Ian Bell, the film was part of the NHS Choices cartoon campaign.



Figures 07 and 08: *Brenda's Poisonous Pastime* (Ian Bell, UK, 2009)

The term 'sensible' has similarly been linked to the government's NHS campaign 'Change4Life' (directors unknown, UK, 2009), a series of ten stop-motion animated short films by Aardman Animations. The campaign's main objective was to educate families and individuals about food portion sizes. Additionally, it was a strategy highlighting how exercises should be undertaken by all of the family as a means of reducing the obesity crisis. Foresight, a government science and technological research department, supported it. The campaign slogan 'Eat well, Move more, Live longer' received considerable media response in relation to the campaign, as did the government's decision to broadcast the information films before the animated cartoon series *The Simpsons* over a period of three months at a cost of £640,000.

Gillian Merron, the then Minister of State for Public Health, supported the decision, claiming it to be a 'popular and engaging way to get the message to real-life families

about a simple way of improving their diet and activity for a healthier lifestyle' (N. Rigby, Guardian online article, *The Simpsons' obesity drive*, 6th October 2009). The government also come under criticism for using the tagline 'Supporting the Simpsons: Sometimes' (A. Martin, Mail on Sunday, *DoH! Government selects doughnut-loving Simpsons to front new healthy living campaign*, 7th October 2009).

However, the campaign took advantage of accessing a mass audience due to the popularity of *The Simpsons*, which has an average of eleven million viewers. The series was sponsored by fast food chain Domino's Pizza until the company's adverts were removed by Ofcom due to them breaching the rules of junk food advertising to children. The overweight doughnut-loving father, Homer Simpson, does little to support the notion of healthy eating, implying that he is being made an example of, as are overweight viewers of *The Simpsons* who relate to Homer and his love of fast food.

What the Change4Life campaign and its supporters seem to overlook at times is that the complexity of obesity cannot be addressed by delivering media messages that pin the blame on the individual for failing to adopt a 'healthy lifestyle', no matter how you try to flight the message into a positive one (Rigby, 2009).

The COI publication 'How public service advertising works' (2008) discusses 'proximate media', where a campaign needs decide what the most suitable time is to target its audience. Owing to obesity becoming an epidemic within Britain, the campaign was reliant on it being viewed by large numbers.

Despite the magnitude of an epidemic, a lack of funding and support restricts campaign success. In 2010, the British coalition government announced that a £75 million budget would no longer be available to support the 'Change4Life' campaign and the then Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, stated, 'We have to make Change4life less a government campaign, more a social movement. Less paid for by government, more backed by business. Less about costly advertising, more about supporting family and individual responses' (G. Charles, *Marketing* magazine, 7th July 2010).

The 'Change4Life' campaign is a clear example of why the animated public information film is still relevant in the contemporary era. It is highly pertinent in encouraging my own practice, which is informed by my understanding of strategies

employed in animated public information films and their social and screening contexts during the war/early post-war period; television in the period between the 1950s and the 1980s; and the mass-mediated cross-platform delivery era from the 1990s into the 2000s.

Hidden Identity

The Law Centre's Federation (LCF), a non-profit legal organisation that offers legal support to the disadvantaged, commissioned a number of animated short films to highlight the work they do. Due to the sensitivity, and the legal restrictions of cases, *Jason's Story* (Greg McLeod, Myles McLeod, UK, 2009) and *Sandra and Robert's Story* (Greg McLeod, Myles McLeod, UK, 2009), directed by the Brothers McLeod and produced by Studio AKA, employ animation to protect people's identities, thus removing any sense of stereotyping certain social groups.



Figure 09: *Jason's Story* (Greg McLeod, Myles McLeod, UK, 2009)

Jason, although human-like in design, has two buttons for eyes; he wears a shirt and tie, and is made from fabric (see Figure 09). When he is animated, the charity can promote and generate awareness without risking stereotyping homelessness and poverty.⁸

Action for Children, a charity that supports vulnerable children suffering from poverty and neglect, has also used animation in their campaign films, which tell the stories of children who have faced difficult situations. The films maintain a documentary

sensibility, but animation removes any factual specificity from them. Fiona Lydon from the charity comments, ‘We wanted to be able to tell the true stories of transformation in children, but to show their faces would be difficult on national TV. The animation allowed us to literally and figuratively illustrate their stories while retaining their anonymity’ (interview via email correspondence, 9th April 2009).

Charities’ campaigns are evident examples of animation using ‘types’, and the preservation of anonymity communicates important facts and information that is not simply about individuals but offers universality and a generic approach to all children, although this too has problems.



Figure 10: *Dan's Story* (Dan Sumich, UK, 2009)

One of the Action for Children’s films, *Meet Dan* (Dan Sumich, UK, 2009), exploring the effects of autism, came under criticism, with complaints forwarded to the ASA (see Figure 10). A proportion of the complaints were submitted by individual viewers, and from Outreach, an organisation that supports and campaigns for the right of autistic people. Eleven viewers complained that the film was misleading as it suggested that autism could be cured and other viewers found the film ‘offensive and distressing’, as a negative depiction of an autistic child as ‘a monster’.

Lydon claims that the monster is not Dan’s autism, but how Dan viewed himself and his behaviour before he sought support for his condition. As a result, the charity felt strongly that ‘it would have been wrong for us to censor him or his ideas in any way’

(Action for Children, 28th January 2009). Additional online comments in response to the film and Lydon's statement are logged on the Action for Children's blog page, and vary from approval of the campaign, to frustration and aversion.

One response to Lydon's comments with regard to the censorship of Dan's ideas was: 'What a cop-out. He is a child, and by definition has communication problems. You are the communication professionals. Helping him get a clear message across isn't censorship!' (Sara, 13:02, 9th February 2009). Mary claimed, 'I found the advert most distasteful to anyone who has autism to be portrayed by "cartoons"' (Mary, 22.02, 3rd February 2009). Her comment again raises the question of a 'cartoon' being associated with entertainment. However, as discussed above, animation often generates awareness on subjects that are difficult to portray. Dan's identity is protected, as animation documents his struggle in treating his condition and the supportive role of the charity. It is crucial, then, to think about *how* an individual's experience and point of view may be translated sensitively into a common yet politicised perspective pertinent to a broad audience.

A key aspect of constructing an engaging piece and prompting audience awareness is the use of humour. Aardman have employed Nick Park's successful *Creature Comforts* (1989) principle for a number of campaigns to prompt amusement and convey messages. Firstly, there was the charity commissioned series *Creature Discomforts* and then *Animal Planet* for the Discovery Channel. *Creature Discomforts*, the series of films commissioned by the Leonard Cheshire Disability charity, features twelve characters in total, and is based on unscripted views from disabled people; it later included outtakes and additional animations for online games (email correspondence, Peter Dickens, Brand Manager, Leonard Cheshire Disability, 28th May 2009).

Watch Me (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008) features a British bulldog in a wheelchair on a bridge. In the background, lemmings wearing helmets can be seen jumping off the bridge, bungee jumping. Other films include *Stick* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008), *Rubbish* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008), *Sweet Shop* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008), *Sex & Relationship – Sex* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008), *Sneaking Up* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008), *School – Education* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008) and *School – Lesson* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008).



Figure 11: *Sweet Shop* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008)

These films maintain Park's narrative model of mixing entertaining animated activity as foreground and background imagery, counterpointing the sometimes-poignant vocal track. For the most part, the main action takes place in the foreground, with the character speaking directly into the microphone. The background is usually filled with smaller pockets of action: a waving figure that realises it is on camera, or an accident. Park's method is based on his love of camera mishaps, the person who trips up in the background, or the farmer talking to a current affairs programme while his cows behind him attempt to mate (Wells, 2002: 60). In *Sweet Shop* (Steve Harding-Hill, UK, 2008) two small childlike tortoises attempt to climb the difficult steps to enter the sweet shop, while the foreground tortoise on crutches discusses his experiences of living with a disability (see Figure 11). This type of humour is popular in British society, with weekly *You've Been Framed* episodes and constant access to similar material on YouTube.

Aesthetically, there is a difference between *Creature Discomforts* and that of *Dan's Story*, although they both address the issue of disability and both encompass documentary elements in that they are animated to recorded and actual persons. *Dan's Story* is much darker; the animation is frantic and scribbles when Dan talks about his autism. The illustrations become much softer and joined up when he speaks about seeking help and 'becoming a better person'. *Creature Discomforts* has a more humorous take on disability, in that the tried and tested formula of Park's method

entices a comic effect from its viewer. This raises the question of having to consider which method of animation best suits a film's objectives, which I will discuss further in Chapter Three. Additionally, the opposing ends of the two campaigns illustrate the range animation possesses to address an identical message with alternative outcomes. In some cases, charities and studios maintain one recognisable format for their films.

The Leeds Animation Workshop's main objective as a studio is to produce animated films that address issues that are affecting people's lives. Each film is similar in context – 2D illustrations and mostly narrated. Arguably, they make films from the perspective of social workers and political activists, in that they promote change and assist in actually changing things taking place within a family or home. They also support and generate films on women's social experiences. Milena Dragic discusses how they best address this through their films:

We have to be aware of all sorts of issues to do with stereotyping, class, race, gender, disability and positive role models. We make sure that script/storyboard takes into account all of these issues, and represent a broader range of people in the society, and portray women in particularly positive roles (Dragic, questionnaire, 26th November 2007).

New animation techniques, and the growing acceptance of a wide palette of moving image representation, now facilitates a wide range of creative approaches, although the subject matter often requires a realistic referent so that information is accepted. Shelton, who discusses varying levels of realism in information films, claims that, 'At the point of minimum reality, communication by its standard definition, becomes insignificant. The film becomes more an exercise in artistic achievement than a carrier of messages. It's an expression of self-expression' (Shelton, 2004: 62). Certainly this statement describes experimental films such as Len Lye's wartime MOI contributions. However, it also supports a notion that, by default, an information film needs to have a clear and concise level of informed 'reality' for the message to be persuasive and fully understood by its viewer.

An Uncomfortable Issue

The onset of sexual maturity and accompanying approaches to sex education can be an embarrassing time for teenagers, when uncomfortable topics are discussed within the classroom or by parents. The demonstrative nature of graphics and animation

lends itself favourably as an educational tool within a school environment, or as an information film for a public audience.

Alex Comfort's book, *The Joy of Sex* (1972), was purchased by over eight million people, and was seen as the first modern sex manual. During the 1970s, under the Conservative government, there was a decline in the delivery of sex education, but it increased during the 1980s due to the AIDS epidemic and the government contributed £20 million to the campaign, with £5 million available for public information films (McGahan, 2009: 3).

With the development of the Internet, a vast amount of information on sex is now available, and hundreds of short films can be viewed on YouTube. A University of Michigan research project investigating the content and accessibility of sex education on the Internet found that online availability had some usefulness, especially for young people looking for information anonymously (Smith, 2000: 693). However, there was a risk that without the correct online searches teenagers, or younger children, could accidentally access pornography and Smith notes that 'The presence of pornography represents a potential unintended consequence of using the Internet for sex education' (Smith, 2000: 693). Nonetheless, the report concluded that the Internet was a valuable tool for teenagers to access information on sex education (Smith, 2000: 693).

Despite the Internet, television remains the most prominent platform to deliver safer sex campaigns. In 2008, Channel 4 ran a weeklong series on sex education, receiving over 2.6 million viewers.⁹ The episodes filmed teenagers viewing graphic images of the effects of sexually transmitted diseases, and showed how to fit a condom correctly. This represents a massive shift in the tone and approach to sex-education since the days of Richard Taylor's animated COI short *Some of Your Bits Ain't Nice* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1983), a film that addressed personal hygiene. Even further back, wartime shorts and posters on sex education, which for the most part focused on military personnel, often portrayed women as sexually promiscuous, for example, *Six Little Jungle Boys* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1944). One poster by the MOI read, 'Hello boy friend, coming MY way?' followed by the text 'The 'easy' girlfriend spreads Syphilis and Gonorrhoea, which unless properly treated may result in blindness, insanity, paralysis, premature death' (1943–1944). In contrast, the most

recent government campaign, 'Let's Talk about Contraception' displays speech bubbles and animated imagery to illustrate the conversations between young people talking about safer sex (see Figure 12).



Figure 12: *Let's Talk about Contraception* (director unknown, UK, 2009)

NHS Choices has a large selection of short films that can be viewed online with a series of animated films that explore teenage issues. *Growing Up* (director unknown, UK, 2008) and *Teens in Love* (director unknown, UK, 2008) combine animation and live action, with subtitles (see Figures 13 and 14). The films record children discussing what puberty means to them. The films were not free from the giggling and embarrassment of those being filmed as they openly discuss menstrual cycles and wet dreams. There is also a doctor, who in each film explains the changes that are taking place as puberty develops. The use of animation subtly illustrates the changing shapes of children's bodies as they leave primary school and head into their secondary education. In addition, the fact that the films are available to view online means that they can be watched in private, if and when they are needed.



Figure 13: *Growing Up* (director unknown, UK, 2008)



Figure 14: *Teens in Love* (director unknown, UK, 2008)

In 2007, UNICEF, a children's charity, developed a 'World Fit for Children' – an online, second life, virtual reality world. The campaign then asked teenagers ranging from thirteen to seventeen to develop an online world that highlighted issues of children's rights. UNICEF took advantage of technological developments and utilised the multi-flow method of communications, as did *Battlefront*, a Channel 4-led programme, which was commissioned to create an opportunity for 'Young people on a mission to change the world'. With members aged between fourteen and twenty-one, the *Battlefront* objectives are to select a number of campaigns important to individuals of that age group, and to offer an opportunity for them to work with a mentor to develop their cause. Campaigns tackled issues from *Give Autism a Chance* headed by Bella Tommey to *Keeping it Safe Online* by Carney Bonner.

MTV and Nickelodeon, young adults' and children's television channels respectively, promoted a competition asking for children to make a thirty-second commercial for children on eating healthily. The winner, Chris Harrison, aged 13, chose to represent his pet gerbil, suggesting that his pet needed exercise, food and water to stay healthy. The final thirty-second animated film was screened on Nickelodeon and terrestrial television, and was fully supported by the COI. Alison Hoad, on discussing ways of reducing negative behaviour within the context of a public information film, confirms that there are currently more opportunities for peers to help each other, claiming: 'We have seen a shift from information providers, and the next step may well be providing the forums and tools to enable people to help, support and mentor each other' (Lannon, 2007: 63). This trend and shift validates the claim that information delivery is developing into a more collaborative practice. The advancement of free software and access to computers, even the use of film software on smart phones, is opening opportunities for a proactive involvement of individuals to develop and produce information films supporting their own personal views and those of others.

Evaluating the practice of information films and engaging in primary research with the people who created them has enabled me to focus upon key approaches, topics and experience, which I have brought into my own practice. In Chapter Three I consolidate this with a broad overview of 'information' in such films, identify a particular animation language of expression, and discuss how these perspectives inform my own work practice and process.

Chapter Three

The Practice of Animated Information Films

Public Service advertising often faces the challenge of promoting people to do something they aren't already doing but should be (Lannon, 2007 36).

This chapter discusses my practice and my animated information film project, *Tell Someone*. The research material in Volume 2 of the thesis consists of three booklets. The first contains some of the development work related to creating Sally Sense, Snitch and the other characters, mood boards and brainstorming. The second is a fully coloured storyboard and shooting script. The third is a production bible. A CD-ROM and memory stick contains animatic, script development, final script and treatment relating to *Tell Someone*.

During the early stages of my research it became clear that there was very little material on the actual procedure of creating animated information films. As a result the archival research I undertook to identify the various approaches applied in public information films became invaluable. It helped me to identify paradigms in message-making films, which find some accordance with one of the first key essays defining such films, by McClusky in 1947. To contemporise some of the ideas expressed in McClusky's defining paradigm, I undertook primary research with filmmakers, producers and those who worked within the framework of public and independent information films. Many of the films discussed in Chapter Two became highly instrumental in my own creative choices.

