THINK OF BRADLEY: A 2D DIGITAL ANIMATION PRESENTING CLASSIFICATION BETWEEN PG AND ADULT CONTENT OF WESTERN TELEVISION CARTOONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

The issue of censorship in animation has persisted throughout the industry's history, with government censorship and self-censorship being used to control the content released to the public. The Hays Code, which regulated the content of films in the 1930s and 1940s, indirectly affected animated content during that era. Despite the eventual abolishment of the Code, censorship has remained a concern, particularly in adult animation that tackles mature themes and content. The distinction between PG and adult animated shows lies in the content's nature and intensity, evaluated by content review boards to guide parents on appropriateness for different age groups. Nevertheless, the ongoing debate on censorship in animation still persist as the need for balancing creative freedom continue with responsible content production, as well as continued dialogue and engagement between creators, audiences, and regulators. This study explores the complexities of censorship in animation and is accompanied by a multimedia project in 2D digital animation that satirically opposes censorship. This project adds to the ongoing discussion around censorship in animation, promotes the value of creative freedom and artistic expression, and encourages further dialogue on the subject.

Keywords: censorship, classification, animation

Introduction

At its core, animation is a visual storytelling medium that relies on the use of images and movement to convey narrative and emotion. Like literature, animation can be used to explore complex themes and ideas, create vivid and memorable characters, and transport audiences to other worlds and realities. Animation is the process of creating a series of images played in rapid succession to create the illusion of movement. It is a highly visual medium that can bring to life characters and worlds that may be difficult or impossible to achieve through live-action filmmaking. It is an art form that has the power to express a range of emotions and ideas, convey meaning to audiences, and communicate with moving images.

As an art form, animation has a long and rich history that has evolved over time. The development of animation as a standalone art form can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the invention of motion picture cameras and the development of hand-drawn cel-animation techniques. The history of animation can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the invention of motion picture cameras and the development of hand-drawn cel animation techniques (Crafton, 2015). Animation as a standalone art form appeared in the 1920s with the success of animated shorts such as Walt Disney's "Steamboat Willie" (1928) and the subsequent Golden Age of American Animation (1930s-1950s), which created a new sector in the entertainment industry (Bendazzi, 2015). Television offered animation programs a further boost in prominence, catering to a wider range of audiences.

The process involves creating storyboards, designing characters, and animating movement through hand-drawn or digital techniques. Animators must be highly skilled in drawing, computer software, and visual storytelling to effectively create animations that engage and captivate audiences. Animation requires a combination of artistic talent and technical ability to create compelling and engaging visuals that communicate complex ideas and emotions (Hooks, 2018). One of the key aspects of animation is the ability to control every aspect of the visual experience. It offers complete control over every aspect of visual representation, allowing the animator to craft a unique and immersive visual experience that can engage and captivate audiences. Through animation, we can manipulate movement, color, texture, and lighting to create a specific mood or feeling.

As a medium, animation is highly versatile and can be used in a wide range of applications, from entertainment to education, to convey complex ideas and emotions in a powerful and engaging way (Furniss, 2016). In each of these applications, animation is used to create engaging and immersive experiences for audiences. From a creative perspective, animation supplies a unique outlet for artistic expression. Animators can create worlds that are not bound by the laws of physics and can use their imaginations to push the boundaries of what is possible. Animation also allows for the creation of characters with exaggerated or stylized features that can convey a range of emotions and personalities.

One of the unique aspects of animation as a storytelling medium is its ability to create worlds and characters that are not limited by the constraints of the physical world. Through animation, we can explore fantastical and surreal landscapes, inhabit the bodies of non-human creatures, and create characters with exaggerated or stylized features that can stand for a wide range of emotions and personalities (Moore & Wells, 2016). From a literary perspective, animation can be analyzed using a variety of critical approaches, including formalism, structuralism, psychoanalysis, and cultural studies. These approaches allow us to examine the formal elements of animation, such as its use of

color, composition, and movement, as well as its cultural and ideological implications, such as how it reflects or challenges societal norms and values.

The first animated films were produced in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with many of these films being experimental and avant-garde in nature. However, as the medium became more popular, it began to face scrutiny from government regulators and industry groups who were concerned about the content being produced.

Censorship is typically to support social stability, protect the values and morals of a community (Moore, 2016). In its simplest form, censorship is the act of suppressing or restricting information, ideas, or opinions that are harmful or inappropriate by those in power. This can take many forms, including the banning of books, films, news articles, or other media; the removal of certain words or images from a work; or the imposition of government or industry guidelines that dictate what can be shown or said in each context.
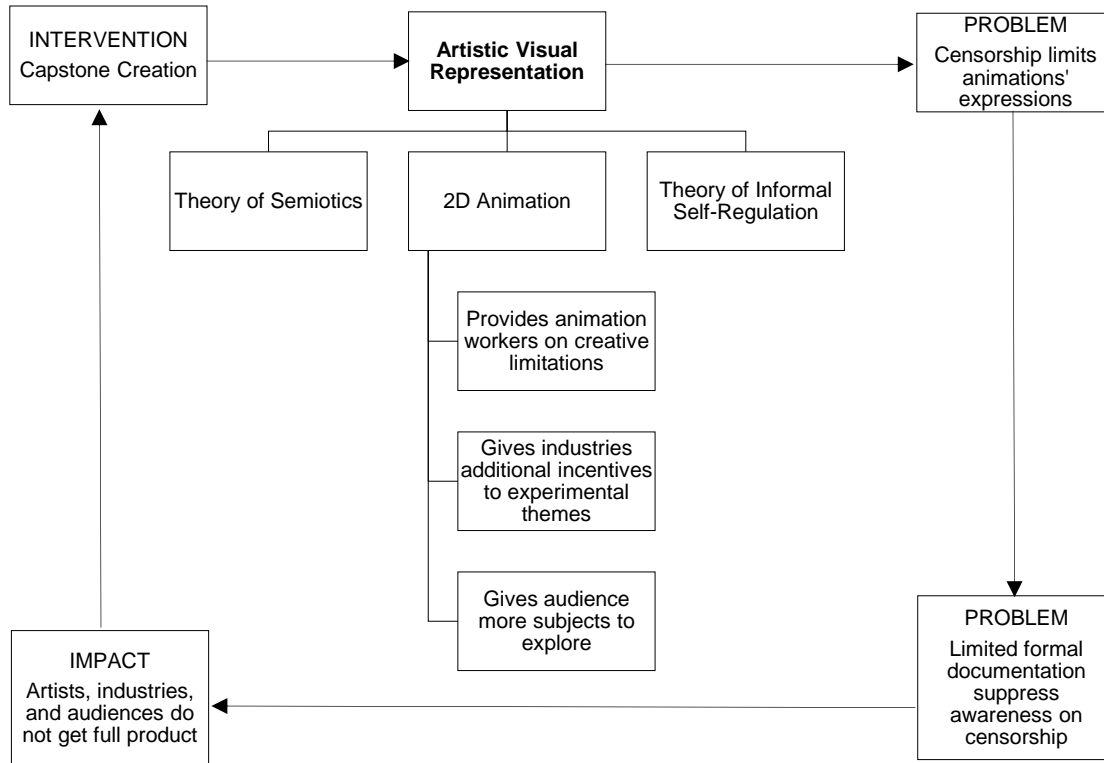
Figure 1 Creative Framework of Censorship in the Industry of 2D Animation and its Effects

