



JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY  
IN KRAKÓW

# Archive or Algorithm? Who Curates Our Audiovisual Memory

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## The Brutal Numbers

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**The algorithm do not recommend your archive. It was never designed to make it visible to the audience...**

### 91% of Views. 1% of Videos. Where Is the Archive?

**Top 1% of YouTube videos → 91% of all viewing time**

**Remaining 99% (the long tail) → only 9% of views**

**Content investment growth → +2% (below inflation)**

**Children watching traditional media → halved in a decade**

### Format war

90% of new YouTube uploads are Shorts. Micro-dramas run 30–60 sec, AI-marketed, ephemeral by design.

The archive holds the opposite: slow, deep, contextual.

### Reach without sovereignty

BBC now premieres content on YouTube first – gain audience, lose editorial control.

Archives risk becoming present but invisible.

### Heritage as training data

YouTube's rarely-watched 99% feeds Google Gemini.

Archival content = AI raw material, stripped of provenance and attribution.

# Three Threats, One Mission

# Dilemmas – no easy answers

So Where Is the User — and Who Speaks for the Archive?



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**Do we go to YouTube** and hand curation to the algorithm?

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**Do we stay sovereign** and accept near-zero discoverability?

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**or do we reframe openness** — asserting that provenance, authenticity, and context are precisely what platforms *cannot* provide?

**In 2026, the most-watched platform hosts 280,000 years of video.  
Almost none of it is yours.  
Almost none of yours will be found.**

**What does openness mean when the algorithm decides what is open?**

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