THE LIGHTHOUSE; AN INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY

The application of user centred, responsive and interactivity design theory and practice to the Case Study of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DECLARATION

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Signature

HELEN GAYNOR

4th September 2019
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How may the key theories and techniques associated with user centered, responsive and interactivity design inform interactive documentary?

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DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Computational platform means in general sense, where any piece of software is executed. It may be the hardware or operating system, even a web browser as long as the code is executed in it.

Interactive Digital Documentary: can be described as documentary re-mediated for the Internet age, utilizing modes and tools of traditional documentary production with interactivity as a new affordance, and the Internet enabled devices as the user platform. (Nash 2012). The interactivity comes about with a physical act by the user for example clicking or swiping, as established by the designer.

Legacy media: refer to those methods, formats and technologies that are applied to media existing before the digitization, computerization and softwarisation of media output. Janet Murray gives an example:

…, digital designers inherit too many building blocks that are quite familiar and practical but suited to legacy media formats and in conflict with one another. When newspaper editors and television producers work together on a news site should they be thinking in terms of sound-bytes or headlines? or both? or neither? Design processes are often stalled by such unproductive attempts to apply legacy conventions to new digital frameworks (Murray 2011 p. 5).

Linear Documentary: is an audio-visual documentary that has a fixed beginning and end, to be viewed in a continuous and self-contained time frame. It has been defined as a time-based artefact (Gaudenzi 2013). No interaction with the material in the documentary is invited apart from a pre or post viewing discourse.

New media: I use Manovich’s definition

… all media techniques and tools available in software applications are “new
media”—regardless of whether a particular technique or program refers to previous media, physical phenomena, or a common task that existed before it was turned into software (Manovich 2013 p. 145).

**Participatory media**: allows the visitor or user to contribute to the media artefact in an applied tangible way (Gaudenzi 2013).

**Responsive Design**: requires that content will be readable and playable on a suite of devices, from computer to mobile phone. The responsiveness is predicated in the programming that allows the content to adapt to the users’ device (Marcotte 2010).

**The Digital Medium**: I use Janet Murray’s definition. She argues

...for the advantage of thinking of digital artefacts as parts of a single new medium, which is best understood specifically as the digital medium...the medium that is created by exploiting the representational power of the computer (Murray, J., 2011. Pp. 8-9). I privilege Murrays definition in this thesis.

**Transmedia**: indicates the distribution of a narrative across more than one platform. It can be participatory or not, can invite audience-generated content or not, and tends to be open and evolving, though not always (O’Flynn 2012 p. 142).

**User**: is a visitor who arrives at the site and engages in completing an immediate task like finding out some information or completing a survey. (Murray 2011, p. 11).

**User Centered Design**: calls on designers to place the end user at the center of design considerations. It often requires testing at various development stages by those proposed to be the end user (Cilella 2011, Nodder 2016)
ABSTRACT

This practice-led research provides documentary filmmakers with a theoretical and practical basis to understand and design for interactive documentary in the digital medium. This project contributes to the fields of interactive documentary, documentary and interactivity design.

This study is centred on the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary that articulates the delivery program and methods of the Lighthouse Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation. The site is primarily designed for specific users, to enable social change in the area of youth welfare and housing.

The study focuses on the interactive documentary form within the context of networked and software driven computational devices. The aim of my research is to provide traditional documentary filmmakers like myself with a theoretical framework and methods to design for this environment which interactive designer Janet Murray (2011) names ‘the digital medium’. Murray identifies the affordances of the digital medium as being procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopaedic. This study examines these affordances in relation to the design decisions available to documentary makers who are using interactive techniques. The study also addresses definitions, types and implications of interactive documentary and the new skills required by the person formerly known as the filmmaker in the design of these projects.