Although I had already decided to make a 'stranger danger' film, influenced by my recollections of the Soham case, noted in Chapter Two, I conducted some informal primary research by talking to a constituency of parents, who were asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix 5). I must stress that this was not a fundamental aspect of my work, and does not constitute a fully substantiated approach to audience research, but it helped consolidate my choice of subject matter for my film.

During the early stages of research I did not decide on the specific age group that my animated public information film would target, although it became clear that the majority of contemporary animated information films were specifically directed at

children. Very little was being commissioned by the COI, and commissions came mostly from charities such as Action for Children, UNICEF, the RSPCC and the NHS.

Consequently, to facilitate my practice, I decided to draw from the approaches I discovered through studying the history of animated public information films, contemporary approaches of recent filmmakers, the cultural context in which children were being addressed, and my own creative engagement with the theme of ‘stranger danger’. As a result, this chapter explores the key components that need to be considered when producing an animated public information film or an independent animated film and I explore decisions contributing to the development of ‘Sally Sense’, the animated character I created for *Tell Someone*.

Education, Narrative and Information

One of the first, and most useful formulations of the information film, after its initial period of success during the 1940s, was ‘The Nature of the Education Film’ (1947), an essay by F. Dean McClusky. The objectives of the paper were to define, classify and evaluate the education film in eleven singular types. These echo many of the approaches I found in viewing numerous animated public information films. McClusky suggests that an educational film is ‘essentially a multiple method of communication. It is especially effective as a technique for telling a story. It presents facts realistically and dramatizes human relations and events’ (1947: 371).

He first discusses ‘Narrative Film’, which utilises animated cartoons and puppets to tell a story based on ‘fiction or facts’, using a narrative method, which ‘gives an orderly, continuous account of an event or a series of happenings’ (1947: 374). This formulation echoes the construction of classical cinema. Second, there is the ‘Dramatic Film’, which is required to be more theatrical and related to literary forms, resulting in being ‘more highly charged with emotional appeal than the narrative film’ (1947: 374). Third is the ‘Discursive Film’, which is affiliated to the information film, and ‘produced in a typical illustrated lecture pattern’ (1947: 374). McClusky notes that the discursive film type would have been used to explain industry-manufactured goods (1947: 374). The ‘Evidential Film’ records scientific data, often deploying time-lapse slow motion photography, and is useful for evaluating movement in creatures and athletes (1947: 376). The ‘Factual Film’ is episodic and provides

background information in support of a topic (1947: 376) and the ‘Emulative Film’ can ‘show how to perform an act of skill or demonstrates patterns of behavior which the learner imitates’ (1947: 376). McClusky refers to this type of film as being used before the Second World War in sports, first aid and industry, before being adopted as the dominant model for military and machine training. The ‘Problematic Film’ was adopted during the Second World War as it set and addressed problems, and was used as a prompt to open discussion and find resolution.

McClusky’s eighth type is the ‘Incentive Film’, which could be viewed as being the nearest comparison to the information film as it echoes the latter’s fundamental objectives. McClusky suggests that the main function of an ‘Incentive Film’ was to ‘motivate action in the direction of developing character, attitudes, morale, and emotional response’ (1947: 377). This type was beneficial during the Second World War to boost morale and highlight the war effort, having propaganda qualities too (ibid.). McClusky suggests that the ‘Incentive Film’ used a number of techniques to guarantee an effective communication claiming that: ‘The commentary, dialogue, sound effects, and pictures generally move fast and are rhythmically combined to stir strong emotional response’ (1947: 376).

The ‘Rhythmic Film’, which is used ‘to achieve artistic effects and to develop aesthetic responses’, refers to Disney’s animated feature *Fantasia* (USA, 1940) as an example of using colour and patterns. Throughout McClusky’s essay, animation, moving graphics and frame manipulation are consistently noted as aspects of the approach to effective information delivery. McClusky notes, however, that there are limited contributions in this category, proposing that it is still at the experimental stage (1947: 378). McClusky’s ‘Therapeutic Film’ is used for the rehabilitation of patients and were, for the most part, linked to the work of medical organisations. In 1947, McClusky reports that the therapeutic film was a successful but unproven method of film education. Recent years, however, have seen more use of animation film in therapy work and this is now being widely practised as a method of communication, counselling and rehabilitation. UK government and charity organisations such as Animation Therapy and HEART (Healing Education Animation Research Therapy) are currently developing animation therapy workshops.

The final category is the ‘Drill Film’, which uses repetitive actions where the observer participates and, like the therapeutic film, McClusky refers to the drill film as being at an experimental stage. In the more contemporary category this could be related to children’s education programmes where the child participates in reading out loud, counting numbers or doing a physical activity like dancing.

McClusky makes a number of suggestions as to which film types may work together and combine; others he strongly suggests would not. For instance, he believes that the drill method should not be used with the incentive film, which is understandable as there could be concerns about brainwashing. He suggests it would ‘be foolish to produce a narrative film when the emulative type is indicated’ (1947: 377). This theory implies that narrative type, containing cartoons and puppets, has too much distraction in its storytelling elements and its alternative characters, and so does not concentrate on the fundamental requirement that the viewers imitate or match the behaviour or activity they are viewing. Incentive and emulation are key elements in a public and independent information film to some degree because viewers are encouraged to make a change, mimic or be educated by the information being addressed to them, from growing vegetables during the Second World War to supporting victims of domestic violence. Animated public information films tend to be underpinned with a narrative and this does not necessarily mean delivery of scripted words spoken by characters or a voiceover narrative alone.

Animation has a highly flexible language of expression – it can represent seemingly un-representable psychological, emotional, physical and material states, re-defining objects, environments and creatures. An animated character can have an overly large sized head with a small body (*Hector’s Home*, UK, 2007), or be a talking dog or horse (*Creature Discomforts*, UK, 2010), or be a blood cell explaining the process of becoming a blood donor (*Blood Donor Bags*, UK, 1984). At each level of production the design has been highly self-conscious, from the tone and accent of a voice and the architecture designed for a character to live in to the clothes a character wears and the colour of a character’s eyes. Effectively each design decision has generated a narrative, which hopefully is accepted and absorbed by the viewer. Animation also provides the opportunity for it to be entirely acceptable for a cat – as seen, for example, in the 1970s *Charley Says* series – to speak a young boy, his owner, on the dangers of playing with matches (*Matches*, Richard Taylor, UK, 1973). It is

unquestioned that the young boy fully understands Charley's language (an extended 'meow' made to sound like a gibberish language), which he then translates to the viewers.

Richard Taylor, creator and director of the *Charley Says* series, stresses the importance and value of character design in animated public information films, claiming: 'We designed and created characters that were appropriate. They WERE key' (interview, March 2008). Curtis Jobling, character designer of *Bob the Builder* and creator of *Frankenstein's Cat* and some of Britain's most popular children's television characters, believes that it is important for a character not to do battle with its design and its environment, so a viewer readily understands it and is not lost within the production process (interview, October 2008).

The specific actions the characters undertake are equally important to ensure successful communication. Taylor recalls being asked by the COI to avoid action that could encourage imitative behaviour. Charley the cat represented the adult in the partnership, to some degree at least. He would warn his young owner of the dangers of talking to strangers, or heading out with friends without telling an adult. He would be the victim of being scalded by hot water or nearly drowning in the river. Charley was the guardian – reminding the adult viewers of the films that young children are not always able to make a sound decision on their own, further conveying that children sometimes need to be made aware of the dangers by someone else. For the most part, Charley is the casualty, and has to experience the disagreeable consequences of his actions. Taylor, by focusing on Charley being accident-prone and keeping the young boy relatively safe, removes risks of imitative behaviour by young viewers who may be likely to emulate the behaviour of the little boy, to whom they could relate. In the short *Matches*, the young boy with Charley is seen building a tower of alphabet blocks and the boy accidentally uses a box of matches as a block. Charley reaches over and knocks down the box of matches, meowing (translated by the young boy) that if matches are found to tell someone. This removes any implication that the young boy is doing anything wrong or misbehaving.

Charley attempts to protect his young owner from making the same mistakes that he makes, or from making errors of judgment. As a result, the *Charley Says* series of films challenges McClusky's theory that combining both the emulative and narrative

types within the context of an education film is inadvisable or questionable. Indeed, it is clear that good storytelling can be highly influential in supporting emulative practices. Firstly, the *Charley Says* series of animated public information films are narrative-based, spoken and visual. Secondly, viewers are encouraged to emulate the young boy by listening to Charley's advice, or to tell Mummy that a stranger in the park approached them (*Stranger*, Richard Taylor, 1973, UK). Taylor employed identical formulas for each of the *Charley Says* films, and they were to become one of the COI's most publicly recognised information campaigns. Key to their success, though, was the fact that many children develop their first major relationship, after their parents and siblings, with pets, and in loving and protecting their own pets, they were persuaded that, in not wanting harm to come to their pets, they would listen to Charley – the pet by proxy – in taking care of themselves and their animal companions. Crucially, too, there was an absence of parental intervention, so both boy and pet had to establish their own disciplines of care.

Communication, Action and Consequences

As discussed previously, communicating action and consequences are equally important; otherwise, there is a risk of an information film achieving little more than merely informing. Although informing viewers is key objective, if an information film in which an authoritative figure, such as a doctor, informs about the dangers of smoking without illustrating the effects, the film may fail to persuade anyone to adopt a model of change or action. Inevitably, shocking the viewer, and illustrating the consequences of smoking by showing coughing blood into a handkerchief or displaying the actions of a character having to use oxygen to breathe, may have more success. Essentially more is required than just informing spectators: they need to be assured that what is being communicated to them is necessary, whether it be evidence that a certain washing power cleans stains on clothes above another leading brand, or the horrific consequences of not wearing a seatbelt. It is clear then that, while McClusky's categories are helpful, aspects of a number of the categories might be employed in any one communications strategy.

Political party broadcasts make use of film to communicate their policies, advocating the changes and action they will implement if elected. Similar to a public information film, party political broadcasting utilises some of the same persuasive methods. A

political candidate sat at a desk, or speaking from the comfort of an armchair directly to the viewer on the improvements they will implement, without introducing factual evidence as to why the changes are needed, may struggle to be convincing. To overcome this they will include documentary footage, interviews with ordinary people on the streets, or support from leading celebrities. This technique simplifies their ideological agenda; it specifies and sells their proposals.

Equally, the same strategy could to be executed in a public information/independent film. In relation to 'Sally Sense', my project, initially children may respond to an animated character sat on a bed talking to camera, primarily because it is animation, and they anticipate that they are about to be entertained. They may listen to Sally as she recounts what happened, absorbing the dialogue, accepting that Sally had an uncomfortable experience while she was online. But it is unlikely they will fully engage, or have the foresight to fully understand without the delivery of action – a re-enactment evidencing Sally's experience. Viewers gain a clearer understanding of the reality of Sally's experience by portraying the events as they happened.

The Believability Factor

Although there is no evaluative qualitative research exploring how children respond to animated public information films, there is published evidence on how children are affected by advertising (Hansen, 2002; Roedder 1981, 1999). As McClusky suggests in his education film categories, the incentive film's objectives are to 'propagandize and to promote sales'. Public information films and advertising both possess the fundamental purpose of communicating messages to generate action.

A particular aspect of consumer research methodology is broken down into three different audience categories: 'strategic', 'cued' and 'limited'. The age range of seven to eleven year olds comes under the category 'cued', because this signifies that children are now 'capable of using storage and retrieval strategies to enhance learning' (Roedder, 1981: 145). To communicate to those who fall into the cued category, it is recommended that 'educational strategies are appropriate to facilitate message processing. Education entails teaching these children how to store and retrieve information' (ibid.: 151). The term 'cued' within consumer research is also referred to as 'analytical', which is described as 'a period of huge change for children's

development during which they begin to appreciate more abstract concepts such as value for money and start to develop understanding of advertisers' intentions' (Nairn, 2008: 243).

The government's *Stop, Look and Listen Live* road safety campaign in 2009 shifted from the familiar brightly coloured, all-singing and dancing hedgehogs of a previous campaign towards a darker and more sinister approach, which leaned more towards the aesthetics of gothic film director Tim Burton. The campaign was led by British animation studio, Slinky Pictures, with contributions from Studio AKA, directed by Marc Craste. Slinky used traditional 2D methods of painting on cel, with watercolour backgrounds (<http://www.slinkypictures.com/work/2d/hedgehogs>; see Figure 15).

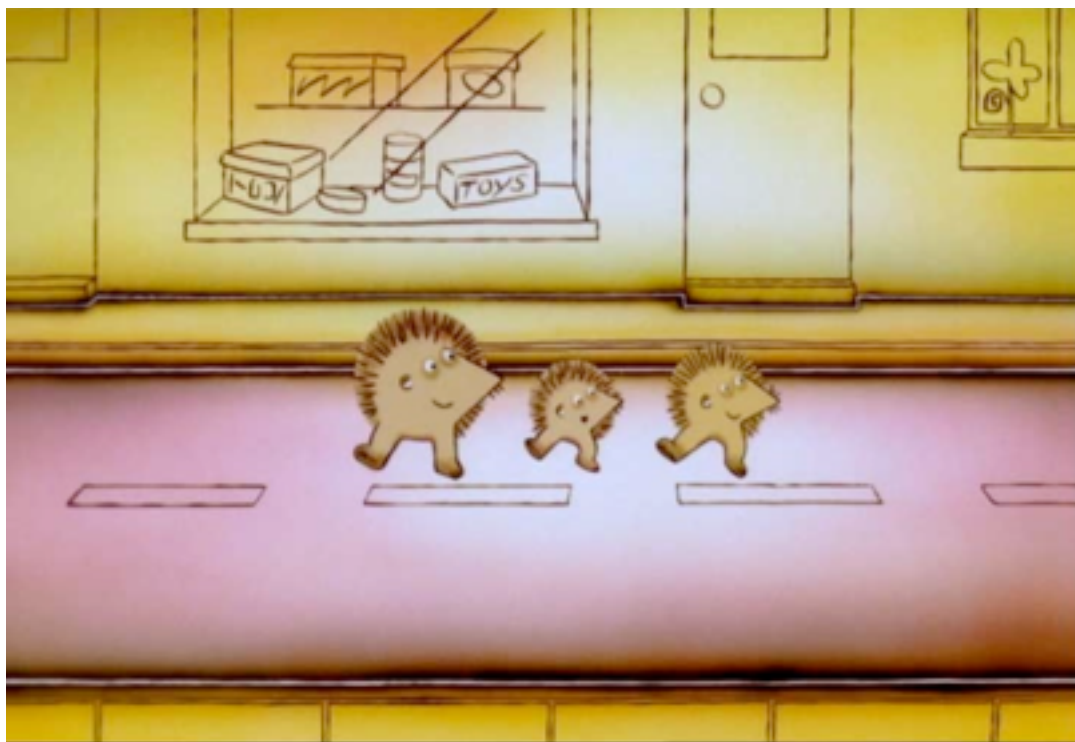


Figure 15: *Staying Alive* (Chris Shepherd, UK, date unknown)

The replacement campaign, *Tales of the Roads*, produced by British studio Nexus and directed by Adam Foulkes and Alan Smith, combined both 2D and 3D elements, creating what they describe as a 'unique visual style' (<http://www.nexusproductions.com/directors/smith-and-foulkes/tales-of-the-road-campaign/>). The film is a particularly useful exemplar, which will help me describe the particular strengths of animation as an expressive tool, and one that usefully

extends the vocabulary by which information is communicated in McClusky's categories.