The diagram shows the impact of censorship on animated media. It shows a brief overview of the animation process and how it focuses on the criticisms of censorship in animation compared to other media. The Theory of Informal Self-Regulation is a framework for understanding how individuals regulate their own behavior in response to social norms and expectations. Informal self-regulation can be contrasted with formal regulation, which is imposed by governments, laws, or other external actors. The theory points out how people and organizations have a duty to govern and manage their own behavior (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012).

On the other hand, semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and how they are used to send meaning. It is a large multidisciplinary field that includes, among other things, linguistics, philosophy, psychology, and anthropology. Semiotics is based on the idea that meaning is created via the use of signs and symbols, which may take various forms, such as words, images, gestures, or even noises (Qadha & Mahdi, 2019). This relationship is referred to as the sign relationship, and it is what gives signs and symbols their meaning.

Censorship in the animation industry has been a topic of debate for quite some time, with many questioning its necessity and its impact on creativity and innovation. The statement "art is not a democracy" is often used to describe the sentiment of artists who feel that their creative expression should not be stifled by external factors such as censorship. However, the reality is that censorship is often necessary to protect individuals and communities from harmful or offensive content. It is up to societies and communities to decide what level of censorship they believe is proper and to strike a balance between protecting vulnerable individuals and ensuring freedom of expression and artistic freedom.

One of the major challenges in regulating content in the animation industry is that it is often difficult to decide what is right for different audiences. Animation is a medium that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, from children to adults. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the content is proper for the intended audience. This is where censorship comes in. Regulations and restrictions are put in place to ensure that the content is right for the audience.

The distinction between PG and adult animated shows are determined based on the assessment of the review boards. TV-PG is acceptable for children given a sufficient guidance of a parent or guardian. In contrast, TV-14 content calls for strong caution due to potentially more intense elements, including more realistic violence, stronger language, and more explicit sexual content. The TV-14 rating shows that the content may not be suitable for children under fourteen without parental guidance, featuring mature themes, intense scenes, and stronger language than TV-PG shows.

While censorship can be necessary, it can also have negative effects on the artistic side of the animation industry. As mentioned earlier, artists may feel that censorship is limiting their creative expression. This can be frustrating for artists who want to push the boundaries and explore innovative ideas. Additionally, censorship can also affect the financial side of the industry. If certain content is considered inappropriate, it may not be allowed to be shown or distributed, resulting in lost revenue for the animation studios.

The target audience for the animated film that will be produced as part of this study is artists in the multimedia art world and the audience of their works. The film aims to expose the subject matter to a wider audience and increase awareness of censorship in the animation industry. Although there are already discussions about this topic on Internet fora, there is a lack of formal documentation on the subject. This project aims to gather existing published material and use it to create a satirical commentary on the absurdity of the strain that censorship has caused in the animation industry. By doing so, the study will supply a constructive critique of the current state of censorship in animation.

The animated film will focus on the censorship applied to modern animated media and how it differs from its original counterparts. By using satire, the film will present the information gathered in an entertaining yet informative way. It will highlight the challenges faced by artists in the industry and the impact of censorship on their creative expression. The film will also supply a commentary on the need for a balanced approach to censorship that protects individuals and communities while still allowing for artistic freedom and expression.

The reliance on secondary sources of information in **research design** has become increasingly important in fields where primary sources may be scarce or unavailable. This type of research design is especially relevant in the social sciences, humanities, and history, where scholars often rely on published works and archival materials to draw their conclusions. The use of secondary sources provides me with access to a wealth of information, allowing me to analyze and synthesize data from multiple perspectives and sources.

One of the benefits of using secondary sources is the ability to analyze data from a broader perspective. By reviewing the work of other scholars and researchers, I can incorporate multiple viewpoints and interpretations of a topic into their own analysis. This not only helps to prove the relevance and significance of the research, but also strengthens the argument by addressing potential counterarguments and alternative interpretations.

Furthermore, the use of secondary sources enables me to access a variety of data types, such as historical records, published literature, and statistical data. This diversity of data sources can help a researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the topic, as they can analyze the same subject matter from multiple angles and perspectives. This can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the topic and a stronger research conclusion.

Despite these benefits, it is important to note that the use of secondary sources also comes with certain limitations. One potential limitation is the reliability and accuracy of the data sources. I must be careful to critically evaluate the credibility and validity of each source to ensure that the data used in the analysis is exact and unbiased. Additionally, the data sources may be incomplete or lack the necessary level of detail needed to support a particular research question.

The use of secondary sources in research design is a valuable tool for scholars in various fields, particularly in those where primary sources may be unavailable or difficult to obtain. The systematic approach of reviewing, analyzing, and synthesizing the data from multiple sources can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the topic and support stronger research conclusions. However, it is important to critically evaluate the

credibility and validity of each source to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data used in the analysis.

The importance of targeting the animation industry as the research's **target audience** cannot be overstated. The animation industry is a unique field that faces various challenges that differ from other creative industries. The industry is often under the watchful eye of various regulatory bodies, and censorship is one of the most pressing issues that animators face. However, the understanding of what censorship is and how it affects the industry is often muddled. Therefore, this research aims to provide the industry's players with a better understanding of censorship and its impact. By doing so, the industry can become better equipped to address censorship-related issues, leading to a better working environment for animators and other industry players.

