

***Braided Channels: Documentary Voice from an Inter-
disciplinary, Cross-media, Cross-cultural and Practitioner's
Perspective***

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Creative Arts in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Technology, Sydney



Photo courtesy of Guy Fitzhardinge

Volume 1: Dissertation

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Certificate of Authorship/Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of the requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged in the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Trish FitzSimons

Production Note:

Signature removed prior to publication.

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Acknowledgments

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Preface

Item One: Documentation of the *Channels* Exhibition *in situ*, including two walkthroughs on DVD, catalogue pamphlets and launch invitation (2002 – 2005).

Item Two: Touchscreen Interactive documentary component of the *Channels of History* exhibition reauthored as a clickable DVD (original 2002, reauthored 2008).

Item Three: ‘Drought’, *Rear Vision*, ABC Radio National program by Annabelle Quince, broadcast 17 and 19 December 2006 with elements of *Braided Channels* oral history archive.

Item Four: Concept Document/Brochure for *Elsies Story* (2005).
Two Concept documents (2006 and 2008), two showreels (2006 and 2008) and a rough montage and selection of rushes (2006) for *Durham Downs: A Pastoral*.

Item Five: Two examples of the transcripts and DVDs of the 27 interviews that make up the underlying *Braided Channels* audio-visual archive: Alice Gorringer’s (2000) being used by Dr Paul Gorecki in support of a Native Title Claim and Edith McFarlane’s (2002), a key source of *Durham Downs: A Pastoral*.

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‘Braided Channels, Queensland’s Channel Country’ courtesy of Guy
Fitzhardinge — Title Page

‘The Queen and Elsie, her youngest subject’, from the photo album of Edith
New, c. 1923, courtesy of Australian Stockman’s Hall of Fame
— Opening Page, Ch 3

— **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
AFC	Australian Film Commission
AFI	Australian Film Institute
AFTRS	Australian Film, Television & Radio School
AQ	Arts Queensland
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CD	Compact Disc
CDB	Creative Development Branch, Australian Film Commission
Dir.	Director
DVD	Digital Video Disc
DVD ROM	Digital Video Disc: Read Only Memory
EP	Executive Producer
Film Australia	Federal Government's film production unit
FFC	Film Finance Corporation
GFS	Griffith Film School
GU	Griffith University
NFSA	National Film & Sound Archive
NIP	National Interest Program
NMA	National Museum of Australia
PFTC	Pacific Film and Television Commission
Prod.	Producer
QCA	Queensland College of Art (Griffith University)
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
SBSI	SBS Independent
SPAA	Screen Producer's Association of Australia
SLQ	State Library of Queensland
The Accord	FFC documentary investment agreement with TV networks
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney

Abstract

Braided Channels: Documentary Voice from an inter-disciplinary, cross-media cross-cultural, and practitioner's perspective

Voice is a concept that is a metaphoric proxy for authorship in a wide range of areas of human creativity. In the area of documentary filmmaking, Bill Nichols' conception of voice has been pre-eminent, dating from a 1983 essay 'The Voice of Documentary' that has been frequently republished since. Nichols' essay forms the basis of his even more widely quoted taxonomy of documentary forms. This dissertation argues that Nichols' conception of documentary voice requires revision to take account of shifts in: the forms of documentary and their relation to other cultural formations; the surrounding (cross) cultural politics; and the way that the concept of 'voice' appears when viewed from the perspective of a reflective practitioner rather than from that of a media studies theorist. The work combines elements of both thesis and exegesis to develop a vocabulary of voice to account for the relationship between the voice of the documentary filmmaker and other categories including subjects, audiences and broadcasters. In particular the categories of the ventriloquic, the dialogic and the choric are interrogated and their application considered both in relation to the candidate's work and more widely