Making the Invisible Visible

Wells (1998: 122) suggests that: 'It is often the case that the difficult concepts or unusual codes of existence can only be expressed through the vocabulary available to the animator because they are in many senses inarticulable in words but intrinsically communicated through the visual and pictorial.' Animation is a process that can communicate in any spoken language. It can speak to the masses as an information film or to individuals on subjects such as grooming and domestic violence. It can also assist and be of personal benefit to someone who is seeking some form of therapy. Grief is a complex emotion and, although such emotion can be seen on faces or demonstrated by crying or hugging, this emotion can also be shown through the symbolic and metaphoric use of aesthetic codes. Wells uses the term 'penetration' – 'the ability to evoke the internal space and portray the invisible' (ibid.: 122) – to exemplify how animation can capture and portray particular interior states or invisible forms.

In *An Inconvenient Truth* (Davis Guggenheim, USA, 2006), former presidential candidate and environmental activist Al Gore uses an extract from *Futurama* and a range of animated sequences to make 'invisible' processes of global warming graphically visible and accessible to his audience. This has its complications, of course, in the sense that such matters are predicated on interpretative strategies and not self-evident 'truth'. Ironically, the artifice of animation is used to authenticate the interpretation and visualise evidence that best supports the case. This is important, though, because it seems that the suggestiveness of animation language enables it to be less didactic than the apparent literalness of live action, and the overt strategies named in McClusky's categories. Animation director Ian Gouldstone discusses the process of production for his film *Face the Music* (2008) for Oxfam, and admits to the difficulties and thought processes that are needed to develop an 'awareness' film. He comments:

I was very tempted to drag out the old cliché that the film needed to make a very powerful statement ... but that actually wasn't the case. In my experience, telling people what to do might work for a while, but it eventually just

aggravates them because you're positioning yourself above them and saying, 'I know best.' It makes me quite angry just thinking about all the films out there that do that (interview, November 2008).

Essentially, then, animation can absorb McClusky's strategies but offer a more symbolic, analogous, decorative appeal that seems to negotiate a position with its audience, rather than directly instructing them. The suggestiveness in the imagery allows for an audience's imaginative investment in embracing the message. The shift in the visual expectations of the audience allows the viewer to participate in re-negotiating embedded positions or taken-for-granted perspectives.



Figure 16: *Stop, Look and Listen* (Adam Foulkes, Alan Smith, UK, 2009)

These shifts in the visual aesthetics in a film like *Stop, Look and Listen* (Foulkes and Smith, UK, 2009) indicates that different approaches can be made, and recognises that children are able to view dark, unsettling imagery (see Figure 16). *Tales of the Roads*, similar to earlier campaigns, refrains from showing actual incidents, but illustrates and labels consequences. Absent is any reference to animals; in its place, the presence of big-eyed oversized-headed children existing in a minimalist foggy environment. There is no verbal narrative from the children, except for the sounds of children playing in a park. Background conversations serve only as sound effects. The main narrative is a poem, voiced by a male who is not dissimilar to Vincent Price, and this enhances the gothic fairytale aesthetics. It is left to the viewer to assess if the character is dead or alive. The children appear ghostly, and watch themselves as the accident is replayed for the viewer.

The three thirty-second films tell the tales of two boys and a girl. The films where the girl is the protagonist open in the same way as the other films, slowly panning from a skyline down to a girl stood in a school uniform. The girl is wearing a neck collar; her clothes are dirty, her hair is untidy; she has sad eyes, clutches her stomach and has a wound on her forehead. She stands alone, in a dark and grey backdrop, as if in the clouds, but stands still on the pavement. The poem explains that the girl always wanted to look her best ‘so didn’t wear a bright coloured vest, or any clothing that was bright, when she was out at nearly night’. The injured girl looks on at herself, as the film repeats the action of her crossing the road. She is neat and tidy and in warmer tones; as she crosses the road, the injured girl reaches out to warn herself of the approaching car. The screeching of brakes indicates that the girl has been hit, and this is confirmed when the narrator ends the poem: ‘The car drove right over her guts and covered her with bruising cuts.’

The film concludes with the wording across the screen ‘DRESS BRIGHT and BE SEEN’, glowing as it appears. Beneath the wording, three children walk past the injured girl, not acknowledging her, as if she is not visible. Each is wearing a fluorescent belt, vest and bicycle helmet. The conclusion is unspoken, and there is a risk that the younger viewers may not understand the message because they focus on the other brightly coloured, active children. Conversely, the ‘shock’ that she is dead may be all the more powerful by virtue of the contrast.



Figure 17: *Stop, Look and Listen* (Adam Foulkes, Alan Smith, UK, 2009)

Fundamentally, the protagonists of the shorts film have failed to stay safe and have been labelled as such; the animation frames them plausibly as supernatural beings. Subsequently they are delivering a warning to young viewers of the consequences of not wearing brightly coloured safety clothing. They have to watch from a distance as the other children, who stop and look before crossing the road, head into the park to play. Those children are symbolically labelled as bright, and remain so when they act correctly, according to the guidelines of efficient road safety (see Figure 17). The films also support the necessity of re-visiting and re-presenting issues, such as road safety, as on-going concerns, and they maintain levels of originality within the context of contemporary animation and design without affecting its purpose of communicating core information.

The cued/analytical period of a child's development suggests that children require clear directions, within the context of information, to fully understand messages. Although this relates to children and the concepts allied to advertising, the same methods could be applied to information films. Animation can apply its cueing suggestively, avoiding overt instruction and encouraging emulation.

Informal Qualitative Research: Parental Awareness

I conducted research to assess the elements of the different education film genres, and evaluate some of the key fundamentals within the context of children's advertising to develop the foundations of producing an animated information film. My approach was based on testing whether a pertinent animated information film could be made, based on my findings from the historical survey and a review of contemporary approaches, and predicated on using retro-aesthetics in support of a key issue in contemporary Internet use.

I had chosen the 'stranger danger' topic, and intended to target the 'stranger' online, who have the potential to harm children using the Internet. Supporting this premise, qualitative research was undertaken with parents to assess if they were aware of what information their children were receiving at home, school or other social groups, such as Scouts or a youth club. I was also interested to learn if they, as adults, remembered COI films from their childhood, and if they recollected them having an effect on the way they behaved. I was keen to understand if there was a subject that parents felt

strongly about their children receiving information on, and why. To achieve this I developed a questionnaire, which I then distributed to 400 households. I requested, if possible, that both parents and guardians complete the forms (see Appendix 5).

Results of the survey found that parents prioritised having information on stranger danger and road safety available to them and their families. I asked parents to suggest other issues of concern, and Internet safety and drug abuse were the most prominent answers. When questioned about whether they felt that information delivered to children as an animated film was of benefit, 93% of parents stated that it was beneficial, although it would depend on the child's age (see Appendix 5). One respondent writes:

My child is captured by the music and the characters in cartoons more so than watching people acting. Too much talking can be difficult for younger children to understand and they find it difficult to cope with the ambiguity of speech. Visual images help younger children to make sense of what they are hearing and therefore have a bigger impact (QT: 063).

One parent further supports this benefit, claiming that: 'Animation can reach a greater target audience including groups with learning difficulties and some medical conditions e.g. hearing impairments, autism, ADHD' (QT: 033). Another parent's response states: 'Children would prefer a cartoon as they relate to more visual, colourful images' (QT: 006). The same parent, who was the father of two children aged eleven and sixteen, believes that the removal of an adult delivering information may be successful, suggesting: 'The characters they use make it more interesting to children and they are more likely to pay attention than perhaps an adult preaching to them what they should or shouldn't do' (QT: 006). The same parent also suggests that an information film on Internet safety, which could be broadcast on television and watched by both the parent and child, is needed.

Claiming that children are taught Internet safety at schools, the parents also noted that 'Children are probably more computer literate than some adults, so a film could be made highlighting to both groups the tell tale signs' (QT: 006). All parents confirmed that they would watch an information film with their children and would be available to answer any questions or concerns the child may have. Parents also agreed that having a website, either to view the film again or to obtain further information, would be expected. This response further supports the current model of information delivery,

where published material is available to parents and teachers to download and is for the most part online. The questionnaire also asked if the children purchased comic books. This was to assess if there was an opportunity to develop Sally Sense into a comic strip.¹

The survey found that 66% of parents would like to see more public information films, with 31% unsure. One parent's response strongly notes: 'Bring back PIFs so much better than product advertisements and their associated brainwashing consumer mentality' (QT: 024). A high percentage (79%) of parents agreed that animation rather than live action was the more suitable medium for information delivery, taking into account that the age range of the children whose parents completed the questionnaire was two to sixteen. The questionnaire also found that parents had a genuine understanding of what styles of animation suit different age groups. One parent writes: 'Obviously cartoon style would be dictated by the age of the target audience' and further suggests a "South Park" style of animation to speak to teenagers about how to manage their finances in a time of economic uncertainty' (QT: 305).

The majority acknowledged that animation keeps children interested, and that recognising a character would also be of benefit. They noted that children related better to information delivery through animation than coming from a parent or adult, and this was a repeated response. A number of parents also suggested repeated viewings of information would ensure that children fully understood the message of the film. The majority of parents did not know what information was being delivered in schools, with one parent's response to the question being: 'No. But I would hope all of the basics were being covered' (QT: 313). The results of the questionnaire concluded that the majority of parents remembered public information films from their childhood, with the animated *Charley Says* series and live-action *Green Cross Code* being the most memorable. They remembered the films having some effect on them and their behaviour.

The questionnaire was invaluable in gaining an understanding of what information was currently available and accessed by the public. Though the research was informal, its findings began to support my approach towards developing an animated information film based on the 'stranger danger' issue in the context of the online era.

Information Film Audience

As discussed earlier, television viewing is a conventional domestic activity for the majority of western societies. British homes often accommodate multiple televisions and digital multiple channels offer viewing 24 hours a day. 'Broadcasting' has become 'narrowcasting', speaking to niche audiences (Curran and Seaton, 2003: 276). Multiple viewing platforms enable the viewer to select what they view and this removes, to some degree, the intention of public information films to reach intended audiences. As a consequence, public information needs to re-invent itself so that films can compete for the attention of the targeted audience.

A number of essential factors need to be considered when developing an animated public or independent information film. Who is the target demographic? Are age and gender significant issues? What is the message and is the information sufficiently relevant to justify its purpose? The COI advises that a public information film needs to be genuine and they also warn that:

In practice, the suitability of any tangible action depends on it being significant and straightforward in equal measure. Too challenging or stretching and it will be rejected as unrealistic. Too simplistic or familiar and it will be dismissed as nothing new (Lannon, 2008: 20).

This certainly underpins the government's re-invention of the road safety campaign from hedgehogs to portraying injured children in *Tales of the Road* (Adam Foulkes, Alan Smith, UK, 2009).

Contemporary public information films have the advantage of a society accepting most models of illustrative communication as an array of colours, typographies, languages, architectural forms, music, design and press texts, which are accessed and processed daily, often without conscious recognition or question. However, assuming that the consumer accepts most approaches to design, this does not necessarily facilitate free rein to develop an animated public information film. There must be a known reference for both parents and children, and this is one of the reasons I use a retro-aesthetic in support of a pressing contemporary issue. It has proved its capacity to communicate and appeal, but is nevertheless fresh for current child audiences.

The Subject

I was fortunate that my investment in a script on ‘stranger danger’ in the Internet era proved prescient, as the issue has become increasingly prominent in the media. There is escalating media coverage of the dangers children face online, and concerns are being expressed by government officials and leading charities. Before the 2010 general election, Gordon Brown, Britain’s then Prime Minister, stated:

We are influenced by our parents, our friends, our schools and perhaps our faiths ... today it is the Internet, mobile phones, computer games and texting. Parents have to do more to protect their children than ever before. Going onto the Internet is like going in at the deep end of the swimming pool without proper safety and instruction (Ben Fogle, *Mail on Sunday*, Live Magazine, 2010: 17)

The Byron Review, a government-funded national report initiated in 2008 to establish the effects of online and computer games on children, strongly recommended that awareness campaigns needed to be implemented in schools. In 2010, a continuation review claimed that there had been some improvements, but further awareness was still needed.² Investigating this further, to support the notion of developing an animated information film on this issue, I did research to assess the levels of information available on the subject. What animation, if any, was already in place and what method of adaptation would be needed for a new animated information film to be considered original, realistic and appropriate for public distribution?

Richard Taylor and his studio undertook a similar procedure during the pre-production process of developing a public information film. Taylor received transcripts from the COI advising on the theme and how to convey the message, the age group the film was expected to target, advice on specific gender concerns and press cuttings. In addition to the material and targets received, Taylor also undertook some research on the topic (interview, 2008).

Treating the development of my own film as a COI brief, and observing the same investigative research as Taylor, I explored the current status of animated public information films focused on online safety for children. This served as an opportunity to observe approaches already undertaken, and helped me to develop an original concept for my own film.

I found that very few contemporary animated public information films were available. There was adequate material employing live action, with additional government publications and reports, but overall media correspondence suggested there was a need for more attention to the subject, and this afforded an opportunity for an approach in animated form. This corresponded to what I had learned from my historical survey and my primary research with contemporary animators making films for children on key issues. Additionally, the results of my questionnaire with parents confirmed there was a lack of information available on the subject.³

The fact that my chosen subject for creating an animated information film would fundamentally address children had some advantages. If animation is perceived as children's entertainment, then children may be more responsive to an animated public information film. Secondly, if it's viewed as an innocent medium, the film concept can communicate with the young audience more easily.

The fundamental process of animation begins with the development of a script, which is storyboarded. The boards are then transferred into an animatic. This format allows the opportunity to time the film, and place dialogue in anticipation of what the final film may be. The animatic is not a completed film but a rehearsal of the final animation and, more importantly, the animatic has the clarity of the story and the message is clear and understandable (see Volume 2 for my storyboarding and animatic).

To achieve my objectives I approached the development of *Tell Someone* by raising some initial questions. Who is this film for? What age is the target audience? What am I trying to say? Is this achievable, and is the film applicable?

The Informer

The principal deciding factor was to develop the key character at the centre of a storyline and for provisional scripts on the topic to be developed. During the early stages it was determined that the protagonist character was to be a young girl called Sally Sense. This was due to a number of key factors. Firstly, a report from the CEOP verified that it is predominantly young girls who are the victims of cyber abuse:

Girls appear to be at higher risk than boys because they use social aspects of the Internet more (notably instant messaging and social network sites), and are

slightly more willing to share some types of personal information with and to interact with strangers. Girls are more likely to have had ‘threatening’ experiences online (Davidson, Martellozzo and Lorenz, 2009: 3).

The report, by CEOP and Kingston University, further claimed that one in five children have experienced threatening behaviour online, either feeling awkward or experiencing bullying from peers. From this evidence came the development of Sally Sense, a young female teenager who would be represented in an animated information film addressing Internet safety. At this early stage, by establishing Sally Sense as a young female role, the intentions of the film’s subject had begun to identify its demographic audience as young children aged seven to eleven. Designating the protagonist role to be female required Sally Sense to be designed in such a way that she could communicate persuasively to young boys as well as to girls.

Sally Sense was designed with bright red hair. The brightness of the hair acts as a focal point. It also links to the red ‘report abuse’ button, which Sally’s mum illustrates in the film. I also wanted the hair not be too ‘girlish’ or childlike, and in the initial concept designs I only ever designed Sally to wear long trousers or jeans (see Volume 2: sketchbook). The decision to have a glimpse of stripy tights/socks was to illustrate that Sally had some independence as to how she wanted to look. I made Sally’s head slightly large in proportion to her body to direct the viewer to Sally’s face because for the majority of the film she is sat at a desk, meaning emotional reactions needed to take place through her facial expressions and eyes.