Moreover, the issue of censorship has far-reaching implications that can affect not only the animation industry but also the broader public. For example, censorship can limit creativity and artistic expression, leading to a lack of diversity and stagnation in the industry. It can also lead to a narrowing of the types of stories that are told, as content creators may opt for "safer" storylines to avoid censorship. Furthermore, censorship can affect the public's right to information, as certain topics may be thought "off-limits" or "taboo." Thus, by targeting the animation industry as the research's primary audience, the findings can have a ripple effect that affects the broader public.

Lastly, targeting the animation industry can help raise awareness of censorship as a relevant and pressing issue. As mentioned earlier, censorship may not always be at the forefront of public discourse, and people may not see it as a pressing issue in their own lives. However, by providing the animation industry with a better understanding of censorship, the industry's players can become advocates for the issue, helping to raise awareness and encourage discussion on the topic. This can lead to greater public understanding and, potentially, policy changes that better address censorship-related issues.

For my **design process**, I created a short 2D digital animated film. Animation is a powerful and unique medium that allows creators to express their creativity and imagination in ways that other forms of media cannot. However, as with any form of creative expression, animation is not immune to censorship. In fact, due to the animated nature of the medium, censorship of animation can be more prevalent and stricter than other forms of media. As such, it is important to raise awareness and educate both the public and those within the animation industry about the impact of censorship on artistic expression. By creating a 2D animated film on this topic, the creator is taking an initiative-taking step in bringing attention to the issue of censorship in animation.

Furthermore, the exclusive use of digital animation in the creation of films reflects the technological advancements that have revolutionized the animation industry in recent years. Digital animation has allowed for greater flexibility and efficiency in the creation of animated content, enabling creators to produce high-quality work at a faster pace. The use of this technology in the creation of the film not only highlights the creator's technical skills but also highlights the potential of digital animation as a tool for artistic expression.

Think of Bradley is a 5-minute short film that provides a satirical take on the commonly used phrase "think of the children," which is often used to justify censorship in animation. By subverting this phrase, the creator is drawing attention to the absurdity of the reasoning behind censorship and highlighting the need for more nuanced and informed discussions around the topic. The process of creating an animated film is a highly iterative one that involves a variety of dissimilar stages and steps. The first step in creating the film was to set up the premise or concept behind it, in this case the theme of animation censorship and its impact on artistic expression. Once this concept had been set up, I began the process of writing the script, which involved fleshing out the details of the story and the character of Bradley, the protagonist of the film.

The scriptwriting process is a crucial step in the creation of any film, and in this case, it was essential in ensuring that the message about censorship was conveyed effectively. The decision to focus on a character named Bradley and the changes in his life because of censorship is a powerful way to illustrate the impact of censorship on individual lives. By creating relatable and empathetic characters, the creator can connect with the audience on a deeper level, making the message about censorship more impactful and memorable.

In developing the character designs, it was important to strike a balance between making them visually interesting and engaging, while also not detracting from the film's central message. This involved careful consideration of the character's appearance, personality, and behavior, as well as their role in the story. Once the character designs were finalized, I began the process of storyboarding and creating an animatic, which involved mapping out the basic structure of the film, including its pacing, shot composition, and visual style. Creating the background layouts and assets for the film was also an important part of the design process, as it helped to show the film's setting and overall aesthetic. In this case, I opted for a look that was reminiscent of a typical urban or suburban environment, which helped to ground the story in a recognizable and relatable world. Once the key animations had been drawn, the in-between frames were added to create smooth motion, and the sketches were cleaned up and colored.

The process of key animation, in-betweens, and coloring is a time-consuming process that requires great mindfulness and patience. However, the result is a visually

stunning and impactful film that will resonate with audiences and raise awareness about the impact of censorship on artistic expression. The sound design is also a principal element of the film, helping to create an immersive and engaging experience for the audience.

The last step in the design process involved sound design, which is a critical component of any animated film. This involved selecting and editing sound effects and music to enhance the mood and tone of the film, as well as recording and editing dialogue. The final product was then reviewed and corrected, as needed, before being exported and made ready for distribution.

In conclusion, the creation of *Think of Bradley* is a powerful statement on the impact of censorship in animation. By using digital animation and creating a relatable story with empathetic characters, the creator can convey a message that is both impactful and memorable. The film serves as a call to action for both the public and those within the animation industry to advocate for greater artistic freedom and to resist censorship in all its forms.

Pre-production Stage
The design process for creating an animated film involves a variety of steps, each of which plays a critical role in the final product. The planning stage is one of the most important steps, as it sets the foundation for the entire project. Creating a Gantt chart for the production stages and deadlines is a valuable tool in helping to keep the project on track and ensure that each task is completed on time. The budget is another critical aspect of the planning stage, as it helps to ensure that the project can be completed within the distributed funds. Careful review of finances and creating a budgeting system is necessary to ensure that the project can be completed without overspending.

The scriptwriting process is equally important, as it lays the groundwork for the entire story. It is essential to ensure that the script aligns with the premise of the film and communicates the intended message effectively. The storyboarding process is also a crucial step in the design process, as it helps to visualize the story and plan the visual elements of the animation. Storyboard Pro is a valuable tool in helping to create a polished and professional-looking storyboard.

The character designs and assets are equally important, as they help to bring the story to life. Creating detailed and intricate designs using Clip Studio Paint EX is a valuable tool in ensuring that the characters and settings complement the story and convey the intended message effectively. Each step of the design process is essential in creating a cohesive and effective animated film that conveys the intended message while also staying visually appealing and engaging for the audience.

Production Stage

Once the storyboarding was completed, I moved on to the production phase of the animation process. This phase involved creating the key animations for the film using Clip Studio Paint EX. Creating the key animations was an essential step in the design process, as they are the most important frames that define the movement and action in the animation. I took great care in creating the key animations, ensuring that they were well-drawn and conveyed the intended message of the film.

Following the completion of the key animations, I moved on to creating the in-betweens. In-betweens are the frames that fill the gaps between the key frames, providing smoother movement and making the animation appear more fluid. Creating in-betweens can be a tedious and time-consuming process, but it is an essential step in creating a polished and professional-looking animation.

Once the in-betweens were complete, I reviewed all the frames to ensure that they were free from missing or excess lines. This review process allowed me to find and correct any errors or imperfections in the animation, ensuring that it looked as professional and polished as possible. Finally, I moved on to coloring the frames, using a color palette that complemented the overall design and mood of the film.

Post-production Stage

After completing the key animations, in-betweens, and cleaning up any missing or excess lines, the next step in the production process was exporting all the animations. This was done using Clip Studio Paint EX, which supplied the necessary tools to create high-quality animations. Once the animations were exported, I conducted a second review to ensure that everything was arranged correctly and that there were no issues with the animation. This step was crucial in ensuring that the final product would be of the highest quality and meet the standards that I had set for myself.

