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| Institution: University of West London | | |
| Unit of Assessment: UoA 34 - Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management | | |
| Title of case study: Revising and Conserving Britain's Music Video Heritage 1966-2016 | | |
| Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2017-2020 | | |
| Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit: | | |
| Name(s): Emily Caston | Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor of Screen Industries | Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: May 2017 – to date |
| Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2017-2020 | | |
| Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No | | |
| 1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) This extensive music video heritage research programme led by Caston has resulted in significant changes at the British Film Institute (BFI), greater innovation and conservation in the British and Cuban industries, and significant shifts in the way that audiences internationally view British music videos. Research had shown that music videos were excluded and neglected in economic reports on the screen industries, despite anecdotal and practitioner reports of the centrality of the sector economically and had been omitted from the collections policies of the BFI, British Library (BL) and British Phonographic Industry (BPI). The impact described here has arisen from research undertaken following a request from the Head of Research at the BFI and the curators of Popular Music and Visual Arts at the BL to remedy the large gap in their collections and scholarship on music video. The collections of both organisations have now been strengthened and have for the first time a common database template that records for posterity the collaborative artistic contributions to music videos. | | |
| 2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) This research programme, funded by two AHRC awards, undertook a novel analysis of the economic and cultural significance of British music video, in three sets of research questions. 1/ The first set of research questions examined whether British music videos lacked originality and reproduced negative stereotypes, such as gender, as suggested has been the case in American music videos by mainstream media. This was answered initially by seeking a definition of 'British' (in consultation with the curators of the BFI National Film Archive and the BL) and subsequently by curating a collection of 'landmark' British music videos to be held as permanent collections by both organisations. In a series of three industry consultations with a panel of experts spanning five decades of production, a short-list of 2,000 videos was drawn up at the end of 2017 from a database of 234,000 titles compiled by Caston from data supplied by VPL (the UK's royalties collection agency for music video). Caston's objective was to identify those videos which would be the most useful for curators, teachers, journalists and the public wanting to investigate the aesthetics and technological history of the form. A final selection of 200 national music videos was made which illustrated major landmark innovations. To preserve the final collection for posterity, the master files and detailed programme notes for each video (including full credits) were formatted in accordance with the database managers to be exported into the main BFI and BL catalogues. The landmark collected was distributed to audiences and schools across the UK as a 6-disc Special Edition DVD boxset sold on Amazon (R1). The research methods were presented and evaluated in R5, and the significance of each video explained in a curatorial essay (R2) and book (R4). 2/ The second set of research questions were: "What is the industry that produced these industries, how did it evolve, and how did it operate in relation to the structures of the film, television and music industries?" This question had been requested by the Head of Research at the BFI to assist senior management in making policy decisions about funding, taxation and training. In 2016, the BFI held no data about any of the production companies or directors involved. In 2017-2018, Caston investigated these questions through qualitative research methods: 52 in-depth interviews, 62 email interviews, four focus groups (each with five different specialist industry practitioners), four group interviews (each with 25-30 practitioners) with directors, producers, cinematographers, commissioners, editors and other crew employed between 1966 and 2016. The in-depth semi-structured interviews, combined with unprecedented access to industry organisations, yielded new rich data which overcame the | | |

methodological problems of the quantitative data which had hampered the BFI previously. This research was published in the articles commissioned for two journal special issues edited by Caston and dedicated to music video in *Alphaville* (Issue 19, 2020) and the *Journal of British Cinema and Television* (Volume 16, Issue 4, 2019), as well as a monograph (R4).

3/ The third set of questions evolved in direct response to a policy request from the BFI, “What economic role has music videos production played in the screen industries in Britain since the mid 1960s?” This question was investigated by conducting, in 2018-19, in-depth unstructured interviews with executives working in the screen industries from the 1960s to 2016. The research showed that the music video industry had functioned as a R&D sector for the UK screen industries as a whole, driving innovation and growth in advertising, feature films and television drama in particular through post-production (innovations in VFX, telecine, videotape and HD) and the formation of British owned companies in the USA, China, Australia, and Hong Kong. These findings were published as R3 and R4, presenting a diagrammatic map of the economic role of music video as a driver of entrepreneurial and technological innovation. Caston led on R1, was solely responsible for the underlying research and curation of R1 and R2 and is the sole author of the project monograph R4. Comparative investigation of this question industry in Cuba showed that stimulation of the music video industry had occurred alongside a growth in Cuban writer/director productions (as opposed to foreign owned productions in which the Cuban industry functioned as a “service industry”). (R6)

B 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R1: Caston, E. (2018) *Power To the People: British Music Videos 1966-2016: 200 Landmark Music Videos*. DVD, 6 Disc Limited Edition Collection: Thunderbird Releasing.