It is difficult to conjure up a list of influential female animated characters present on children’s television. There is the garden-digging *Dirt Girl*; Lola, the inquisitive younger sister, from the successful British animation series *Charlie and Lola*; pre-historic pre-schooler *Igam Ogam*; *Dora the Explorer*; and the stop-motion animated series *Fifi and the Flowerpots*. They all focus on the pre-school audience. For the older audience, contributions come from Bart Simpson’s sister, Lisa, the brains of the Simpson family. Opinionated, frustrated and headstrong, Lisa’s character is in the shadow of Bart and Homer. Dominant teenagers or young women in animated feature films are virtually non-existent apart from fairytale classics such as *Cinderella*, (Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske, USA, 1950) and *Sleeping Beauty* (Clyde Geronimi, USA, 1959).

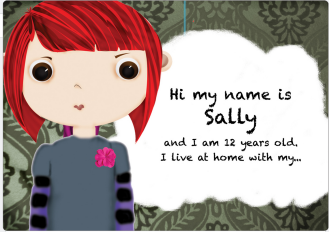
Heroines in Japanese anime are more common, particularly in Hayao Miyazaki's films, including *Spirited Away* (Hayao Miyazaki, Japan, 2001). Portland studio Laika's stop-motion feature *Coraline* (Henry Selick, USA, 2008) adapted from Neil Gaiman's book of the same title, features a young, lippy teenager who fights with her parents, and Pixar's CGI feature *Brave* (Mark Andrews, Brenda Chapman, USA, 2012) also features a determined flaming red-haired young woman competing for equality and freedom with the expectations of being a princess. There are also encouraging examples of work that might speak more directly to young women.

When specifically writing for a children's audience, Wells suggests that it is important that the script must be 'true to children and ... represent their idiosyncrasies, idioms and outlook with as much integrity as possible' (2006: 99). Wellins adds, more generically, 'Telling stories is a sharing of experiences on a very simple level; shared experiences allow people to place themselves in their groups and judge and measure their lives and positions in the world' (2005: 25). Such perspectives enabled me to focus on core issues as I developed my script, also taking into account some of the strategies suggested by McClusky.

Furniss recommends that, when developing characters, it is beneficial to your pre-production if you generate a world for them to exist in, thus enabling you 'to know your characters before you can animate them' (2008: 60). Most script development texts also suggest that developing a back history for your character enables you to 'develop a character's life story, worldview and attitudes' (ibid.). Using this model, I created the opening titles of *Tell Someone* to enable Sally Sense to introduce her street and home, her family, best friends and the activities she enjoys the most (see Figures 18 and 19).


Project: Sally Sense - PhD Practice Author: Kerry Drumm Date: Scene: Opening Page 2 of 27

7




Audio/Video:
VO: Hi there, my name is Sally and I'm twelve years old. I live at...

8




Audio/Video:
VO: 57
SE: Traffic, birds, outside effects

9




Audio/Video:
VO: Moonbeam Road
SE: Traffic, birds, outside effects

10




Audio/Video:
VO: With my mum, dad and little sister.

11



Audio/Video:
VO: I have a dog called Banjo and a cat called Sat.
SE: Barking dad, purring cat

12



Audio/Video:
VO: I Love...


Notes
An upbeat sound track to support the voice of Sally and action taking place.

TOOLFARM

Figure 18: *Tell Someone* (introduction)


Project: Sally Sense - PhD Practice Author: Kerry Drumm Date: Scene: Opening Page 3 of 27

13




Audio/Video:
VO: ...my best mate Laura
SE: giggles

14




Audio/Video:
VO: wearing stripy tights
SE: outside sounds
Action: small plane L-R of frame

15




Audio/Video:
VO: peanut butter with jam

16




Audio/Video:
VO: tomato ketchup

17



Audio/Video:
VO: on everything
SE: splat
Action: 2 splats of tom ketchup

18



Audio/Video:
VO: reading horror stories
SE: A scream
Action: blinking bats

Notes
An upbeat soundtrack to support the voice of Sally and the action taking place.

TOOLFARM

Figure 19: *Tell Someone* (introduction)

The use of opening titles is common with animated series. *The Simpsons*, although without dialogue, follows the Simpson family individually undertaking their routine activities, work, school, shopping and skateboarding. In the hugely popular pre-school series *Charlie and Lola*, opening titles illustrate an imaginative sequence of chasing butterflies, drinking strawberry milkshake, drawing and exploring planets in space.

My decision to retain the extensive opening title to Sally Sense was affirmed when I recorded the voices of the children singing the song and reading the information sheets for the film. It took some time to settle the children, who were all school friends aged seven to eleven. I taught them the opening chant and made them repeat it over and over to settle them down so that I could record the rest of the dialogue.

Some months later when I showed them the animatic I witnessed them humming and singing along to the song (they had remembered it), then go quiet when Sally began talking. I asked them if they understood the animatic, which they said they did.

It's not uncommon for studios producing an ongoing animated series or feature film to include characters' back history as part of a production/style bible, which I developed as part of my practice (see Volume 2: 05). Often, a production will run from six months to five years, with many animators and production staff working on a variety of characters, locations and scenes at any one time. Animators are able to refer to the production bible to gain some understanding of the director's sense of the performance and emotion they wish the characters to portray. The brief could contain a list of a character's favourite food, colours or songs. The bible may also include still frames of character poses, props and clothing. This enables the animator to understand the characters they will be animating over the next eighteen months or so. Additionally a production bible is a valuable tool to have when it comes to pitching a concept for a film at a festival, conference or funding organisation (Nagel, Animation World Network, 2004).

It could be argued that Sally shares too much information with her audience, going against the purpose of the film's objective, which is to protect one's identity. However, I felt it was necessary that Sally put trust in her audience, and that they establish their trust in her. This builds empathy for Sally as a character when she struggles with her confrontation with Snitch. For the purpose of making a public information film, it enables the viewer to settle and register the introduction of a film

that they are about to view, and to understand the context before engaging with a specific issue. I was also guided by the intention of developing Sally Sense into a series of short films, in which the introduction would be recognised throughout.

I decided that developing a signature tune for Sally Sense would offer a sense of familiarity to viewers. Sing-a-long opening titles are popular with pre-school animated series, and this was successfully used in the *Staying Alive* hedgehog road safety campaigns. Furthermore, this may offer an additional educational tool for classroom activities.

The Villain

The depiction of a villain, a wrongdoer, scoundrel, crook, or monster, can be constructed very specifically in animation from the outset. Clearly, a ‘stranger danger’ narrative implies the existence of a ‘villain’. The representation of the villain is often symbolic of a darker side, mischief and unpleasantness. Historical villains include the jealous witch who poisoned the beautiful princess in *Sleeping Beauty*, or the Queen of Hearts who cried ‘off with their heads’ in *Alice in Wonderland*, Kaa the snake in the Disney animated feature *Jungle Book* (Wolfgang Reitherman, USA, 1967) who attempts to hypnotise Mowgli, and Aardman/Nick Park’s villainous characters: the problematic penguin in *The Wrong Trousers* and Preston the bullying mechanical dog in *A Close Shave*.

The representation of a villain has also been associated with animated public information films. During the Second World War there was an opportunity for animation studios to caricature Hitler, who would be booed and hissed at if he appeared on the screen in cinemas. Halas & Batchelor’s *Abu’s Poisoned Well* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1943) characterised Hitler as a snake. The film *The Behemoth* (director unknown, UK, 1944), combining animation and live action, refers to moths and the damage they can do to your clothing, supporting the MOI’s ‘Make Do and Mend’ campaign. Animated moths, which are represented by the Luftwaffe, lay eggs ‘on your Sunday best’. The eggs, each symbolised with the swastika, crack open from within the shell in a military fashion, where rows upon rows of helmet-wearing worms appear, each of them characterised by the iconic Hitler moustache. The film concludes with live-action women checking clothing by shaking them free of moths

and eggs. The ‘villain’ could also be represented in other forms: a shadow in the corner, cancerous lungs, or infected cells such as in *Measles* (Sandra Ensby, UK, 2009), part of Amnesty International’s ‘Protect the Human’ campaign (see Figure 20).



Figure 20: *Measles* (Sandra Ensby, UK, 2009)

Fiske speaks about codes that communicate and he examines the basic non-verbal communication codes, which are commonly used in animation. He explores how the ‘human body is the main transmitter of presentational codes’ (1990: 68). Taking some of these methods, Fiske discusses gesture and explores the work of hands and arms, noting that ‘emphatic up-and-down gesture often indicates dominance’ (1990: 69). Van Norris suggests that the success of *Creature Comforts* is in part due to the animation medium used, claiming:

Despite mainstream animation today dominated by slick, fast and affordable three-dimensional computer adhering to the stop-motion form, using clay figures has contributed to the *Creature Comforts* series retaining its unique position within the cultural landscape (Norris, 2007: 4).

He continues by suggesting that the weight of the clay figures (even though they are represented in animal form) and the familiarity of their landscape give the ‘viewer a sense of believability and verisimilitude that extends further than the abstracted (albeit generalized) “cartoon-y” aesthesis offered by “cel” animation’ (ibid.).

I have taken such observations into my design strategy. Purposely designed to have larger hands, Snitch, the villain in *Tell Someone*, aggressively types with one finger from each hand (see Figure 21).



Figure 21: *Tell Someone* (Snitch typing – animatic still)

This allowed a repetitive up-and-down action, to illustrate his attempt to dominate Sally. Further enhancing the non-verbal action, Snitch, similar to a snake, slithers around in proximity of Sally, but never touches her.

Fiske further notes that a more fluid continued circular motion indicates an attempt to gain sympathy (ibid.). An action that is popular in animation is a character standing, eyes to the floor, hands behind their back and perhaps circling their foot, and with sad eyes glancing up in the hope that they will be ‘let off’ or forgiven for what they have just done. Again, I adopted similar gestural approaches in my practice. When Sally’s mother reminds her that she disobeyed her by staying online, Sally responds by dipping her head and lifts her eyes in puppy-like manner. But, due to the seriousness of the risks Sally undertook, Mum remains firm.

Malleable in his form, Snitch is an unrealistic monster in that he is oversized, green and can float through walls. As an animated character it is acceptable that he can

appear and drift from a computer screen, or slither into the kitchen through the gap at the bottom of the door. Therapist Matthew Bernier discusses how the manipulation of puppets and other objects as symbols can portray a number of identities, suggesting: ‘In puppetry, any object that can be manipulated with movement can be used symbolically to represent something’ (Bernier, 2005: 129).

Snitch’s closeness, and proximity to Sally is not seen by Sally, but the darkening of the sequence of him hovering and waiting for Sally to respond generates a sense of claustrophobic atmosphere. His closeness resonates with the sense of someone looking over your shoulder.

As a character essential to communicate a persona, Snitch is ‘cued’ in that he has attributes that signify a monster, a villain, harmful and unlikable, without portraying the implausible. Snitch, when he shares the screen with Sally, is slightly transparent, appearing almost ghost-like, similar to the *Tale of the Roads* information shorts where victims are never fully recognised by the other characters but have a screen presence (see Figure 22).



Figure 22: *Tell Someone* (animatic still)

Peer Involvement

During the early development stages of Sally Sense, conveying the impression of peer support for Sally within the context of the film and outside it became fundamental to my aim of persuasive message communication. As discussed previously, this method of communication has become more applicable and established with the emergence of character peers, and children themselves participating in information films in some way. Both the *Charley Says* (Richard Taylor, UK, 1973–1974) series and *The Wrong Trainers* (Kez Margrie, UK, 2006) generate child characters who all become informants for the viewers.

Although Margrie's films lean towards documentary, there are elements of information delivery and generation of awareness by several protagonists. Within animation this method enables further definitions of relative realities; it is the main protagonist who is informing, speaking and acting, but this is linked to related parallel concerns expressed by others, and included through the use of child performers.

It is important that a film does not become determined by dialogue alone, which can be the tendency with the inclusion of numerous characters. However, it should also not become dependent on a key spokesperson as the only method of communication. There is a risk that the information film could become dull and reliance on dialogue alone removes any visible evidence of consequences and actions, which are key to information delivery.

Tell Someone takes place within Sally's family home, with the prominent action occurring between Sally, Snitch and Sally's mother. Introducing the presence of peer involvement required some thought and planning. It was important that Sally's peers did not distract from the correspondence that was to take place between Sally and Snitch. The peers are, however, fundamental for delivering information successfully. To achieve this, peer inclusion is never seen, but heard. Children were used for the opening titles, cheering '*S.A.L.L.Y. here comes SALLY let's say hi*', and then later reading the information sheets to Sally and the viewers (see Figure 23).



Figure 23: *Tell Someone* (information sheet – animatic still)

This implies that they know Sally and like her – supporting the notion that the children reading out the Internet rules may have experienced the same situation as Sally. Additionally, the inclusion of peer support was fundamental in generating some empathy towards Sally. Research supports the development of empathy towards a character within the context of information delivery suggesting: ‘when we are dealing with sociological themes such as sexual abuse, child molestation, and gambling addiction, our audience needs to identify and empathise with the show’s characters to enhance communication’ (Shelton, 2004: 145). Furthermore, the more forceful the empathy generated towards a character, the more involved the audience become (Shelton, 2004: 146).

Director of and contributor to animated public information films, Chris Shepherd, remembers, as a child, feeling little empathy towards ‘Tufty’, the squirrel in the road safety animated public information film. He recalls how he felt Tufty was a ‘mummy’s boy’ (Wells, 97: 2006). I recall having a similar view to this as Shepherd and, in fact, feeling more empathy towards Willy Weasel, the supposed scoundrel character of the film. Willy, unlike Tufty goes to the ice cream van without taking ‘mummy’. As a result, while crossing the road, Willy gets knocked over and drops his ice cream. I clearly remember watching the film as a child and being more upset that

Willy Weasel had dropped his ice cream, which lay splattered on the road rather than empathising with him being run over and rubbing his hurt leg! My remembering this certainly influenced my decision to focus the fundamental issue of the information film towards Sally, in the hope that there would be little confusion as to where the viewer should direct their empathy. It was also my intention that, by enhancing empathy towards Sally, adults and parents viewing the film might be persuaded to respond by implementing the actions undertaken by Sally's parents in the film.

Government and organisations supporting awareness of online safety advise that the family computer is placed in a room that is accessible by all of the family, so that parents are able monitor online activity. To reinforce this advice, most of the action where Sally is online takes place in the kitchen, on the family computer. Above the family computer I placed a large family activity filled notice board, which reiterates the family rules of being on the Internet, each of them listing the suggestions from leading agencies. This is another practice that should be considered in the home. The rules for computer use were then developed into information sheets, a visual sign highlighting each of the conditions.

Narrative Structure

Tell Someone begins outside of Sally's home as the spectator views the exterior of the home and garden. It is the end of the day and thunder and lightning fill the dark sky, while rain lashes across the screen. Panning down and zooming through Sally's garden the swing is pushed forwards and backwards by the wind, giving it an almost haunted look, and a football is blown across the lawn. Closing in on the house, the viewer catches a glimpse of Sally, who is peering out of the house from the back door. The light in the house makes it inviting (see Figure 24). The viewer then sees the family kitchen and Sally closing the kitchen door blind, blocking out the elements of outside. This symbolises the safety and control within the home and Sally blocking outside elements (see Figure 25).



Figure 24: *Tell Someone* (animatic still)



Figure 25: *Tell Someone* (animatic still)

The decision to develop Sally Sense as 3D puppets, which differs from the computer-based animation popular with audiences, was to produce an information film, as discussed earlier, I also wanted to bring the characters and the action that was taking place forward in the frame, creating a foreground and background narrative without too much distraction for the viewer. To achieve this I decided to have the background elements of the film designed and illustrated in 2D (see Figure 26).



Figure 26: *Tell Someone* (kitchen production design)

Objects that required 3D elements, such as the computer desk, chair, keyboard mouse and the kitchen worktop on which Sally's mum prepares dinner were designed to be 3D built, though produced to look illustrated and made of paper, or developed in post-production from drawings. This would allow elements of familiarity within the visual narrative without too much distraction or unrealistic design aesthetics that would be unfamiliar to the viewer.