After the animations were reviewed and finished, it was time to start the sound production process. The school supplied the necessary equipment for this stage, including microphones and sound mixing software. The sound production process was a critical part of the overall film, as it helped to create a more immersive and engaging experience for the audience. The sounds and music used in the film were carefully selected to match the tone and atmosphere of the story, and great care was taken to ensure that they were synchronized perfectly with the animation.

Once the sound production process was complete, the next step was to put all the animations and assets into Adobe Premiere Pro. This software supplied the necessary tools to complete the film and make any necessary adjustments to the animation, sound, and overall production. It was during this stage that I was able to add any final additions

or effects to the film, making sure that everything was polished and perfect. Finally, the film was exported, and it was ready to be shared with the world.

Review of Related Literature

In recent years, there has been a growing concern over the censorship of content in animated media. Various distributors have come under fire for censoring or removing content thought inappropriate, often targeting younger audiences under the belief that animation is strictly meant for children. This has led to a debate over the right level of censorship in animated media, as well as the impact that such censorship may have on the artistic integrity of the work. In addition, there has been a trend towards less frequent use of medium blending in mainstream media, as it is perceived to be a more time-consuming and expensive process. Despite this, creators have continued to push for the use of medium blending as a means of creating more visually dynamic and engaging content. By delving deeper into these topics, researchers can gain a better understanding of the complex issues surrounding the production and distribution of animated media.

Guidelines in American Television Parental Guidelines

The TV Parental Guidelines are a voluntary rating system designed to supply information about the content of television programs and help parents make informed decisions about what their children watch (Harari & Yadin, 2019).

The Monitoring Board is made up of representatives from various organizations, including parents' groups, educators, and child development experts. They review television programs and assign ratings based on their content, which includes themes, language, violence, and sexual content. The ratings are designed to be easily understood by parents and are displayed at the beginning of each program. In addition to assigning ratings, the Monitoring Board also reviews complaints from viewers about programs that they believe have been rated incorrectly. The Board may reevaluate the program and adjust the rating if necessary.

Censorship in Western General Media

Application of moral decency and values in entertainment has long been shifted since the streamlining of media that challenge the norm. As the West boasts on their progressiveness, their standards for censorship changed from conservative values regarded inappropriate at most and dissonant at least compared to modern ones, to more politically correct representations of others' identity. Media entertainment tread carefully on offending no one with any of their works as one tad mistake result in reports of insensitivity.

An explanation of this is the tendency of Western media to worry about the young audiences in a general rated show. The parental rating has then been valued as to cater more on being overly proper to all rather than to be entertaining to all (Mitkus, 2023). This

modernization of censorship never removed its main problem but rather created a different one. Major entertainment industries never realized the faultiest premise of censorship to begin with: overdoing limitation restricts artistic freedom.

TV Parental Guidelines

The TV Parental Guidelines are a system of ratings designed to supply information about the content of television programs and help parents make informed decisions about what their children watch. This system was created by the television industry and is a voluntary initiative (Katz, 1994). These ratings are classified into six categories: TV-Y: This program is designed to be proper for all children; TV-Y7: This program is designed for children aged seven and above. It may be more right for children who have gotten the developmental skills needed to distinguish between make-believe and reality; TV-G: This program is suitable for all ages. It has little or no violence, no strong language, and little or no sexual dialogue or situations; TV-PG; This program contains material that parents may find unsuitable for younger children; TV-14: This program contains some material that many parents would find unsuitable for children under 14 years of age. Parents are strongly urged to exercise greater care in watching this program and are cautioned against letting children under the age of 14 watch unattended. TV-MA: This program is specifically designed unsuitable for children under 17. Parents are strongly urged to learn more about the program before taking their children to watch it.

Content descriptors are short phrases that give parents more detailed information about the elements in a show that may be of concern (Timmer, 2013). These descriptors go with the age-based ratings and help parents make more informed decisions about whether a particular program is suitable for their children. The common content descriptors used with TV Parental Guidelines are the following: D: This descriptor is used to indicate the presence of suggestive dialogue; L: This descriptor is used to indicate the presence of strong language; S: This descriptor is used to indicate the presence of sexual situations; V: This descriptor is used to indicate the presence of violence. The former content descriptors are usually reserved for ratings from TV-PG to TV-MA. A special descriptor FV is used in TV-Y7 to show when a program has intense fantasy violence. It is important to note that these descriptors are not standalone ratings but are intended to complement the age-based ratings by providing more detailed information about the nature of the content.

Movie and Television Review and Classification Board

The MTRCB is a government agency in the Philippines responsible for reviewing and classifying movies and television programs. The board's primary function is to ensure that the content of films and TV shows distributed and shown in the Philippines follows local laws and cultural standards (Conti, 2015). The MTRCB classifies content for television into three distinct categories, such as General Patronage (G), Parental

Guidance (PG), and Strong Parental Guidelines (SPG), to help guide viewers and parents in making informed decisions about the appropriateness of the material for different age groups. The board also has the authority to review and act on content that may be thought inappropriate or in violation of regulations.

The sub contents, or specific considerations for classification, include various elements that may affect the overall rating of a movie or TV program. The overarching themes of a movie or TV program are considered. This includes the nature of the story, its tone, and the messages it conveys. The use of language, including profanity or strong language; the level of violence, including its intensity and graphic nature; scenes with sexual content, nudity, or sexual innuendos; the intensity of scares and disturbing elements; and depictions of drug use or references to substance abuse are all evaluated.

Bowdlerization on Local and Foreign Exports

Bowdlerization is a type of post-production censorship wherein certain contents of an original work have been omitted or changed to better suit the target audience. This approach is more narrow than regular censorship as outright banning would be more effective if moral guardians are utmost concerned. Bowdlerization aims to minimize banning of exported media while keeping the place's own censorship guidelines.

Foreign exports demand the original studios to change their works in compliance of airing it to their airwaves. By doing so, not only does it desecrate the artists' works but also puts more added workloads on the artists' side. Certain regions such as China, the Arab world and, surprisingly, the West tend to bowdlerize an original work to suit their accustomed values. This notorious demand puts strain and pressure on the workforce and budget of the work's company.