R2: Caston, E. (2018) Production Credits and Curator’s Essay in Booklet for *Power To the People: British Music Videos 1966-2016: 200 Landmark Music Videos*. DVD: Thunderbird Releasing.

R3: Caston, E. (2019) “The Pioneers Get Shot: Music Video, Independent Production and Cultural Hierarchy In Britain”. *Journal of British Cinema & Television* 16.4: 545-570. <https://doi.org/10.3366/jbctv.2019.0498>

R4: Caston, E. (2020) *British Music Video 1966 – 2016: Genre, Authenticity and Art*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press (Oxford University Press in the USA).

R5: Caston, E. (2020) “Conservation & Curation: Theoretical & Practical Issues In the National Collection Of British Music Videos 1966–2016”. *Alphaville: Journal of Film & Screen Media*, 19. <https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.19.14>

R6: Caston, E., & Smith, J. (2020). “Dancing and Dreaming: “Fifty Years of British Music Video in Havana.” *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, 19: 184-194. <https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.19.16>

Quality Statement: Outputs R3, R5 and R6 appeared in peer-reviewed journal special issues dedicated to the research and edited or co-edited by Caston. All listed publications are included in a multi-component output submitted to REF 2021.

Grants:

1. J. Smith (PI), E. Caston (CI); Fifty Years of British Music Video, 1964-2014: Assessing innovation, industry, influence and impact; AHRC; 1/15 – 6/18; £477,089; AH/M003515/1.

2. E. Caston (PI), J. Smith (CI); Dancing, Drawing, and Dreaming: Presenting Fifty Years of British Music Video innovation on the global stage; AHRC; 9/17 – 12/18; £76,568; AH/P01321X/1.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Caston’s research has fostered new approaches in policy debates, industry creative practice, archival preservation, education, and public engagement with music video, as a result of partnership work with the BFI, the BPI, British Council, and the GRAMMY Museum.

PUBLIC POLICY: Caston’s research has led to a comprehensive change at the BFI, deemed by Royal Charter the organisation responsible for the conservation of British moving image and the formulation and implementation of moving image policy, funding and training. Prior to 2015, the BFI’s work excluded music video, regarding it as an element of the music industry, based on a misunderstanding that music video was part of the advertising and music industries, as the former Head of Research at the BFI has testified [S1]. Given that music video was also excluded from the archival, policy and training activities of the British Phonograph Industry, music video heritage was neither being conserved nor the interests of

its industry members represented within the music industry (BPI) or film industry (BFI). The Creative Director of the BFI states that as a result of Caston's work the BFI now recognises music video as a significant sector of the screen industries and says that music video is now taken into account in policy discussions and decisions about the strategic development of the screen industries in Britain. [S2] It was recognised when, in 2017, Caston, was asked to contribute to the BFI's Film Policy and Education Roundtable consultation for the BFI's next five-year strategy - Film Forever 2. Data from her research [R2, R3 and R6] was imported into the BFI's career tracker database which informs education and training policy (launched officially in 2018).

PUBLIC APPRECIATION & ENGAGEMENT: Caston's research has created greater access to music video for new audiences and has offered curators a revised paradigm through which to exhibit the work – as shown by her public presentations for Sky, TRT, BFI Southbank, the SoundTrack_Cologne Festival, and the FRAME Dance Festival as well as her public engagements for the DVD [S3]. By the end of 2020, 1,312 copies of the boxset had been purchased on Amazon with an average score of 4.7 out of 5 stars across 90 global ratings and positive reviews by members of the public (S4). Press reviews showed that the box set had been successful in changing people's mind about the negative gender stereotyping of British music video, partly as a result of the juxtaposition by Caston of videos representing masculinity and femininity. The reviewer for *Cubed* wrote, "seeing Girls Aloud's *Sexy! No No No...* framed as a portrait of femininity rather than just a late-noughties girl band video is just one example of how the collection breathes new life into certain long-forgotten releases". The innovative role of Annie Lennox's representation of gender was re-examined by Caston for Sky Arts TV series *Video Killed the Radio Star* in 2018 (audience 25,000 UK only), and the role of The Spice Girls in bringing feminism into popular culture was examined in the same series Sky Arts series later that year (audience 25,000 UK only), paving the way for a revised public appreciation of the contribution of music videos to popular culture. Caston was also invited by Turkish international channel TRT to re-consider the impact of the videos of Janet and Michael Jackson on Black representation in film in 2018. In 2019, she was asked to present Steve Barron's work to an audience at the BFI Southbank to reconsider his influence as a filmmaker on subsequent Hollywood narrative film.