Equally as important to delivering the film's message is that an information film, especially when communicating to children, should offer reassurance and illustrate how that they can safely remove themselves from harm. Richard Storey, who has worked on a number of government initiatives, suggests that one of the key factors of initiating positive behaviour in public information films is to have an understanding of how to 'balance alarm and reassurance' (2007: 36). Fundamentally, *Tell Someone* explored the negatives of the Internet and the risks involved. However, it concludes with a positive outcome to illustrate and support the notion that being 'online' and the Internet is safe and entertaining.

My narrative begins with the news that Sally and her friend Laura have won an online competition. Sally talks directly to the viewer, supporting the advantages of using the Internet by claiming the 'Internet is lots of fun' (which is demonstrated when Sally goes online at the beginning of the film to play a game). The actions of Sally sat comfortably, cross-legged on her bed illustrates that she is safe and happy and she speaks to the viewers from her bedroom, which invites the viewers to feel that they are friends of Sally's, meeting her in her personal space. While sat on the bed, Sally reiterates the importance of being safe online and the importance of telling someone if you are upset or unsure while you are online (see Figure 27). The film closes with Sally's peers from the opening titles further supporting Sally's message by collectively shouting out 'Tell someone ... promise' with Sally.



Figure 27: *Tell Someone* (animatic still)

Additional Support

For the most part, a government public information film or those produced independently, will have available a website relating to the message. This allows viewers access to education material for teaching and learning in schools, a support forum offering advice for those wanting access to further information and the opportunity to view the films. The practice of providing additional information supporting public information campaigns is not a new scheme. Many campaigns provided posters and badges to schools and youth groups – one of the most successful being the COI's Tufty Squirrel road safety campaign, which invited children to become members of the Tufty club.⁴

Production of a contemporary public information film needs to budget for designing and building a website in addition to film costs. The advancement of animation techniques producing digital media supports the developing of fun and interactive websites.⁵ Flash animation, visual effects and moving image designers produce brightly filled content, making it attractive to audiences. The website supporting the *Tales of the Road* information films has access to games, character information and the films, and this would be something that would be required for Sally Sense if produced (see <http://talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk>).

My decision to use speech bubbles in *Tell Someone* was primarily to enable the younger viewer to read and follow the correspondence that takes place between Sally and Snitch. Firstly, the oversized bubbles may engage with the viewer without the risk of losing their attention by asking them to read a normal chat room template. The sound effects of typing on a computer keyboard, the action showing hands typing, and the use of the mouse illustrate that this is a communicative action between two people at separate locations on computers. Even though there is dialogue, it was still important to emphasise that the action taking place between Sally and Snitch would have been through the visual exchange of written words. Secondly, I designed the speech bubbles so that they could be useful in the classroom as an exercise for teachers and pupils wanting to engage with the issues of online safety further (see Figures 28 and 29).

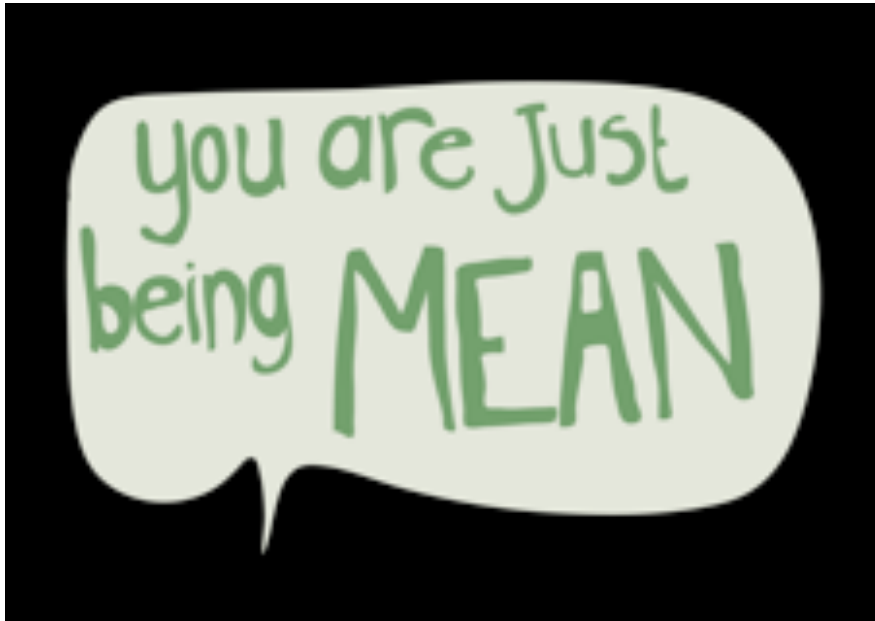


Figure 28: *Tell Someone* (animatic stills)



Figure 29: *Tell Someone* (animatic stills)

While designing Sally as a 3D stop-motion character I thought about how she could be utilised for education purposes as a puppet/doll within the classroom. Judith O'Hara, discussing the use of puppets in education, suggests:

When the goal is education, the puppets become a vehicle for expression of the child's understanding of life, literature, social studies etc. Puppets become foremost a vehicle for communication and personal interaction through children's drama, and the theatrical performance becomes secondary (O'Hara, 2005: 64).

The design of puppet-making kits would enable children to create their own Sally or Snitch, or place themselves in the same scenario. They would contribute additional persuasiveness to the message-driven animation: ‘Puppetry provides a role-playing approach to social growth and problem solving, sequencing, and the organization of ideas’ (Cheese, 2005: 15), and puppets communicate expressively.

As “nearly humans,” puppets elicit identification from audiences. We see ourselves in them, or parts of ourselves. Once that occurs, we see them as being “like us” and in doing so invest them with our own thoughts and feelings. These processes can happen almost instantaneously. The puppets become simultaneously, “me” and “not me,” and therein lies their power (Linn, 2005: vii).

The possibilities of Sally Sense becoming an education tool for discussion and interaction in the classroom, on any of the issues discussed in her information films, would generate an afterlife for the animation.

My research into the practice of information films, both public and independent, presented me with a platform of ideas that I could use to engage with and test through the design of my own information film. Understanding the substance and exposition of characters in information films was fundamental in establishing the codes of practice for producing a successful and entertaining information film. Furthermore, considering diverse methods of communication focused on the opportunity to address contemporary audiences in a cross-media platform era.

Conclusion

My research originated from my curiosity about animation's contribution to information films. I had become aware of wartime public information films during my animation degree and while working as an archivist. As a practicing filmmaker, I recognised that knowledge of archival material could help me to contextualise my practice and offer models for developing a contemporary message-driven animated narrative.

In the absence of an existing animation information filmography I realised that, to gain a historical understanding of British public information films, it was vital that I undertook research at a number of archives. Since the relevant films are located in various archives, some with more access than others, the task of viewing material and assessing its condition would be a lengthy historical archive-driven project. As a result, my research was restricted to the films I was able to view. The animated information film filmography alone verifies the ongoing presence of animation within society (other than entirely for entertainment and advertising purposes) (see Appendix 1).

Unquestionably, British public information film contributes an important chapter in the history of British animation film studies. The archive findings relating to Len Lye and Paul Rotha are examples of the hidden treasures, which require further extensive investigative research; further study exploring the contributions by wartime studio Halas & Batchelor at the National Archives would also be of interest. Due to the extensive size of their archive collection, a funded project focusing on government wartime correspondence may deliver additional documentation. There are over 3000 documents relating to 'cartoon' – a more popular term for animation during the 1930s and 1940s – in the National Archives database. The archive links to other collections, for example the Museum of English Rural Life and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Film Collection, the latter of which houses *How to Plough* (director unknown, UK, 1941), a sixteen-minute film that uses animation to instruct the Women's Land Army on how to plough. In addition, continued research is needed to evaluate the continued release of archival material revealed by the National Archives and the BFI in relation to the COI collection.¹

The material I gained access to, or located, has been documented in a custom-built database. Where possible I've included details of directors, producers, animators, dates and film stills. I have also included which medium is used, for example, traditional 2D, 3D, stop-motion or computer graphics, whether the film is colour or black and white, what dialogue is used, for example if narrated, and if a celebrity is used. A short synopsis on the subject the information film addresses is provided and, where possible, the film's broadcasting information. Any press material or newspaper articles linked to the films are also included.

My filmography of over 200 British public and independent animated information films is a comprehensive historical survey of public and independently produced animated films from 1939 to 2009. From my filmography it became clear that British information films have sub-genres, the most important being the public information film, funded by the government and the taxpayer, and the independent information film, funded by non-governmental agencies such as charities. Both promote issues of social and educational importance to the public (or groups of the public such as children).

As part of my research methodology, I interviewed directors and filmmakers because over the decades most British studios, directors, animators and producers at one time or another have employed their skills to tackle the art of persuasion, either independently or within government-funded projects. Either way they have contributed to enticing society to take notice, either altering their behaviour or reminding them of the dangers of crossing the road. My interviews were a significant and rewarding part of my research project and I refer to them throughout this thesis.

I would like to develop the filmography further, to conduct and record further interviews, and to attempt to research and locate copies of the films and artwork that may still exist. Leading on from that, given the opportunity, I would be keen to work towards producing an exhibition of the history of British animated public and independent information films.

To guide my PhD research and integrate theory with my practice I formulated two research questions: How is the art of persuasion manifested in British animation information films, and how can animation practice contribute to contemporary information films made for public distribution? These questions led me to an

awareness that, as filmmaking is expensive, the budgets required are usually beyond the resources of individuals and I realised that I could use my practice to test some ideas about information films for children by producing a pre-production pitch and animatic with accompanying production bible.

During my research process I began questioning whether animation, as a persuasive tool, was preferable to live action in information films. Was animation only suitable when informing children? Was there a limit on what animation could contribute as socially relevant information? Was animation considered serious enough, as a moving image story, to offer guidance and instigate change successfully?

Initially, it is easy to assume that animation is a suitable form to use for information films due to it being continuously commissioned over the decades. However, what my research indicated was a clearer understanding as to why this is so. By observing the information film historically I was able to identify the distinctions between animation and live action, and highlight why one medium might be more adaptable than the other in particular projects.

My research established that animation and live action could address a number of subjects. For the most part, during the Second World War, public information films were either one or the other. The presence of animation in live-action information films during that period was included only as an instructional illustration, for example the use of Isotype diagrams or animated arrows and symbols. The contemporary information film, as a result of the advancement of technologies, can more easily embrace both. The NSPCC's *Children Don't Bounce Back* and *Dan's Story* are examples where animation and live action can equally influence the fundamental objectives of the film's message. Owing to the time constraints of producing animation, live action can be a more suitable provider of a public information film during an emergency situation. Even with the advancement of animation techniques, software and computers, the production of animation remains a lengthy process. Arguably, live action has the same pre-production considerations, however a quicker turnaround to produce and exhibit is more achievable.²

My research identified that animation remains a key contributor to the delivery of public information films, in particular films aimed at children. There are a number of reasons to support this. Firstly, there is already an established relationship between

animation and children. It's a trusted medium as an educational tool – from pre-school to teenagers. This alone contributes to one of the criteria suggested when developing and maintaining the marketing of a public campaign (Collin, 2007: 143): what is the best media to engage with our target audience?

Animation continues to be acknowledged as a category of children's and family entertainment (Dobson, 2009; Selby, 2009). This in turn poses the question of whether animation, as a persuasive art form communicating important messages, fundamentally instigates change. What my research discovered conclusively, confirming Collin (2007: 131), is that if a collaborative relationship between entertainment and information films is encouraged, it can strengthen a film's objectives. Shifting from younger audiences, animation lends itself to explaining explicit issues that could be considered difficult within the context of live action, for example domestic violence. Animation also offers the opportunity to protect the anonymity of individuals by using fictional, non-specific characters, where the film's message is more biographically driven.³

Animation can also contribute to highlighting a societal issue, for example, the growing concerns relating to an epidemic of obesity. Without identifying individuals, or causing offence with overt stereotyping of gender, race or demographic sensibilities, animation is able to address the topic without risking offence, or 'finger pointing'. Gerard Hastings, discussing the 'Change4Life' campaign broadcast before *The Simpsons* episodes featuring Homer Simpson, believes 'the public is more likely to listen to healthy-living tips if they come from imperfect characters ... It is good that health is associated with something irreverent and fun instead of po-faced and worthy ... It is not what is said but who says it that matters' (A. Martin, *Mail on Sunday*, 'DoH! Government selects doughnut-loving Simpsons to front new healthy living campaign', 7th October 2009). Having Sally Sense disobey the initial orders from her mother to set the table for dinner before returning to the computer offered an opportunity to show her character as a normal teenager. It was fundamental not to portray Sally as a submissive and obedient and illustrating her imperfections would make her peers relate to her.

McClusky's recommendations as to the distinctive genres within education films, and the restrictions on combinations, have altered. There is a consensus that 'anything

goes' as long as the intentions of the film's message are clear and the province of the information is realistic. *Tales of the Road* is an example of finding 'the middle ground'. The films do not cause distress by using actual events, but they have removed the 'fun' element of the singing hedgehogs – substituting them with darker, lifelike imagery. However, the BBC's involvement in commissioning films for children on issues of poverty and knife crime support the notion that younger audiences can comprehend 'hard hitting' issues affecting their peers.

By tracing the chronological path of the animated public information film, I discovered that there was a shift away from animated information films being dependent solely on government campaigns. Independent organisations recognise the persuasion of animation, trusting its abilities to communicate their intentions, and it continues as a partnership between message and form. There has been an increase in peer involvement, which is encouraged and recognised by leading agencies as a shift in the formula of information delivery. Similar to the MOR, which recorded the public responses to the MOI shorts, the contemporary film – with some dependency on online interaction and sharing – provides opportunities for the public to contribute their own views regarding a campaign, either in support or to protest.⁴

Although my research only touched the surface of the use of propaganda within the context of the public information film, I found that propaganda maintained a strong, if sometimes troublesome, relationship with public information films, most notably during the early years of Second World War. To a certain extent there is some capacity for propaganda in public information films because, after all, an information film's objectives is to inform and recommend, and this is part of what propaganda represents. For the most part there is some recognition that society supports contemporary public information films but, as Parris claims, 'The public are becoming increasingly wise to marketing. People do see where advertisers are coming from' (Parris in Lannon: 2007: 10). Parris, discussing an audience's perception of marketing suggests:

In a society increasingly suspicious of the motives behind messages, this is a very great resource, and public service advertisers should not value it lightly, or squander it in campaigns that devalue the currency of something of which we should not be ashamed: honest propaganda (ibid.).

He emphasises the importance of understanding what message you are trying to address. The message must be valid and understandable so as not to face a negative response from the very audience with which you are trying to communicate. My research has established that the public is willing to come forward and vocally dismiss the content of information films if it is felt to be misleading or misrepresentative.⁵

My research has also established that the contemporary public and independent information film no longer survives as a singular entity. In a campaign targeted at children, a website for teachers or parents, offering an opportunity to revisit the film and information, would be expected. Developing online interactive games, which could act as an educational tool, would further encourage repeated visits to the website. Social networking, Facebook, Twitter or a blog generate awareness and also offer opportunities for visitors to further encourage the sharing of information (Morgan and Poorta, 2007: 163). Online interactive activities need some consideration when naming a campaign. For example, an online search for *Dirt Girl World*, an animated children's television programme about growing vegetables, may require some guidance from adults as a number of explicit images could appear as a result of this word cluster.