Certain contents are censored on foreign broadcasts as cultures have different norms and see more topics more sensitive than others. Religion, for example, is prohibited to be depicted in animation as it implies insensitivity over a certain demographic (Vulpoiu, 2015). Such customs cannot be changed by the original creator as they may come off disrespectful amongst others' beliefs. Therefore, the creators have no choice but to oblige and edit their works as their export wishes.

Multilevel Censorship in the Philippines

The censorship of the state through its laws, review and regulatory boards, and the military, as well as the self-censorship of media practitioners under pressure from corporate and other types of private interests unregulated by the state - could be used in

media studies to specifically analyze media repression in definitely modern generally illiberal democracies, which is quite significant (Jopson, 2013).

While the state plays a vital role in traditional censorship, multilevel censorship captures the nuance of the collusion of state and corporate interests to silence individuals, who may or may not be aware of their own censorship in a significant way. It happens when media practitioners internalize the rules of corporate media survival and adapt.

Influence of Western Media Censorship on Philippine Media Censorship

Western ideologies have stuck upon the values of Filipinos since the American occupation in the Philippines. Along with their introduction of television media to us came also their values concerning their distribution. Western, particularly American, censorship have been applied up to this date on our entertainment media (Pertierra, 2012).

We, however, also have our own standards in censorship, being that we are of Catholic nation. The result henceforth is the standards of censorship in the West on top of our already own standards of censorship. This then further deviates from the original content.

Review of Related Works

The following works were selected by the proponent for their multimedia project. The artworks shown, their respective date publication, the industry distributor, and the artist themselves will be mentioned in the following paragraphs.
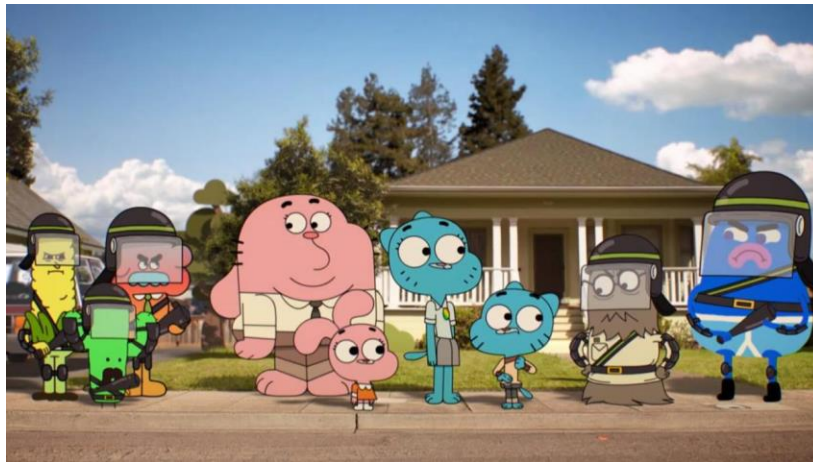

Figure 2 Screenshot from the episode "The Safety" of The Amazing World of Gumball by Ben Bocquelet

The episode's exploration of overprotectiveness also raises important questions about the role of media in shaping societal norms and values. As the characters' influence extends beyond their own life and into the show itself, the episode calls attention to the power that media has in shaping our understanding of the world around us. By blurring

the lines between reality and fiction, the episode demonstrates the extent to which our perceptions of reality can be shaped by the media we consume. This highlights the importance of critically engaging with the media we consume, and of being aware of the ways in which it may shape our beliefs and behaviors. The use of animation as a medium in this episode further underscores the potential impact of media on our understanding of the world, as it allows for a vivid and imaginative portrayal of the character's descent into paranoia and control. Overall, the episode's commentary on overprotectiveness raises important questions about the role of media in shaping our understanding of the world and encourages viewers to reflect on their own relationship with media and its potential effects on their beliefs and behaviors.
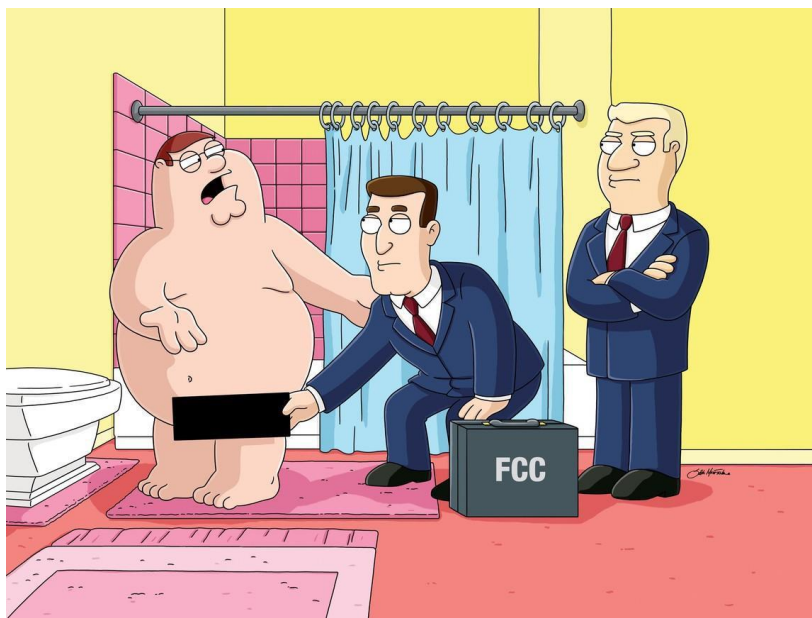