My research demonstrates user centred, responsive and interactivity design as an effective response to the needs of the filmmaker moving into interactive documentary design. The literature review provides the historic and contextual overview, including documentary, software and communications theory. The theory and practice of user centred, responsive and interactivity design is then applied to two case studies of interactive websites. One belongs to the Berry Street Organisation and the other is an independent site, Here At Home hosted by the National Film Board of Canada and co-produced by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Both sites address issues of housing for vulnerable people, including youth. The theoretical framework and findings from the case studies are then applied to my design and analysis of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary site.
These findings provide new insights in a number of areas. The application of user centred design techniques at the first stage of the design process is useful in determining the exact nature of the relationship with a site user. The technique of persona design is also identified as a useful method for this stage (Cooper, A. 2019, The Origin of Personas, Para 1).

Another finding concerns the application of web design techniques of standard, consistent and responsive design to interactive documentary design, to ensure ease of engagement. This approach identifies returnability, that is the ability of the user to leave and easily return to specific areas *within* the site whenever they want, as a key element to successful site design.

My final finding proposes methods to differentiate interactive documentary design from the strategic communication aims of many websites. The documentarist’s intent of providing discourse about the existing world can be expressed in both the site architecture and the content itself. This intent diverges from the strategic communications approach of commercial web design to simply enhance the engagement with a brand or product (Duerte Melo, Balonas, Felicio 2016).

Combined, these findings provide the documentary filmmaker with some practical and theoretical methods in the move from the linear world of film production to the procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopaedic of the digital medium.
CHAPTER ONE

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Introduction

In this chapter I describe the creative project and research background that supports this study as a whole, including research questions. I also provide a rationale for this study.

In Chapter Two, I provide a review of literature; acknowledging existing research from the fields of documentary and interactive documentary theory, user-centred, responsive and interactivity design theory, and not-for-profit communications theory. Chapter Three contains a detailed discussion of my theoretical framework. Chapter Four features case study analyses, and Chapter Five contains an analysis of my own project, the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary. Chapter Six concludes this exegesis and is where I make clear the new knowledge that has emerged as a result of this study.

My findings address the application of user-centred, responsive and interactivity design principles to interactive documentary design.

1.1 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This practice-led research provides site design documents for an interactive documentary that will communicate the methodology and supporting research of not-for-profit (NFP) organisation, the Lighthouse Foundation. The Lighthouse Interactive Documentary is designed to be accessed from a computational device with internet access. The site design documents consist of:

- Persona/User research
- Site map
- Flow charts
- Wire frames,
- A mock-up of the site
- An inventory of audio-visual content
Persona research describes the user identity and their needs for the site. The site map incorporates site areas and the topics within them. Flow charts map how the user will move from one area of the site to another. They provide a precise description of formats and content e.g., audio-visual interview with resident, text-based document, mini-documentary, at each point of the site. Wire frames of the site home page and lead pages for each section indicate page layout and function. The mock-up is a visual iteration of fonts, colour schemes and page layout. The inventory of audio-visual content itemises specific details of content. Together these documents provide a detailed plan of who site users are, how they will engage with and navigate the site, what the content will be and in what format.

Design of this interactive documentary is informed by consultation with key people within the Lighthouse Foundation, in particular the Chief Executive Officer and the Philanthropy Manager. The Lighthouse Foundation has been providing homes and care for teenagers and young people for more than 20 years. During that time, it has developed the Therapeutic Family Model of Care (TFMC) which is described on their website as follows: “Lighthouse Foundation provides homeless young people from backgrounds of long-term neglect and abuse, with a home, a sense of family, and around-the-clock therapeutic care that is individually tailored, trauma-informed and proven to work” (Lighthouse Foundation, 2018, About Lighthouse Foundation, para 1). They propose that this evidence-based system of care is effective and unique. Lighthouse also provides training for organisations working with people who have experienced complex trauma. These may include policy makers, other homelessness services, community mental health services, out-of-home care services and schools.