Fundamentally, my research concludes that animation's on-going contribution to the information film is its ability to constantly re-invent itself as a medium, which allows it to be an innovative method of re-telling and re-igniting a public information film, even if the fundamental objective remains the same: 'Animation has proved that it can stand the test of time because the process relies on experimentation, whether that be through representation, structure, technology or insight' (Selby, 2009: 8). Animated public information film has successfully adapted to the transition from cinema to television, and is more than capable of advancing and developing even further within the context of digital technologies. The COI recognises that the public information film has also had to adapt to the shifting platforms of information delivery, as Lannon points out: 'Traditional broadcast as a medium will always have its role in public health and safety campaigns but the web should be an ever more powerful tool' (Lannon, 2007: 234). With much of my research locating public and independent information films online, animation is also proving it is more than capable of adapting to web delivery. Early government films broadcast today can appear dated or unfashionable, and run the risk of the message not being taken seriously; providing an

audience with an updated, innovative film could help the viewer to accept that there is a fresh need for the information to be broadcast. This was tested in my practice with *Tell Someone*.

My research investigated how the viewing of information films had increased from a solitary stimulus experience to a multi-method way of receiving messages. The contemporary public information film is dependent on using various media viewing platforms where information is forwarded, returned, deleted, observed more than once, and available almost instantly. Considering the advantages of digital television, Chalaby and Segall, in their paper 'The Broadcasting Media in the Age of Risk: The Advent of Digital Television', claim that the viewer 'can take advantage of the possibility to watch almost any programme at the most convenient time to them, making their television consumption a matter of choice rather than "fate"' (1999: 365). I was mindful of this in designing *Tell Someone*. I also acknowledged Judie Lannon's observation that,

For the communications planner and the sponsor of the communications, it is crucial to understand the particular contribution of each medium to the overall effect in order to develop an efficient communications plan. These new media are largely uncharted territory and all marketers, not just government departments need to understand how these new media work (2007: 234).

I conclude that the demand for public information films remains and, with further government cutting budgets, independent and commercial information films may be the only possible option for producing information films. Furthermore, the animated public information film specifically targeting children will need to consider distribution. Anna Horne, Chairperson of Save Children's TV, recognises that that there is a need for information films to be broadcast during children's programming. At the same time, Horne acknowledges the difficulties of a public information film reaching its target audience, noting that 'Animation and also live action can convey important messages, as far as kids finding them, in the past they have been run as interstitials but that is harder in a competitive market' (email correspondence, 22nd October 2008).

In responding to my research question about how animation practice might contribute to contemporary information films, it was as important to gain some understanding of the public's perception of animation within the context of an information film. The

participation of parents in my survey raised a number of valid points. The results of the parents' questionnaire confirmed that public information films had some effect on them as children. This was fundamental as up until that point I was only assuming this was the case from my own experiences. Furthermore, the responses to my questions sufficiently supported the idea of animated information films being made available to their children. The responses reinforced the theory that animated public information films have a beneficial and persuasive effect. The survey fully supported the need for an information film addressing the issues of contemporary 'stranger danger'. Parents recognised that fundamentally the issue remains relevant but its location has shifted – in that the stranger danger has shifted from outside of school and park locations (fixtures of 1970s public information films) to stranger interaction with their children online within the home.

The survey results also challenged my preconceptions that, for the most part, viewers perceived animation as a 'one-size-fits-all' medium. Individual responses recommended what style of animation would be more suitable for certain age groups, from pre-schoolers to teenagers. The perceptive responses were unanticipated, and certainly stimulated my desire to understand the spectatorship of animation further.

Key Findings

My research has proved the value of accessing archive material and conducting primary research with filmmakers. These research methods enabled me to analyse and identify the contribution of British animation, both historically and culturally. My survey acknowledges animation, within the context of a public information film, as an effective and memorable form of delivering persuasive information, especially to children. However, in light of the recent government budget cuts, there runs a genuine risk that the public information film may cease to exist entirely, necessitating greater commitment from institutions that fund independent information films.

In evaluating my research and its aims, I realise that a focus group with children aged seven to eleven (the intended target audience) to discuss Sally Sense, would be of benefit. This would provide an opportunity to assess whether my animatic delivers a clear story, and check that the characters and the film's message are understandable. It would also be of benefit to run a workshop with both parents and children, to assess if

the parents understand the procedures of preventing or responding to cyber-bullying like that in *Tell Someone*.⁶ Furthermore, I would like to work closely with a professional model maker to develop a prototype of Sally and Snitch with a view to approaching producers and agencies to discuss the opportunity to develop Sally Sense in other storylines. These might focus on bereavement, bullying, road safety and other issues children face, and become a series of animated information films. Working collaboratively with an agency that specialises in the subjects I wish to develop could lead to the production of independent information films, which are often commissioned by a charity.⁷

Finally, my research establishes that British animation has been instrumental in contributing to social awareness by delivering important information to British society for over seventy years. My practice reveals that animation does make a contemporary contribution to information films. As a stand-alone art form, animation continues to be a convincingly creative, persuasive and inventive asset to the delivery of public and independent information films. It also proves to be adaptable to rapidly changing technology and capable of updating knowledge to meet the new social challenges posed both by online access to technology and by the new multiple platforms available for the delivery of information in the digital era.

Notes

Chapter One

¹ The interview with Dick and Liz Horne was to be invaluable for my research, with both discussing their time spent as animators at the Halas & Batchelor studio during the Second World War and post-war period. The importance of the recorded interview is supported further because Dick and Liz Horne have passed away since the interview – Dick (2010), Liz (2012).

² It was not until 1943 that live-action MOI films began to focus more on the ‘Home Front’ and less on the armed forces (Chapman, 1998: 52).

³ The MOI’s first campaign involved a poster designed to encourage morale and boost support for the war by stating ‘Your courage, your cheerfulness, your resolution will bring us victory’. It attracted a serious exchange of negativity, both within society and the media towards the MOI and its officials (Reeves, 1999: 141).

⁴ The BBC ceased television broadcasting 1st September 1939. The BBC cut broadcast in the middle of a Mickey Mouse cartoon (Chapman, 1998: 174).

⁵ John Grierson is most recognised for developing the British Documentary Movement. His work relates to an auteurist approach mode of filmmaking with contributions from Rotha etc. from the 1920s through to the 1940s.

⁶ The MOI’s first poster campaign resulted in unprecedented negativity. The poster, which reads ‘Your Courage, Your Cheerfulness, Your Resolution, Will Bring Us Victory’, was viewed by the public as if the government was expecting them to sacrifice themselves for the war effort. If the MOI had removed the ‘Y’ from ‘Your’ to read ‘Our Courage, Our Cheerfulness, Our Resolution...’, the poster may have received a more positive response.

⁷ Demographic observations took place in London, Watford, Letchworth, Ruislip and Birmingham, with a total of 200 Londoners questioned.

⁸ Isotype was a graphic system created by Otto Neurath, which Rotha continued to use in a number of his documentaries. *Land of Promise* (Paul Rotha, Paul Rotha Productions, UK, 1946) uses the graphics throughout the live-action film, which is narrated by John Mills, who later did the voice of Jim in the feature film *When the Wind Blows* (1986). The graphics are used to illustrate the number of workmen needed to develop houses. These are shown as an illustration of a man wearing overalls and carrying a spade. The illustration multiplies to show an increase. The same method is used to highlight the ratio of population to houses, through graphs, houses and human figures. The Isotype archive is based at Reading University.

⁹ Carl Giles, who is most remembered for his cartoons for the *Daily Express*, began work as an animator and worked on the British feature film *The Fox Hunt* (1936). Giles was injured in a motorcycle accident, which left him unable to apply for war duty and, as a result, he worked as an animator and cartoonist. Rotha developed *Worker on the Warfront* as an official news article item, and produced films for the MOI from 1942 to 1945. Giles’s film, *The Grenada*, was included in *Worker on the Warfront* No 11 (1944, http://bufvc.ac.uk/newsonscreen/search/newsreel_histories/detail.php?id=20).

¹⁰ *Silly Symphonies* was a series of animated short films dating from 1929 to 1939 with a total of seventy-five produced.

¹¹ Radio was also a key contributor to the government's use of propaganda, with historians referring to the BBC as 'the most important instrument of domestic propaganda, and its efforts to renegotiate a place for itself in response to the wartime challenges and changes' (O'Sullivan, 1995: 174). Not everyone was able to visit the cinema, especially in the more rural areas. Radio BBC broadcasted *The Forces Programme*, which first broadcast in the evenings, then early mornings to midday, and 'made use of selected, often simultaneous Home Service programming' (ibid., 1995: 177).

¹² Cinemagoers viewed newsreels in the hope of catching a glimpse of loved ones serving overseas who had written home telling of film crews filming. On the other hand, there was a possibility of military personnel who had been filmed being killed in the course of filming. The broadcast of such a film clips would cause distress to loved ones who might be in the audience.

¹³ Anson Dyer (1876–1962).

¹⁴ The Halas & Batchelor studio archive collection is currently held at the Animation Research Centre, University of the Creative Arts. The collection holds artwork, scripts, films and other memorabilia from the studio. There is very little surviving work referring to the studio's Second World War period. This may be due to the studio flooding, but when I spoke to Dick Horne, who worked for the studio during that time, asking if he knew of any artwork, he confirmed that very little evidence remains, mostly due to the studio having to re-use paper over and over again.

¹⁵ Len Lye joined the GPO after Grierson commissioned *Colour Box* (Len Lye, UK, 1935). Lye used a technique of hand painting directly onto film (Sussex, 1975: 53).

¹⁶ *A Few Ounces a Day* is a limited style of animation, relying on a majority of diagrams and symbols, unlike other animated information films from Halas & Batchelor, and Larkins, who utilise a more traditional method of animation.

¹⁷ Film historian James Chapman, discussing the function of the MOI short film, suggests that they achieved levels of success. Referring to the MOR report, he finds that they did achieve a positive outcome. Short films did quickly date, but contributed to the government's objectives (Chapman, 1998: 113).

¹⁸ It is worth noting that, although this research investigates the mechanisms, function and political deliberations of the COI with regard to gaining knowledge of the popularity of the COI through the decades of political intervention, it is important to list these alongside the history of the public information film.

¹⁹ The Marshall Plan was devised in America by George C. Marshall, who asked for assistance from America to rebuild Europe, which faced economic crisis as a result of the Second World War. Due to the success of the *Charley* series and *The Shoemaker and the Hatter*, the studio was approached to produce *Animal Farm* (Halas & Batchelor, UK, 1955). The film was to be the first British feature film for the purposes of entertainment and at the time of production Halas & Batchelor had the largest animation studio in Europe (Shaw, 2001: 96).

Chapter Two

¹ There has been some success with animated features such as *Persepolis* (Vincent Paronnaud, Marjane Satrapi, 2007), *Waltz with Bashir* (Ari Folman, Israel, 2008) and *Mary and Max* (Adam Elliot, Australia, 2009) gaining some commercial recognition with adult

audiences and shifting the perception of the cartoon and animation to addressing serious topics of war and disability.

² Nick Park of Aardman Animations, and the creator of Wallace and Gromit and Shaun the Sheep, has won a total of four Oscars, and been nominated five times.

³ Leeds Animation Workshop will normally have three to four applications at any one time seeking funding. They are dependent on multiple funders for one single project as funding tends to be from various organisations. For the most part, a project would not be funded from just one organisation (December 2007)

⁴ British Transport Films commissioned the film, funded by the government. It focuses on a school sports day, where children race across railway lines. I remember seeing this film as a child off school with chicken pox. It was terrifying to watch. The British Film Institute (BFI) claims the film to be ‘among the most audacious public safety films ever made’ (<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1077210/>).

⁵ Pixilation is a non-drawing method of animating which involves a ‘process employing live actors who are moved through incremental poses and captured frame by frame’ (Furniss, 2008: 327).

⁶ Other complaints about the content of the film suggested that it was false and misleading. It was suggested that the portrayal of rising floods to the extent shown in the storybook was exaggerated. The press campaign, which supported the storybook theme by using popular children’s nursery rhymes, also came under criticism.

⁷ The films were commissioned using four British animation studios: Bold Creative, Slinky Pictures, Blue Zoo and Arthur Cox. The films took three months to animate.

⁸ The films can be viewed online either on YouTube or the Brother McLeod’s website. Interestingly, the films available the McLeod’s website are categorised by the term ‘activism’.

⁹ Channel 4’s sex education series the week ending 14th September 2008 came fourth in the top thirty Channel 4 programmes for that week. During that same week, 50% of the weekly programmes were documentaries, with the sex education series topping the viewing figures.

Chapter Three

¹ The most popular comics purchased by children were *The Simpsons*, *Peppa Pig* and *Dora the Explorer* (questionnaire results).

² Dr Tanya Byron headed the Byron Review.

³ The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, hereafter CEOP, and ThinkUKnow both advocate online safety in the UK and employ many methods of communication, using both live action and animation. *Hector and Friends*, created in New Zealand, is a series of short animated information films targeting the age group five to seven. Hector is the protagonist – a dolphin who lives in the ocean with his underwater friends, including Police Officer Jim, a seahorse. The films are bright in colour and the characters remove any elements of human stereotyping, aside from Officer Jim, who wears a full police uniform – the only clothing in the films. Officer Jim, the only British accented character, and with a northern Yorkshire accent is the adult of the group, the protector. The short films are a simple and effective introduction to younger children accessing the Internet. The films are further supported with teaching materials, and classroom activities, all of which can be accessed online (http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/5_7/hectorsworld/).

⁴ The COI Tufty Squirrel animated road safety campaign was a huge success for the government, with over a million children members. Upon registering with the club the member received stickers, badges and information on road safety. Speaking with a colleague about the popularity of the Tufty campaigns, he vividly remembers applying to join the club, and having to wait as the agency was unable to cope with the demand. He also remembers the pride of everyone wearing the badges and stickers at school.

⁵ Currently the most popular UK website visited by younger audiences is Moshi Monsters, a website I explored and researched with reference to building ‘Horrors and Nightmares’, the website where Sally meets with Snitch. Such is the popularity of the website and its characters that they have a merchandise department (see www.moshimonsters.com).

Conclusion

¹ Halas & Batchelor lost a large amount of the original artwork relating to their public information film campaigns during a flooding of the studio.

² Animation is used during weather broadcasts, normally as a graphic illustration, a flow of arrows, or an animated illustration of an approaching storm.

³ *Cut* (Wright, UK, 2007), a live-action independent information film commissioned by Women’s Aid and starring British actress Keira Knightly, was originally meant for television broadcast. The film was refused on the grounds that it was too violent. The charity’s refusal to remove scenes led to the focus on cinema and online viewing (Johnston, UK, 2009).

⁴ *Peppa Pig*, a popular pre-school children’s animation series, recently came under criticism for allowing Peppa Pig to travel in a car without wearing a seatbelt. Initially the studio had considered seatbelts but felt that it might restrict the animation. The decision to return to the relevant episodes and include a seatbelt was the result of a parent contacting the studio complaining that their child refused to wear a seatbelt after seeing the programme (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8460753.stm>). This supports the principle that animation is persuasive to children who will emulate the behavior of an animated character.

⁵ The COI celebrated its 60th birthday in 2006 and re-released an updated *Joe and Petunia* (director unknown, UK, 2006), which was a bit tongue in cheek, and a reminder of former COI characters. They now wear headphones while listening to an MP3 player and read *Hello* magazine, to update them from the original film, *Joe and Petunia – Coastguard* (Nicholas Spargo, Nicholas Cartoons, Central Office of Information, 1968). The illustrative style of the film and the voiceovers, even with the updates, still give a sense of an outdated animated public information film. Some may be offended by the illustrative stereotypical representation of the characters – the use of northern accents, the handkerchief on the head and oversized breasts, with their suggestion of the British *Carry On* films and ‘Kiss Me Quick’ postcards. Even though the message remains the same – safety while at sea – the message could be lost on the more contemporary viewing audience.

⁶ In addition to the workshop for Sally Sense, it would be of interest to include the two public information films on road safety, *Tales of the Road* and the hedgehog road safety song, parting order to further understand how children respond to peer involvement in an information film over a film of the same subject taking a different approach, for example a child sings the hedgehog song, while an adult narrates *Tales of the Road*.