Figure 3 Promotional art from the episode "PTV" of Family Guy by Seth MacFarlane

This episode is a clear commentary on the censorship practices of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in American media. As a cartoon aimed at adult audiences, the show was subject to unnecessary censorship from the FCC, which is responsible for enforcing moral guidelines in American media. The episode uses humor and satire to shed light on the absurdity of such censorship practices, as well as the potential negative impact on creative expression and artistic freedom. This serves as a valuable addition to the research topic, providing further insight into the issues surrounding censorship and its effects on the animation industry.
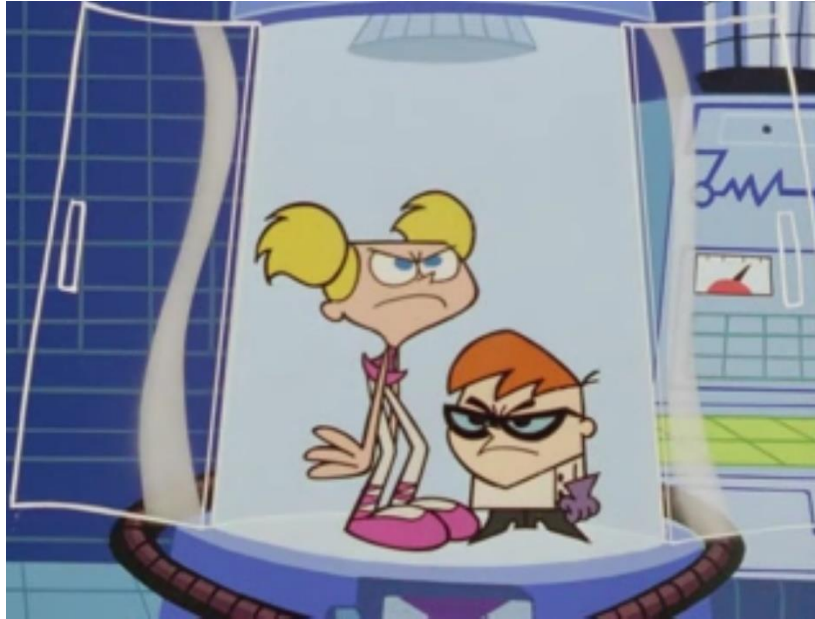
Figure 4 Still from the segment "Rude Removal" in the animated series Dexter's Laboratory by Genndy Tartakovsky

The episode *Rude Removal* serves as a notable example of the ongoing debate surrounding censorship in the animation industry. Despite being intended for broadcast as part of the second series of Dexter's Laboratory, the episode was deemed unsuitable for airing on Cartoon Network due to its use of crude language. However, the episode eventually found a home on Cartoon Network's Adult Swim programming block, which is aimed at older audiences. The episode's use of controversial language as a thematic element highlights the potential for animation to explore taboo subjects in a way that would not be possible in other forms of media. Moreover, the episode's eventual airing on a separate programming block aimed at older audiences underscores the complex relationship between animation and audience demographics. Overall, the episode presents a compelling case study for examining the intersection of censorship, animation, and audience reception.

Figure 5 Official artwork from "Ed, Edd, n Eddy" by Danny Antonucci

The animated series *Ed, Edd, n Eddy* centers around the exploits of three main characters named Ed, Edd, and Eddy as they attempt to scam their fellow children in the cul-de-sac out of money. Despite their elaborate schemes, their plans often backfire, leading to disastrous and embarrassing consequences. One notable aspect of the show's animation style is the use of the line boil effect, which adds a distinctive visual flair to the hand-drawn lines. This effect is particularly noticeable when characters are standing still, as their lines wobble and shift with each frame. The use of limited animation techniques helps to mitigate the impact of line boil by only redrawing the parts of the character that are in motion, resulting in a smoother overall look. The incorporation of these animation techniques contributes to the show's distinct visual style and helps to make it stand out within the broader animation landscape.

Figure 6 Promotional art for Adventure Time by Pendleton Ward

Adventure Time is a widely acclaimed fantasy animated television series that was produced by Cartoon Network. The show follows the adventures of two best friends, Finn

and Jake, as they navigate the post-apocalyptic Land of Ooo. One of the show's most distinctive features is its unique art style, which includes character models and expressions that are intentionally distorted or exaggerated. This freeform animation style, which often features characters with both stiff and "noodle" arms, as well as occasional off-model characters, has become a hallmark of the show's aesthetic. The short film also incorporates the style to simplify the production process and streamline the animation workflow.

Results and Discussion

Animation was a new and experimental form of entertainment. While many of these early cartoons did not have explicit moral messages, they did reflect the cultural and political values of the time. For example, early cartoons often depicted racial and ethnic stereotypes, and used caricatures to mock immigrants and minorities (Bisignano, 2022). In the 1930s, as the Great Depression and the rise of fascism in Europe led to a growing sense of social and political unrest, some animators began to incorporate more social commentary and political satire into their work.

One of the earliest examples of censorship in animation before any established censorship agencies was in the 1929 Walt Disney short *The Opry House*, where a scene of Mickey Mouse mimicking a blackface performer was edited out of the film's re-release due to racial sensitivity concerns (Klein, 1993). However, it was not until moral standards were being observed that people started to concern themselves over animation's influence on society.

The first ever known large movement in censoring animation was the Motion Picture Production Code, more popularly known as the Hays Code. The Hays Code was released in 1934 in response to concerns about the content of motion pictures and their potential impact on audiences, particularly children (Milhailova, 2018). The code set up a set of moral and ethical standards to produce films, including restrictions on violence, sexuality, language, and portrayal of certain social and political issues. The influence of Hollywood on the global film industry meant that the Hays Code indirectly influenced film production and distribution worldwide. As a result, the content restrictions imposed by the Hays Code were often seen as a model for other film industries to follow.

The Hays Code did not have a direct impact on animation, as it was primarily concerned with regulating live-action films. However, the influence of the code and the broader cultural climate of the time did affect the content of animated films. The industry became more cautious about producing cartoons that held controversial or potentially offensive content (Lehman, 2007). This climate of self-censorship often led to a conservative approach to content in animated films and cartoons, particularly those aimed at family audiences.

Animated works can have a lasting impact on young viewers, and the messages and themes presented in animated content can shape their beliefs and values (Iamurai, 2009). As a result, censors may be more concerned about the long-term effects of what is shown in animated works and may be more likely to restrict or remove content that is thought to be harmful.

The public concern over children's exposure to violence in animated programming has been a long-standing debate, but there is less attention given to the explicit presence of sex, drugs, and profanity in primetime cartoons (Matter, 2011). Despite the seemingly innocent nature of animated content, animation carries inherent risks for children and teens. Animated depictions, in comparison to other programming, may trivialize and humorize adult themes, potentially normalizing them for young audiences.

Modern animated shows are increasingly adopting a PG rating, and several factors contribute to this trend. Creators are aiming for a diverse audience appeal, crafting content that resonates with both children and adults (Hermansson, 2019). This approach allows for the exploration of complex and mature themes while supporting elements suitable for younger viewers. The evolving belief of animation as a medium primarily for children contributes to this shift, as creators and studios recognize the potential for sophisticated storytelling addressing various themes. Recognizing the maturity of young audiences, including pre-teens and teenagers, is another influencing factor. Creators aim to produce content that goes beyond traditional children's programming, reflecting the diverse interests and maturity levels of their audience. Moreover, the competitive landscape prompts animation studios to differentiate their content. This involves incorporating sophisticated storytelling, character development, and humor to stand out in the market.