As a result of screen and panel discussion at the FRAME dance film panel, Caston's research has also impacted the contemporary dance world. [REDACTED] (choreographer, director, TV presenter) called Caston's curated dance collection an 'amazing catalogue of videos that changes the way we think about dance. Truly fantastic'. The CEO of Sadler's Wells invited Caston to a discussion of future collaborations with resident choreographers for their third digital space. In August 2018, Caston gave a screening entitled 'Political Radicalism in British Music Videos' at the SoundTrack_Cologne Festival in Germany, 22nd-25th August 2018 to an audience of 168 journalists, filmmakers and members of the public. The Festival is Europe's leading specialist congress for music and sound in film, games and the media, attended annually by 2,000 plus professionals. The theme of political radicalism was picked up by journalist John Nicolson who interviewed Caston for his Talk Radio show 4/10/2020 regarding videos included on the DVD that the BBC had banned.

The continuation of this public engagement for future generations of the British public is ensured because there is now a national strategy for the collection and conservation of music video as British moving image heritage on which curators and cinemas can draw for public events. Before 2015, much of this heritage was at risk and lost, only partially available on YouTube. None of the publicly funded charitable organisations charged with 'preserving the nation's moving image archives' held catalogued digital collections for public, research or educational access. Now, following Caston's research, the BFI has an active collecting policy in music video.

In 2018, following their involvement in Caston's research project, two major British film directors [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] donated their entire private film collections to the archive. Both donations enabled public engagement events at the BFI Southbank. In 2018 Caston located not only a 35mm but also an original 16mm print of the missing film print of the 1968 Manfred Mann 'Mighty Quinn' video, an important landmark in promo editing history. Caston's AHRC research grant paid to have the 16mm print (the 35mm disintegrated when removed from the can) digitised and colour restored by the UK's leading colourist with the

original film director [REDACTED] attending. The original 16mm of Flowered Up's 1992 'Weekender', a landmark example of a promo / narrative short film was located in the director's attic and a full digital restoration undertaken with Caston's research funding.

During lockdown a special BFI promotion of the DVD boxset was run with 120 sold to their members who were unable to visit the closed cinemas at the BFI Southbank for archival screenings. Information about the videos will be publicly accessible from the BFI's Collections Information Database along with a short history of the British Music Video industry on the BFI's website by Caston.

The British Library also now has a substantial digital video collection. In 2018, the entire digital music video archive of Warp Records, one of the most influential and prolific producers of innovative music videos through the 1990s and 2000s, was given to the BL as part of a formal donation agreement facilitated by Caston to complement the BL's audio archive of Warp Records. Furthermore, where previously there had been no 'template' in the software databases of the BFI and BL for the multiple authorship of music videos as collaborative audio-visual works combining integrated IP entities (tracks authored by musicians and films authored by writer/ directors), there is now a new template shared by both the BFI and BL, designed by Caston in a consultation with the database managers.

EDUCATION & TRAINING: Since the mid-2000s, Caston's influence on education and training in the UK screen industries has been delivered through her role as Governor of Film London, the capital's strategic publicly funded agency for screen. Previously teachers lacked a resource that enabled them to teach music video historically. Caston's research has resulted in changes to school education through her collaboration with the English and Media Centre, an independent educational charity serving the needs of secondary and FE teachers and students studying music videos for the GCSE and A-Level Media Studies curricula. The Media PGCE Course Leader at Goldsmiths and editor of Media Magazine says, "Not only has my knowledge of the industry improved but also my teaching of the industry units in media and the choice of videos I use has been impacted by Caston and her DVD collection which I use in my teaching" [on the PGCE]. Emily Caston's expertise and research has had a significant impact on the work we do with Film and Media Studies students completing A level and vocational courses in schools and colleges across the UK". Caston's contributions include two talks at the Media Magazine Conference (attended by 400 students & teachers) and writing for the magazine. During the first pandemic lockdown in 2020, Caston's digital research and DVD were used as a teaching resource (called *Leap into Media*) for A-Level students unable to attend school. With over 515 institutional digital subscriptions and a circulation of over 800 hard copies, the magazine has considerable reach. [S5] To support the *Leap into Media* lockdown initiative, Caston secured a discount for all secondary school students to purchase the DVD at the price of £5 (a reduction from £30).