⁷ During my research for the PhD and as a member of the School of Arts Animation Academy, Professor Paul Wells and myself met with the Child Bereavement charity to discuss the possibility of producing an animated short that looks at the issues children face over bereavement. The charity was very interested in my research, and supported the notion

that animation was a valuable tool to speak to children. We were asked to develop a proposal based on one of the charity's books but unfortunately, due to their restricted funds, the project couldn't move forward. But for the purposes of Sally Sense, and developing an independent information film, speaking with experts in the field of the information you wish to address is fundamental to a successful campaign.

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Box 1: Films 1936–50, Film Reports and Press Cuttings

- 17/1/A: Letters from volunteers and film reports
- 17/4/B: Film Reports 1939 – 40
- 17/1/C: Film Reports 1941 – 42
- 17/1/D: Press Cuttings

Box 2: Films 1936–42

- 17/2/A: The Bernstein Report
- 17/2/B: Department Committee on Cinematograph Films 1937
- 17/2/E: Press Extracts and Cuttings
- 17/2/F: Film Correspondence and Memos 1939–42
- 17/2/G: Film Reports 1939–40
- 17/2/H: Note for Miss Lejeune on audience response to German personalities
- 17/2/I: Postcards to Moore Raymond

Box 3: Film Reports 1939–44

- 17/3/A: Film Questionnaire
- 17/3.B: “The Lion Has Wings”
- 17/3/C: Film Questionnaire 1940
- 17/3/D: Cinema Queues
- 17/3/F: The Plymouth Report 1941
- 17/3/H: British Film Institute Report
- 17/3/I: The Film and Family Life
- 17/3/J: Miscellaneous Material

Box 4: Film Reports and Interviews

- 17/4/A: Film Interviews 1939–40

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- 17/4/C: Film Reports 10–19
- 17/4/D: Film Reports 20–32
- 17/4/E: Film Reports 33–45
- 17/4/F: Film Reports 1938–46
- 17/4/G: “The Great Dictator”
- 17/4/H: Memos 1940
- 17/4/I: 1939 Miscellaneous Material

Box 5: Letters to Picturegoer Weekly 1940

- 17/5/A: Letters to Picturegoer Weekly Report, 13.1.41
- 17/5/B: Letters to Picturegoer Weekly - British Films

Box 7: Newsreels 1939–45

- 17/7/A: General Newsreel Reports
- 17/7/B: Super Sound Gazette
- 17/7/C: British Movietone News
- 17/7/D: Newsreels Analysis
- 17/7/E: Newsreel Reports
- 17/7/F: Newsreel Reports 1939–40
- 17/7/G: Newsreel Reports 1940–45
- 17/7/H: Newsreels Reports from Observers

Box 8: Reports and General Material

- 17/8/A: Film Reports and Memos
- 17/8/B: General Reports
- 17/8/C: Distribution of MOI Films
- 17/8/D: Press Extracts Concerning MOI Films
- 17/8/E: Observers Letters about MOI Films
- 17/8/F: MOI Film Questionnaires
- 17/8/G: Unidentified Questionnaire Responses 1942

- 17/8/H: MOI Miscellaneous Material

Box 9: MOI Shorts – Reports and Analysis Material

- 17/9/A: MOI Scripts
- 17/9/B: “You’re Telling Me”
- 17/9/C: “A Few Ounces A Day”
- 17/9/E: “Arms for Scrap”

Box 15: “London Town” Survey, “Chance of a Lifetime”, Cinema Going, Film and Theatre Reports

- 17/15/I: Film and Theatre Reports 1946–48

Appendices

Appendix 1

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Teenagers Learn to Swim, Central Office of Information, 1972.

Teenagers in Love, director unknown, NHS Choices, 2008.

Tell It Like It Is, director unknown, Leeds Animation Workshop, 2000.

The British Army at your Service, Halas & Batchelor Cartoons, Central Office of Information War Office, 1950.

The Brown Rabbits – Pills and Bottles, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

The Charley Says Series 'Falling in the Water', Richard Taylor, Richard Taylor Cartoon Films, Central Office of Information, 1973.

The Charley Says Series 'Hot Stoves', Richard Taylor, Richard Taylor Cartoon Films, Central Office of Information, 1973.

The Charley Says Series 'Matches', Richard Taylor, Richard Taylor Cartoon Films, Central Office of Information, 1973.

The Charley Says Series 'Mummy should Know', Richard Taylor, Richard Taylor Cartoon Films, Central Office of Information, 1973.

The Charley Says Series 'Teapot', Richard Taylor, Richard Taylor Cartoon Films, Central Office of Information, 1973.

The Circle, Caroline Gardiner, Mosaic Films, National Blood Service, 2003.

The Finishing Line, John Krish, British Transport, 1977.

The Highway Code – Pedestrian Crossings, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

The House that Jack Built, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

The Tokkels, Preventing STIs, The Brothers McLeod, NHS Choices, 2010.

The Tokkels, Hosepipe, The Brothers McLeod, NHS Choices, 2010.

The Road of Health, Brain Salt, Gaumont-British Instructional, 1938.

The Shoemaker and The Hatter, Joy Batchelor, Halas & Batchelor Cartoons, 1949.

The Skeleton in the Cupboard, director unknown, Ministry of Information, 1943.

The Way Ahead, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

The Wrong Trainers, Kez Margie, Children's BBC, 2006.

They Can't Keep an Old Blade Down – Care with Pig Feed, director unknown, Ministry of Information, 1944.

Think Bubble – Adult and Child, director unknown, Central Office of Information Home Office, 1994.

Trade Tattoo, Len Lye, General Post Office Film Unit (GPO), 1937.

Through the Looking Ceiling, director unknown, Leeds Animation Workshop, 1994.

Ticket Dreams, director unknown, Ministry of Information, 1944.

Tim Marches Back, director unknown, Ministry of Information, 1944.

Tombstone Canyon – Keep Death off the Roads, director unknown, Ministry of Information, 1945.

Traffic Shapes, director unknown, Central Office of Information, 1979.

Tufty Under 5's Ice Cream, John Hardwick, Bob Bura, Central Office of Information, 1973.

Tyre Maintenance, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

Use Your Head – Acting Impulsively, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

Use Your Head – Breakdowns, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

Use Your Head – Driving Conditions, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

Waste Watchers, director unknown, Leeds Animation Workshop, 1996.

Watch Me, Aardman Animations, Leonard Cheshire Disability, UK, 2008.

What's Blood Got to do with it? Andy Glynne, Mosaic Films, National Blood Service, 2004.

When in the Country, director unknown, Guild Animation Ltd/Desmond Films, Central Office of Information, 1963.

Worker on the Warfront, Paul Rotha, Paul Rotha Productions, Ministry of Information, 1943.

Working with Care, director unknown, Leeds Animation Workshop, 1999.

Worth Talking about Contraception, director unknown, NHS, 2009.

Writings Worth While, director unknown, Ministry of Information, 1945.

Yellow Box Junctions, director unknown, Central Office of Information, 1979.

Yellow Lines, director unknown, Central Office of Information, date unknown.

Appendix 2

Filmography

An Inconvenient Truth, Davis Gunnenheim, USA, 2006.

Brave, Mark Andrews, Brenda Chapman, USA, 2012.

Beauty and the Beast, Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise, USA, 1991.

Cinderella, Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackons, USA, 1950.

Coraline, Henry Selick, USA, 2009.

Creature Comforts, Nick Park, UK, 1990.

Cut, Joe Wright, UK, 2010.

Fantasia, James Algar, Samuel Armstrong, Ford Beebe, Norman Ferguson, Jim Handley, T. Hee, Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske, Bill Robers, Paul Satterfield, Ben Sharpsteen, USA, 1940.

Jungle Book, Wolfgang Reitherman, USA, 1967.

Sleeping Beauty, Clyde Geronimi, USA, 1959.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, David Hand, USA, 1937.

Spirited Away, Hayao Miyazaki, Japan, 2001.

Waltz with Bashir (alternative title: *Vals Im Bahir*), Ari Folman, 2008.

When the Wind Blows, Jimmy T. Murakami, UK, 1986.

Appendix 3

Media

Addressing the Nation: The GPO Film Unit Collection, British Film Institute, 2008.

Cathy Come Home, Wednesday Play, Ken Loach, 1966.

Animation Nation – The Art of Persuasion, BBC Productions, 2005.

Animation Nation – Visions of Childhood, BBC Productions, 2005.

Britain Goes Camping, Brian Henry Martin, BBC Four, 20th July 2010.

Land of Promise: The British Documentary Movement 1930–1950, British Film Institute, 2009.

Public Information Films of the British Home Front 1939-1945, Strike Force Entertainment 2009.

The Best Public Information Films in the World “Charley Says” Network, 2001.

The COI Collection: Volume One – Police and Thieves, British Film Institute, 2010.

The Joy of Sex Education, British Film Institute, 2009.

Yes We Can! The Lost Art of Oratory, BBC 2, 5th April 2009.

Appendix 4

Webography

Note: The following websites were consulted on a regular basis for ongoing relevant information and contacts:

Aardman Animations – URL: [http:// www.aardman.com](http://www.aardman.com).

Animation Therapy – URL: <http://www.animationtherapy.co.uk/>.

Amnesty International – URL: <http://www.amnesty.org.uk>.

BBC Schools – URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools>.

BBC iPlayer – URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer>.

CBBC – URL: <http://www.cbeebies.com>.

End Child Poverty – URL: <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/>.

Every Child Matters – Department for children, schools and families – URL: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/>.

Film & Sound Online – URL: www.filmandsound.co.uk.

The Grief Blog – URL: <http://thegriefblog.com/grief-counseling/death-and-dying/death-of-a-grandparent/>.

Halas & Batchelor Collection – URL: <http://www.halasandbatchelor.co.uk/>.

Has someone you loved died – CBBC *Newsround* – URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_7680000/newsid_7680600/7680628.stm.

Hector's Home – URL: <http://talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk/>.

Help give them a voice – URL: <http://www.helpgivethemavoice.com/>.

Hideout – Women's Aid – URL: <http://www.thehideout.org.uk/default.aspa>.

How to get Nickelodeon – URL: <http://www.nickjr.co.uk/get/>.

HumanKind TV – URL: <http://www.youtube.com/user/HumanTV>.

Imperial War Museum Film Archive –
<http://collections.iwm.org.uk/server/show/nav.203>.

Keep Britain Tidy – URL <http://www.thebigtidyup.org/>.

Kidscape – URL: <http://www.kidscape.org.uk/index.shtml>.

Know it All – Childnet International – URL: <http://www.childnet-int.org/kia/>.

Leeds Animation Workshop – URL: <http://www.leedsanimation.org.uk/index.html>.

Live Earth – URL: <http://liveearth.org/en/>.

Mark Williams-Thomas – Media Police Advisor – URL: <http://www.williams-thomas.co.uk/>.

Marketing Magazing – URL: <http://www.marketingmagazine.co.uk>.

Mass Observation Report – URL: <http://www.massobs.org.uk/index.htm>.

Moshi Monsters – URL: <http://www.moshimonsters.com/home>.

MTV Switch – URL: <http://www.mtvswitch.org/en/>.

National Archives – URL: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>.

Need2know – URL: <http://www.need2know.co.uk/need2know/>.

Netmums – URL: <http://www.netmums.com>.

NHS Choices – URL: <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>.

Nick (Nickelodeon) – URL: <http://www.nick.com/>.

Nicktoons – URL: <http://nicktoons.nick.com/>.

Nobel Prize – URL: http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2007/.

NSPCC – URL: www.nspcc.org.uk.

Ofcom – URL: <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/>.

Office for National Statistics – URL: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>.

Oxfam – URL: www.oxfam.org.uk.

The Official Dave Prowse Web Site – URL: <http://www.darthvader-starwars.com/index.htm>.

Parents’ Centre – Helping to you to help your child – URL: <http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk/usingcomputersandtheinternet/>.

Poop Productions – URL: <http://www.poopcreative.org/home.html>.

Professor Byron – URL: <http://www.professortanyabyron.com/>.

Protect and Survive – URL: <http://www.cybertrn.demon.co.uk/atomic/>.

RSPCA – Give Animals a Voice – URL:
<http://www.giveanimalsavoice.org.uk/campaigns/cut-out-stuffing/>
<http://www.youtube.com/user/simonscat>.

Saatchi & Saatchi – URL: <http://www.saatchi.co.uk/>.

Save Kids' TV – URL: <http://www.savekidstv.org.uk/>.

Shout out for Sure Start – URL: <http://shoutoutforasurestart.org.uk/>.

Sky TV – URL: <http://tv.sky.com/>.

Slinky Pictures – URL: <http://www.slinkypics.com/>.

Smart Enough – URL: <http://www.smartEnough.co.uk>.

Stardoll – Fame, fashion and friends – URL:
<http://www.stardoll.com/en/clubs/home.php?id=1359028>.

Hedgehogs – URL: <http://talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk/hedgehogs/>.

Studio AKA – URL: <http://www.studioaka.co.uk/>.

Tales of the Road – Directgov – URL: <http://talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk/>.

Terence Higgins Trust – URL: <http://www.tht.org.uk/>.

The Child's Bereavement Charity – URL: <http://www.childbereavement.org.uk>.

The Children's Society – URL: <http://www.thechildrensociety.org.uk>.

Thinkbox – URL: <http://www.thinkbox.tv/>.

ThinkUKnow – URL: <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>.

UK National Statistics – URL: www.statistics.gov.uk.

UNICEF – Cartoons for Children's Rights – URL: <http://www.unicef.org/crcartoons/>.

Virgin Media – URL: <http://www.virginmedia.com/>

Winston's Wish – URL: <http://www.winstonswish.org.uk>.

Women's Aid 'Cut' – URL:
<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001001000120001§ionTitle=Cut+movie+FAQ>.

Women's Aid – URL: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/default.asp>.

World Have Your Say – URL: <http://worldhaveyoursay.wordpress.com/>.

Appendix 5

Questionnaire Analysis

Age group percentages

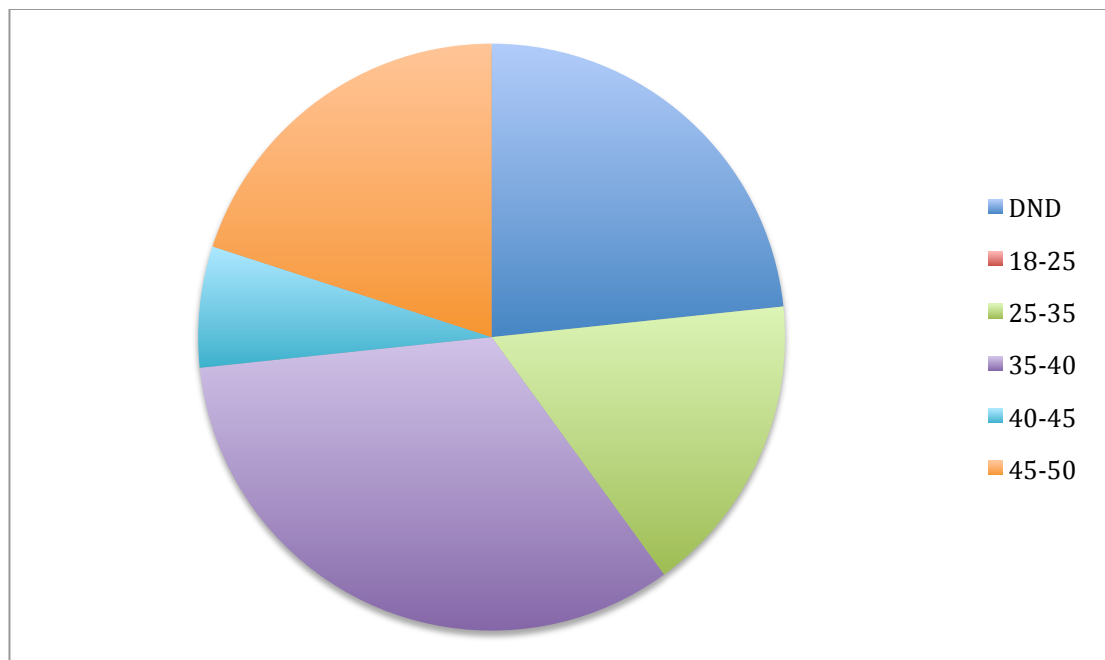


Figure 30: Age group percentages

DND: Did not determine.