On the other side, the increase in adult animated shows reflects the acknowledgment that animation transcends its traditional association with children's content. Despite historically being perceived as primarily for kids, the expanding audience for animation has prompted creators and studios to explore more diverse and mature themes (Ledoux et al., 2021). Key factors contributing to the rise of TV-14 animated shows include a growing, diverse audience making of teenagers and adults seeking intricate storytelling. Animated shows supply a unique platform for creative expression, allowing creators to address complex themes and explore unconventional realms.

The difference between the TV-PG and TV-14 classifications sets an unclear line of distinction of what is acceptable to younger audiences and not (Signorielli, 2005). Within the TV-PG classification, the designation implies that parents might meet material considered unsuitable for younger children, needing parental guidance. However, this rating still supports overall acceptability for a younger audience. Conversely, the TV-14 classification signifies that the program incorporates content that would be considered inappropriate for individuals under 14 years of age, prompting a robust cautionary directive to parents. These distinctions emphasize the nuanced gradation within television content classifications, supplying a framework for parental decision-making about the appropriateness of content for diverse age groups.

The MTRCB in the Philippines and the TV Parental Guidelines in the United States are both systems designed to provide viewers with information about the content of movies and television programs, helping them make informed decisions about what is suitable for different age groups (Kublenz-Babriel, 2016). The question of whether industries should loosen their scope in allowing PG content in animated shows depends on numerous factors, including societal norms, cultural considerations, and the intended audience. A laxer approach allows animators and creators to explore a wider range of themes and storytelling techniques. This can lead to more innovative and diverse content that appeals to a broader audience.

The perceived strictness of the MTRCB compared to the TV Parental Guidelines may be influenced by several factors, including cultural, societal, and regulatory differences between the Philippines and the United States. The Philippines has a unique cultural context that may shape the MTRCB's approach to content regulation (Molina, 2008). Cultural factors, including religious beliefs and societal expectations, can influence how content is perceived and regulated. The countries may have different regulatory philosophies when it comes to media content. The MTRCB operates as a government agency with the authority to review and classify both movies and television programs. The regulatory philosophy and goals of the MTRCB differ from those of the self-regulatory TV Parental Guidelines system in the U.S.

The Philippines has specific laws and regulations that guide the MTRCB's actions and decisions. These legal parameters could contribute to a perceived strictness in content classification. If there is a general societal expectation for stricter content regulation, it may be reflected in the MTRCB's classifications. The fact that the MTRCB is a government agency with direct regulatory authority over both movies and television programs may contribute to a perception of strictness. In contrast, the TV Parental Guidelines in the U.S. operate as a voluntary and self-regulatory system implemented by the television industry.

The line between PG and adult content is not entirely arbitrary, but it involves a certain degree of subjectivity and interpretation (Maier, 2019). They are designed to supply general guidance to parents about the suitability of television programs for different age groups. These ratings are decided by content review boards, which assess various elements within a show to assign a proper rating. However, these criteria can be open to interpretation, and the context in which these elements are presented matters.

The censorship of animation is often driven by a desire to protect children from potentially harmful or inappropriate content, and to ensure that animated works are suitable for all ages and demographics. However, the degree of censorship can vary from country to country, and is often influenced by a range of cultural, political, and social

factors. The stigma attached to animated content, which is often seen as being for children or for people who enjoy more childish and immature forms of entertainment. This belief can make it difficult for adult animated shows and films to gain critical and commercial success, as adult audiences may not take them seriously (Mitkus, 2023). This makes it more challenging for producers to get their works distributed and seen by the public.

The debate over censorship versus free speech is a long-standing and fundamental issue that has been the subject of ongoing discussion and controversy. Some proponents of censorship argue that it is necessary to protect public morality, prevent harm, and keep social order (Frantz, 1962). They believe that certain forms of content or expression are inappropriate and should be restricted or prohibited for the greater good of society. On the other hand, advocates of free speech argue that censorship violates the basic right to freedom of expression and is therefore unconstitutional (Zick, 2017). They argue that individuals should have the right to express themselves without fear of censorship, regardless of whether others find their opinions or ideas offensive.

The debate over the impact of violent or sexual content in animation on children is also a controversial topic, with different viewpoints and perspectives. Some argue that exposure to violent or sexual content in animation can have negative effects on children, including aggression, desensitization, and decreased empathy (Anderson et al., 2010). They believe that children are particularly vulnerable to such content and that it can shape their attitudes and behaviors in harmful ways. On the other hand, others argue that it is the responsibility of parents to monitor their children's media consumption and ensure that they are exposed to age-appropriate content (Hill et al., 2016). They believe that censorship is not the answer and that parents should take an active role in educating and guiding their children's media use.

Censorship can lead to self-censorship, which can have a chilling effect on creativity and intellectual exchange (Davis, 2019). Self-censorship is a practice that has become increasingly common in the animation industry, as studios and creators are often wary of offending viewers or facing backlash. This can result in the modification or removal of content that may be considered controversial, offensive, or inappropriate (Bar-Tal, 2017). In some cases, self-censorship may be a response to corporate pressure, with studios looking to avoid controversy that could potentially harm their bottom line. External censorship, on the other hand, is typically imposed by governments or regulatory bodies, and can take the form of laws, regulations, or administrative actions. This type of censorship can have a significant impact on the content of animated films and TV shows, as creators may be required to modify or remove content that is deemed to be in violation of these restrictions (Cook & Heilmann, 2013). Finally, censorship in foreign markets

involves changing content to meet cultural, social, or political norms in other countries. This is often done to ensure that a film or TV show can be shown in that country, as certain content may be deemed offensive or inappropriate.

These debates highlight the complex and nuanced nature of censorship and its impact on society, culture, and media. While some may argue that censorship is necessary to protect certain values or interests, others may view it as a threat to freedom of expression and creativity. Similarly, the debate over the impact of violent or sexual content in animation on children underscores the importance of responsible media use and education, as well as the need for ongoing research and dialogue on these issues.

While there is a framework in place to guide the rating assignment process, it is important to acknowledge that the line between TV-PG and TV-14 is not a precise, objective measurement. Instead, it reflects a collective judgment based on established guidelines and the subjective interpretation of content review boards. With this, the ultimate goal is to give parents awareness of the contents in animated media while being more flexible on what is considered proper.

Conclusion

In the case of animation, censorship is often discussed in the context of children's media. Due to the feeling that animation is primarily intended for children, it is often subjected to stricter forms of censorship than other forms of media. The argument for this is that children are more impressionable and therefore need greater protection from potentially harmful content. However, this belief does not acknowledge that animation can and often does deal with complex and mature themes that are not proper for children. It also does not recognize that adults can and do enjoy animation as a form of entertainment and that their freedom to access such content should not be unduly restricted.