INDUSTRY & ECONOMICS: Throughout the period from 2017 to 2020 there has been high industry engagement as a result of Caston's influence from her prior industry career as an executive producer (1993-2003) and a founding member of the Music Video Producer's Association. There were 85 industry practitioners (directors, producers, commissioners and editors) who served as research consultants; the three industry-wide consultations events attracted a total of 373 attendees; a further 198 participated in online research (through the project Facebook page), and 28 participated in focus groups. As a result of their involvement, filmmakers report having become more innovative and challenging in their work. An award-winning director writes that, ".the project has encouraged me to look for opportunities" to use the greater creative freedom offered in music videos than other screen media to explore ".current cultural themes" and ".to be more radical in our representations of gender and ethnicity". [S6] Editors at the Ibiza International Music Video Festival, the leading international event for the music video industry, at which Caston presented screenings in 2017, 2018 and 2019, talked of pushing their editing styles further and beyond conventional generic expectations as a result of seeing some of the neglected experimental work of the 1960s and 1970s. [S7] More industry practitioners are now voluntarily conserving their work for future audiences. Freelance directors and producers are not only keeping active archives of their work in a way they had not done previously, but also in some cases paying to have their work digitally mastered and upgraded to new formats for archival conservation. [S6] From 1966 to 2016 it was the norm for production companies to destroy their paper business archive on

dissolution; following their involvement in our project, several companies have embarked on a process of conserving their data and work on solid-state drive archives for future access.

Several women creatives have come forward to claim authorship of works previously attributed to men in production cultures often steeped in patriarchal and masculine ideologies of authorship. ██████ instated her right to be credited as director of two of the videos in the national collection which were previously attributed in authorship to male directors, and this historic correction has now been made in the national archives. ██████, a pioneering female founder of the one of the leading 1980s companies, having been uncredited as a producer at that time, has had her name re-instated in the credits. ██████ has said that there was a pressure at the time for women to be 'invisible'. The credits for the landmark collection contain these revisions and were published in R2 and reprinted in R3.

One of the most significant shifts in industry practice occurred in the recording industry's copyright exploitation and moral rights policy. For fifty years, the music video industry had acted to suppress the identity of the filmmakers responsible for making music videos, in favour of advancing the notion of artist musicians' as the authors of music videos. This was embedded in legal contracts with filmmakers which denied them the legal right of attribution to their work and to any and all moral rights in the videos, despite the fact that almost all of the original video scripts (treatments) were generated by the directors rather than the musicians. In Britain from 1981 to the early 2000s, this was entrenched further by MTV's decision in the UK not to credit directors (a different policy to the USA). As a result of these contracts, music video directors and producers have no moral rights to any of their works, have no right to release their videos, and earn no royalties from the commercial exploitation of the videos (e.g., on sales of DVDs and CDs). For the release of the DVD Boxset and as a result of an arrangement Caston secured with the Chair of the BPI, all of the British record labels (with one exception) agreed to reverse this policy and waive the royalties due to them and their artists from commercial sales in order that the boxset could be set at a RRP affordable by students and libraries. The record labels also agreed to undertake all the legal work necessary for these arrangements (individual contracts with each of their recording artists) without payment on a *pro bono* basis. The eventual DVD, containing newly digitised and mastered works, was promoted by the BPI on their website and marketing materials.

International industry impacts were also seen. In 2019, the GRAMMY Museum in Los Angeles decided that British music video should form part of the exhibited history of music video. After taking a digital donation of the British landmark videos, the museum signed a partnership agreement with Caston at UWL to further public engagement in the USA with British music videos since the 1960s. In 2018, following an official reception for Caston's research team at the British Embassy, (R6, S8), a workshop to mark 40 years of British Council work in Cuba and a talk at the Havana International Film School attended by 120 students from over 40 countries, Cuban practitioners said they would henceforth produce more theoretically critical music videos. At the core of Caston's work in Cuba was a series of workshops at the Danze Contemporanea de Cuba with a young female Cuban director, recent graduates of the dance school, and Cuban rap artist Telmary. Mentored by Caston and British director WIZ, the Cuban team experimented with the choreographic and cinematographic techniques of British dance videos identified in R4, to create a new music video.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- S1. R. Paterson, *Music Video and Commercials Production in the UK Screen Industries: An Overlooked Dynamo of Innovation and Success*, Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media no. 19, 2020. DOI: 10.33178/alpha.19.15
- S2. Letter from Creative Director, Programme British Film Institute, dated 14/8/20.
- S3. List of broadcasts and presentations by Caston
- S4. DVD Boxset reviews and sales figures
- S5. Letter from Media PGCE Course Leader / editor of MediaMagazine English and Media Magazine dated 13/7/20 and education resource pack.
- S6. Collated industry feedback and letters from two video producers
- S7. Email from Founder, Ibiza International Music Video Festival, 22/7/20
- S8. *Dancing and dreaming: 50 years of British music video in Havana*. Documentary video available at: <https://repository.uwl.ac.uk/id/eprint/7646/>