The art and craft of radio documentary: some Australian accents.

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Some Australian Accents
Dr Siobhan McHugh

The ART and CRAFT of RADIO DOCUMENTARY

Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme, 1949-1974

- 100,000 workers
- 60,000 came from over 30 countries in Europe
- Many had recently been on opposing sides in WW11
- In 1949, Australia was 90% of British and Irish origin, 2% indigenous, 8% other
- ‘Displaced Persons’ had to work 2 years where allocated
- CLIP: Sir Robert Jackson re Chifley
**VOICE conveys information re age, gender, social/cultural background**

Survey Camp 1956 – Kon at right

**SNOWY WORKERS CLIP:**
Ksenia Nasielski (Estonia) admin
Paddy Kerrigan (Ireland) miner
Frank Rodwell (Australian) plant operator
Charlie Salvestro (Italian) miner
Tom Little (Australian) ganger
Kon Martynow (White Russian) surveyor assistant

**Tunnels: danger**

- Wages linked to speed: risks taken to earn 3x basic wage
- Union weak due to uncertainty re migrants – not like strong miners' unions
- American contractors 'ruthless'
- Broke world records – machismo, ethnic rivalry
- Italians dominant, 'Yugoslavs'
- 56 of 121 fatalities underground
- Buried alive in concrete?
Snowy: behind the 121 fatalities

- Said ‘a man a mile’ would die building the tunnels.
- Actually 0.6 of a man a mile.
- SOUND CLIP:
  - Ulick O’Boyle
  - Pino Frezza
  - Ulick O’Boyle
  - Charlie Salvestro

MINEFIELDS and MINISKIRTS:
Australian women & the Vietnam War

- 50 women interviewed
- Hitherto unheard stories
- Female ‘veterans’: nurses, entertainers, journalists, volunteers, consular
- Wives, mothers of soldiers
- Anti-war movement/women’s movement at home
Elizabeth Burton, entertainer: ‘we stopped the war…’

- Eldest of 8, miner’s daughter, from Wollongong
- Hairdresser’s apprentice, go-go dancer on side
- Went to Vietnam aged 20, for adventure
- Interview reveals her journey from wide-eyed naivete to sex, drugs, rock’n roll, to awareness of politics and reality of war – inc. racial and sexual tensions

Jan Graham, journalist in Vietnam: voice vs. text versions

- Audio version, ABC 1993, *Minefields and Miniskirts*

On another occasion, Jan was on her way to a remote airstrip in the central highlands to see off an American sergeant, whose name she was up. He was going home, and he had his three days off and he’d been getting pissed with everybody else in the camp: she recalls. “He saw something going on in a field and he jumped out—she should have stayed in the fucking jeep, he had no right to do this—he ran in, and there was a big explosion … and I did the stupidest thing of my life. I ran in after him. And his legs were blown off, his penis and testicles were gone, and he was just bleeding—there was not a thing I could do. So I just pulled what was left of his body, nose and head, and cuddled him. And he thought I was his wife, who he was going home to see, so be with for the rest of his life. And he spoke to me of how happy he was to be home, how wonderful it was to be in her arms again—my arms. And it’s so wonderful to feel …

Jan Graham transcript re-worked for Lothian edition 2005

He saw something going on in the field and he jumped out
He should have stayed in the fucking jeep he had no right to
He ran in
And there was a big explosion
And I did the stupidest thing of my life
I ran in after him.

And his legs were blown off
His penis and testicles were gone
And he was just bleeding
There was not a thing I could do

So I just pulled
What was left of his body
Nose and head
And cuddled him.

And he thought I was his wife
Who he was going home to see
To be with for the rest of his life
And he spoke to me of how happy he was
To be home
How wonderful it was to be in her arms again …
My arms.
MARRYING OUT: oral history/radio

- 50 interviews, up to 2 hours/interview
- Solicited through letters to newspapers, to Protestant and Catholic religious groups, word of mouth referrals
- 27 Catholics, 16 Protestants, 7 converts
- 35 spouse, 16 children, 4 clergy, 4 misc
- CONVERT TO 2 X 53 mins radio
- Academic multimedia article, *History Australia* 6/2/2009, 42.1-42.22.
- INTERVIEWS archived National Library of Australia, available online

Opening Montage Pt 1 CLIP

+ Accuracy of written records

- 'James', police officer, Sydney, 1955-'96
- Joined police aged 19, retired at 60
- Raised Catholic in a mixed marriage
- Answered my letter in *Catholic Weekly*
- Alleges he witnessed 'doctoring' of police statistics re numbers of Catholic offenders
- Has placed his interview in National Library of Australia, research access (full name supplied)
MARRYING OUT: Protestant-Catholic Sectarianism

- 1 in 5 marriages 1890s to 1960s ‘mixed’ C/P
- Australia 3: 1 Protestant: Catholic till 1950
- ‘Catholic’ perceived as ‘Irish’
- ‘Irish’ perceived as disloyal, different, other
- Discrimination in workplace – Catholics Need Not Apply’ till 1960s
- CLIP; Haynes story, m.1962

The children: Between two Worlds

- Susan Timmins’ story:
- Mother, Julia, Catholic, and father, Errol, Protestant, eloped 1920s
- Julia barred from father’s deathbed
- Died in childbirth: children rejected by both sides
CONTESTING DOMINANT NARRATIVE – Relevance Today?

- ‘Anglo-Celtic’ a distortion of the truth
- Meaning for other demonised groups today
- Cronulla use 2010 on anti-racist Facebook site
- Jan Graham’s story powerfully conveys the horror of war
- Migrant interviews express their desperate circumstances, lack of support