Male and female percentages.

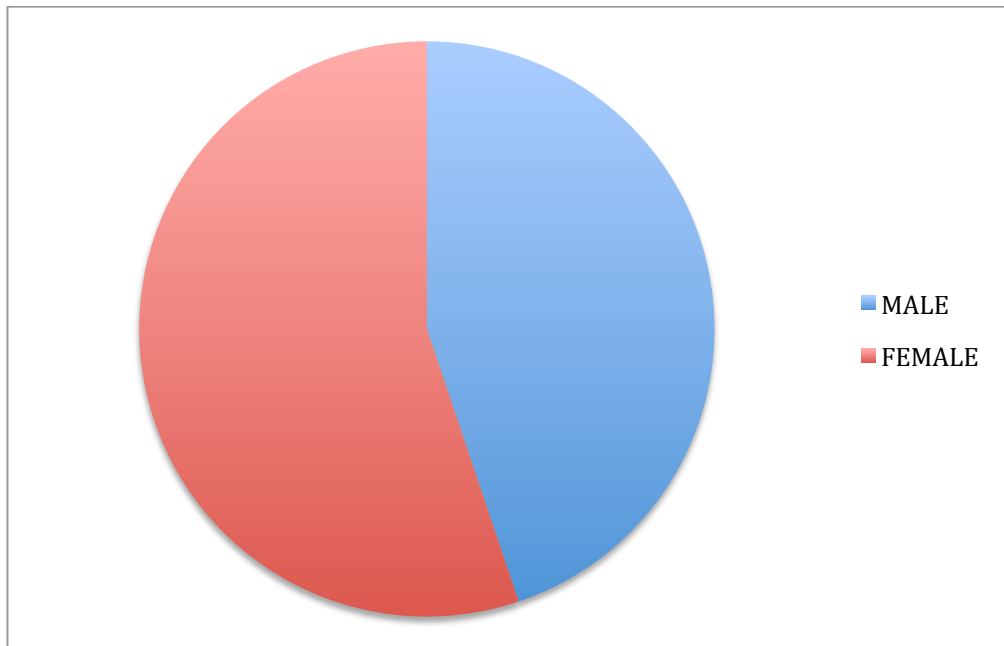


Figure 31: Male/female percentages

Percentage of respondents who stated whether public information films had an effect on them as children.

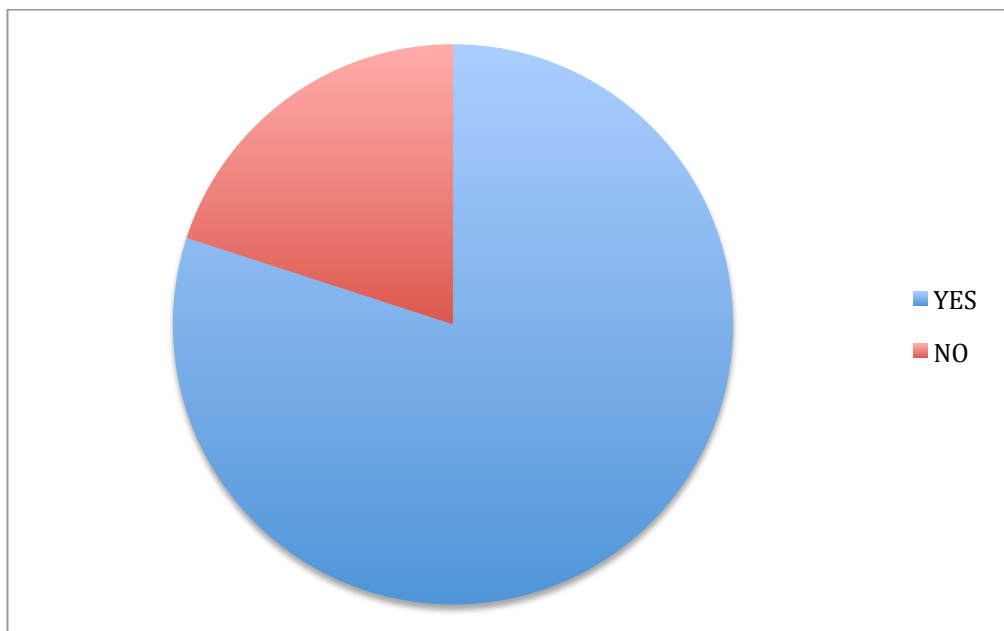


Figure 32: Remembering public information films percentages

Percentages of importance, and preference, on issues concerning children to be included in a public information film.

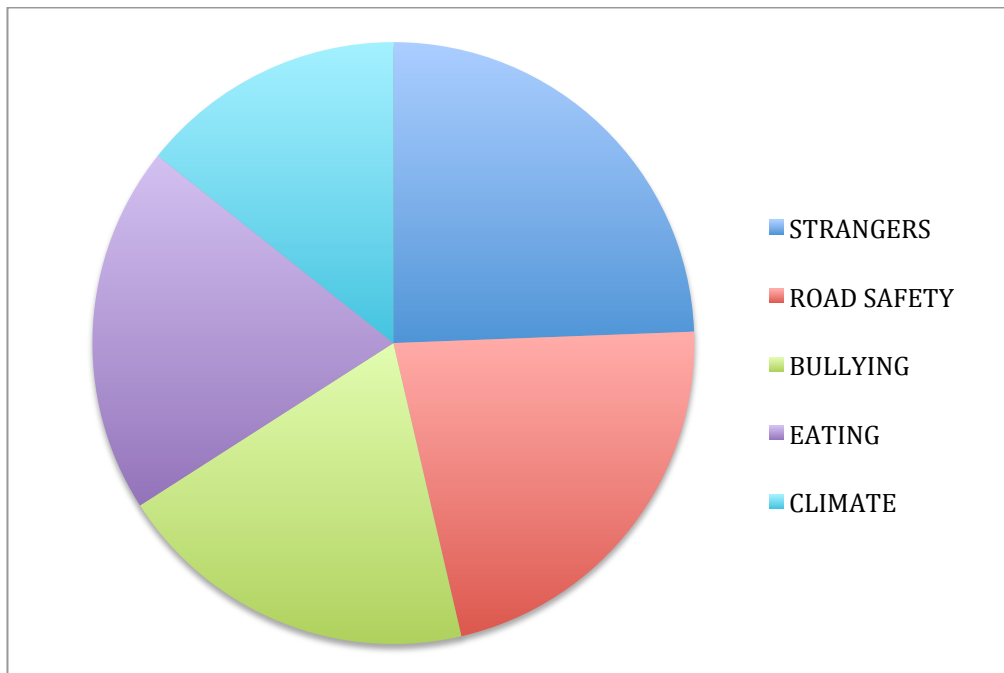


Figure 33: Importance of issues percentages

Percentage of respondents stating whether they felt animation over live action was beneficial for children.

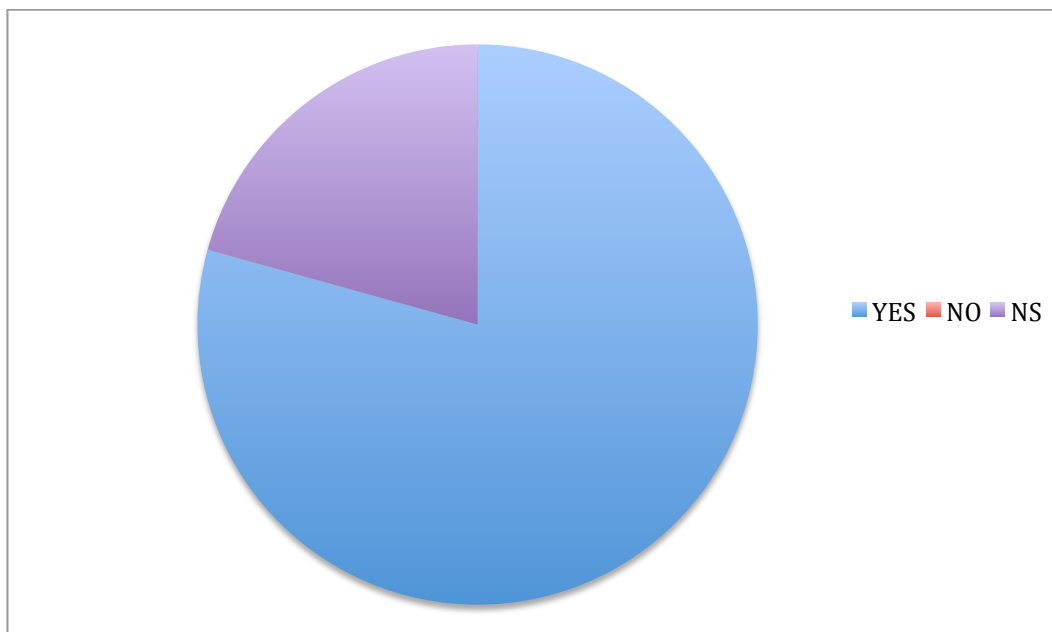


Figure 34: Animation preferred to live action percentages

NS: Not sure.

Percentages of respondents stating whether they felt animation was a suitable method of delivery for a public information film.

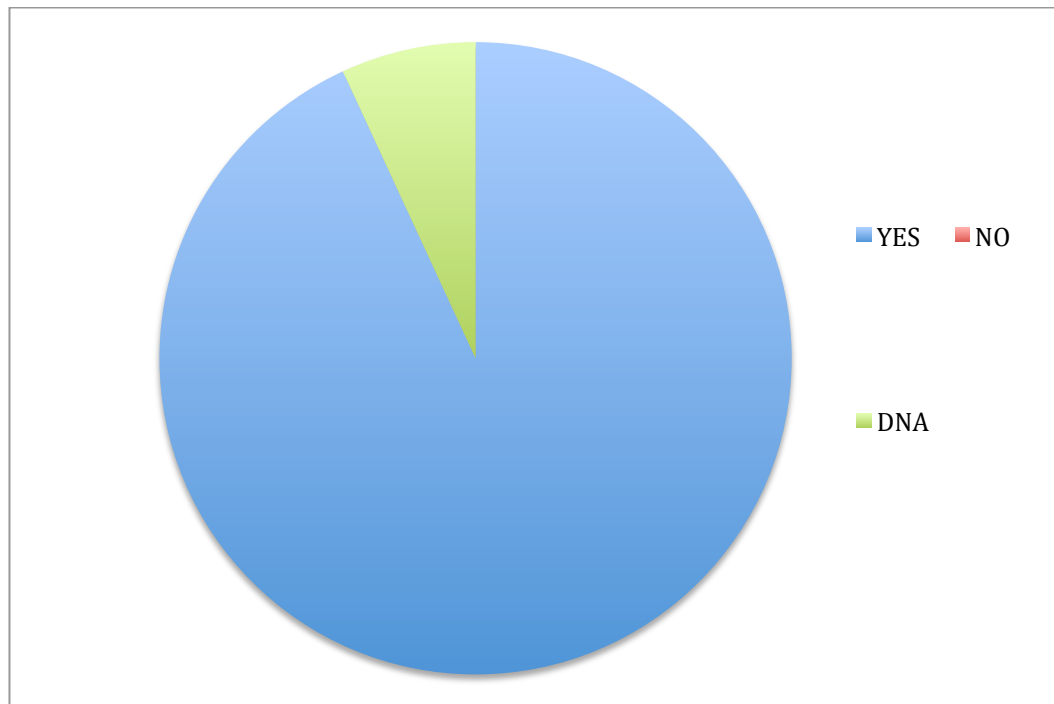


Figure 35: Animation suitability percentages

DNA: Did not answer.

Appendix 6

Funding Requests

Note: The following studios, agencies and individuals were contacted and spoken to with regard to sourcing funding to make *Tell Someone*.

Aardman Animations

Sarah Jex

Gas Ferry Road

Bristol, BS1 6

Email: Sarah.Jex@aardman.com

Website: www.aardman.com

Alan Duncan, MP

Parliamentary Candidate for Rutland & Melton

33 High Street

Melton Mowbray

Leicestershire, LE13 0RT
Email: baldaml@parliament.uk
Website: www.alanduncan.org.uk

Arts Council, England

14 Great Peter Street
London, SW1P 3NQ
Email: chiefexecutive@artscouncil.org.uk
Website: www.artscouncil.org.uk

Calling the Shots

Steve Gear
1 Gas Ferry Road, Bristol
Email: steve@callingtheshots.co.uk
Website: www.callingtheshots.co.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Service

33 Vauxall Bridge Road
London, SW1V 2WG
Email: press@ceop.gov.uk
Website: www.ceop.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families

James Ashbridge, Child Safety Unite
Email: James.ASHBRIDGE@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.dcsf.gov.uk

Leicestershire County Council

Noel Singh, Policy Officer
Policy & Partnerships Team
County Hall, Glenfiel
Leicestershire, LE3 8RA
Email: nosingh@leics.gov.uk
Website: www.fundingtoolkit.org

Screen West Midlands

Simon Flynn, Talent Development Officer
Screen WM

9 Regent Place
Birmingham, B1 3NJ
Email: simon.flynn@screenwm.co.uk
Website: www.screenwm.co.uk

NSPCC Midlands and West
Ina Price, Communications Manager
Email: IPrice@NSPCC.org.uk
Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Omni Productions
Richard Penfold
Email: rpenfold@omniproductions.co.uk

The Child Bereavement Charity
Ann Chalmers, CEO
Aston House, West Wycombe
High Wycombe
Bucks, HP14 3AG
Email: Ann.Chalmers@childbereavement.org.uk
Website: www.childbereavement.org.uk

UNICEF
Edward Waller, Head of Education
30a Great Sutton Street
London, EC1V 0DU
Email: Edward@unicef.org.uk
Website: www.unicef.org.uk

Virgin Media
Richard Branson
Virgin Management Ltd
120 Campden Hill Road
London, W8 7AR

Appendix 7

List of Interview and Questionnaire Participants

Note: This lists the individual filmmakers, directors, designers and producers I contacted for research.

Kenneth Clarke, 28th September 2008 (Historian)

Sarah Cox, 20th May 2008 (Animation Director)

Peter Dickens, 28th May 2009 (Charity Director)

Dominic Edwardes, 10th October 2009 (Head of Marketing, Terence Higgins Trust)

Nick Fletcher, 27th June 2009 (Charity Spokesperson)

Ian Gouldstone, 20th November 2008 (Animation Director)

Iain Harvey, 29th February 2008 (Animation Producer)

Anne Home, 22nd October 2008 (Chairperson of Save Kids' TV)

Elizabeth Horne, 16th May 2008 (Animator)

Dick Horne, 16th May 2008 (Animator)

Curtis Jobling, 23rd October 2008 (Character Designer)

Brian Larkin, 10th April 2008 (Animation Director)

Fiona Lydon, 9th April 2009 (Charity Spokesperson, Action for Children)

Kez Margrie, 4th August 2008 (Animation Director)

Richard Taylor, 9th October 2008 (Animation Director)

Tony White, 22nd December 2007 (Animation Director)

Milena Dragic, 26th November 2007 (Producer)

Mark Williams-Thomas, 6th February 2008 (Child Protection Officer)