Furthermore, censorship can also affect the creative process of animation. For example, if creators are forced to adhere to strict censorship guidelines, they may be limited in their ability to explore certain themes or ideas. This can result in a lack of diversity in animation and limit the potential for innovation in the industry. Additionally, censorship can have a chilling effect on creators, who may choose to self-censor their work to avoid controversy or potential censorship. This can lead to a lack of artistic freedom and expression, as well as a homogenization of animation content.

The MTRCB has much stricter rules compared to the United States when regulating content especially for animation. What is considered PG in the United States is still too loose for the MTRCB's standards. This overprotectiveness over children from animated media gives the adult section less proliferation. Like any media regulatory body, the MTRCB may aim to protect certain audience groups, particularly children, from potentially inappropriate or harmful content. Animated content, while often targeted at

children, can also include themes or elements that may call for careful consideration. There is a perception that animated content is primarily intended for children, and as a result, the MTRCB may be more vigilant in ensuring that such content is suitable for its perceived target audience. If animated content includes mature themes or content that could be deemed inappropriate for children, the MTRCB may classify it accordingly.

As societal norms evolve, the content rating system could adapt to reflect these changes. What might have been considered inappropriate for a PG rating in the past might be more acceptable today. Moreover, parents should actively guide their children's media consumption and use content ratings as a tool rather than strict rules. In response to changing viewer preferences, industries might consider being more flexible with content ratings to meet the demands of audiences who are looking for more sophisticated and diverse animated content. However, keeping a clear distinction in content ratings is essential to protect younger audiences from potentially inappropriate or distressing content. A more relaxed approach might lead to confusion and frustration among parents who rely on these ratings.

Ultimately, striking a balance between artistic freedom and responsible content creation is essential. A more relaxed approach should still consider the impact of content on the intended audience and uphold a level of responsibility in storytelling. Industries might consider incorporating more flexibility into the content rating process while supporting transparency and supplying clear information about the nature of the content. Viewer advisories and educational initiatives can also help empower parents to make informed decisions about the media their children consume.

In conclusion, the proper level of censorship for animation, like any form of media, should be based on a careful consideration of its potential impact on individuals and society. While it is important to protect vulnerable individuals from harmful content, it is equally important to ensure that creators have the freedom to explore a range of themes and ideas. The balance between these competing concerns must be struck by individual societies and communities based on their unique cultural contexts and values.

The short film *Think of Bradley* supplies a satirical critique of the commonly used phrase "think of the children" to highlight the absurdity of censorship in animation. As discussed, censorship in animation is often justified by the belief that it primarily targets children's media, but this reasoning overlooks the potential for animation to explore complex and mature themes for adults. Furthermore, censorship can hinder the creative process, limit diversity in animation, and lead to self-censorship among creators. Therefore, a balanced approach to censorship in animation should be taken that considers the potential impact on individuals and society while also preserving artistic freedom and expression. By having these discussions, we can promote a more nuanced

and informed approach to animation censorship and create a more innovative and diverse industry.

Recommendations

Research Topic

The data-gathering process is a critical aspect of any research method. In the case of the present study, there is considerable scope for improvement in this area. While the original plan was to conduct interviews with individuals in the animation industry, including those responsible for overseeing standards and practices in adherence to censorship guidelines, and those falling under their authority, challenges arose during the production phase.

Time constraints appeared as a significant challenge, which hindered the ability to conduct interviews as initially planned. Despite multiple attempts to contact the interviewees directly or via third parties, it became clear that conducting interviews within the given schedule was not possible. This situation highlights the need for more efficient planning and management of the data-gathering process to overcome such time constraints in future research endeavors.

Moreover, reliance on online communication as the primary mode of contact may have contributed to potential shortcomings in the method. It is essential to acknowledge that online communication may not be the preferred method of contact for all interviewees. As such, moving forward, it is crucial to try in-person contact while respecting their schedules. This approach can foster more effective communication and help to develop a rapport with the interviewees, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of their experiences and perspectives.

The reliance on papers and articles as the primary sources to support the study's case is another area that requires careful consideration. While such sources can be informative, they may not provide the depth of insight that can be gained from direct engagement with the relevant stakeholders. In this context, the study could receive help from more diverse sources, including archival material, public records, and field observations, among others.

In conclusion, the data-gathering process is a crucial part of any research method. The present study highlights the need for further refinement in this area to improve the overall effectiveness of the research method. This includes efficient planning and management of the data-gathering process, more effective communication methods, and more diverse sources of information to support the study's case. By addressing these challenges, future research endeavors can receive help from a more robust and comprehensive data-gathering process.

Creative Process

The animation process undertaken to produce the short film for the study stands for a crucial part of the research method. While the production successfully generated a practical outcome, the process itself met various challenges that may have limited the quality of the final product. It is recommended that the animation process be revised and perfected to enhance the overall effectiveness of the research method.

One of the primary concerns with the animation process was the limited variety of shots in the final product. This issue led to scenes in which the characters appeared static, not achieving the intended visual impact. To address this challenge, it is recommended that the animation process incorporate a wider range of shots to avoid such instances of static characters.

Another area of concern was the use of in-betweens to enhance the fluidity of character movements. While the animation process was used in-betweens, there was an opportunity to expand their use to further improve the overall quality of the animation. To that end, it is suggested that the animation process be refined to maximize the use of in-betweens in a more comprehensive manner.

Artistic style also posed a significant challenge during the animation process. Establishing a specific art style to guide the animation process was difficult, and a more systematic approach could improve this aspect of the method. One potential solution is to agree upon a specific stylization within the producer's purview at the outset of the project, thus supplying a clear framework for the animation process.

The transfer of exported animation files from Clip Studio Paint to Adobe Animate and Adobe After Effects stood for another area of concern during the animation process. Incompatibility and inconsistency issues appeared during the file transfer process, leading to the dismissal of the cross-software workflow step. The resultant compromise saw the animation process confined to Clip Studio Paint. To overcome such issues in future, it is suggested that the cross-compatibility of software be thoroughly examined, especially when working with different program ecosystems.

The animation process undertaken to produce the short film for the study required considerable refinement to maximize its effectiveness. Addressing the challenges outlined above will help to ensure that the animation process better aligns with the overall goals of the research method, leading to a more successful outcome.

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