My collaboration with key Lighthouse personnel has identified key user groups who are not served by existing Lighthouse materials and website. These are high net-worth individuals, large philanthropic trusts, government policy makers and other service providers in the sector. In the main, these users have a relationship with, or awareness of the Lighthouse Foundation and the Therapeutic Family Model of Care they deliver. The interactive documentary will provide this user group with the resources they need to advocate for the TFMC. This is in order to influence government policy and promote its implementation amongst organisations dealing with youth homelessness.
At present Lighthouse has a single online presence via a website that provides information about and pathways to donations, which are aimed at small net-worth donors. Lighthouse methodology around the Therapeutic Family Model of Care resides in embodied practice, print-based material and training programs. Thus, the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary fills a gap in the Foundation’s communication and advocacy program and supports their efforts to influence policy and provision of the care of homeless teenagers and young people.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Interactive documentary sits within the context of the expansion of digital artefacts and the software and technology that supports them (Manovich 2013, 2014; Murray 2011). As an indication of the pervasiveness of these new technologies, software designer and theorist Lev Manovich compares software in the 21st century to the centrality of electricity and the combustion engine in the early 20th century. Digital designer and theorist Janet Murray argues that digital artefacts comprise a single new medium – the digital medium – driven by the arrival of what she describes as a new form of representation being the networked, programmable computer. Murray (2011) describes the functionality of this medium as being procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopaedic. My research examines theories outside documentary and interactive documentary that assists the documentary practitioner to work in the environment described by Murray and Manovich. This addresses a gap in the literature regarding methodologies to support this transition for linear documentary filmmakers.

I suggest the need for documentary filmmakers moving into the digital medium to look beyond what they know of the legacy film practices of delivering to a passive audience via a fixed screen. Designers Ethan Marcotte and John Allsop support the need for site designers to move beyond their legacy practice when working in the digital medium (Allsop 2000; Marcotte 2010, 2015). For filmmakers, this requires engaging with the digital medium as interactive designers as opposed to filmic authors.

I examine user-centred, responsive and interactivity design principles as methodologies that may assist this transition. I privilege Janet Murray’s (2011) definition of pleasurable experience of agency, being the matching of the user’s participatory expectations and actions to the procedures of the machine, to assess the success of user-centred design in the digital medium. To achieve this, designer Chris Nodder (2016) identifies the need for establishing the individual user, and what successful interaction within a site looks like to them, before
the development and production of content. Designer Sal Cilella (2011) argues for the use of persona design, a technique that draws on the interview skills of documentary and scriptwriting skills of character and story arc development, to build an individual profile of proposed users and how a successful journey through a site would be experienced by them. Nodder (2016) proposes that standard and consistent design principles as being highly relevant to user-centred design, as they enhance the ability of the user to leave and then return easily to the site. This situates returnability as a central aspect of Murray’s pleasurable agency.

Documentary theory emphasises the role of discourse that has an indexical relationship to the existing world in defining its role in factual and real world-based films (Rotha 1952; Grierson 1966; Nichols 1991). With the aim of addressing how this may be applied to the digital medium as described by Manovich and Murray, I present Gaudenzi’s theory of interactive documentary and its modes (Gaudenzi 2014). I also draw on an analysis of communications for not-for profits, and their relationship with strategic and public interest communications described by theorists Oliveira, Duarte Melo and Goncales (2016). This research investigates how a project, using the design principles usually applied to strategic communications, (standard and responsive design); that is the purposeful use of communication by an organisation to fulfil its mission (Oliveira, Duarte Melo & Goncales 2016), may also be defined as an interactive documentary.

1.3 RATIONALE: SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The importance of this research lies in the challenge for the documentary filmmakers like myself to situate documentary practice within the digital medium and to design for the properties within it. Linear documentary filmmakers in the 21st century are challenged when creating works in an the continuously growing and changing digital media environment as described by Manovich and Murray. Even existing interactive documentary practice is a complex mix of single and multi-platforms, and authored, curated and collaborated work. Theorists and producers alike describe a growing list of computer-based documentary types: webdocs, iDocs, games docs, transmedia docs and even Facebook docs (Bogost, 2007; Dena, 2009; Dovey, 2014; Gaudenzi, 2013; Nash, 2012; O’Flynn, 2012). Additionally, the emergence of new digital technologies and software programs is continuously affecting, disrupting and expanding existing interactive documentary modes of production, distribution, exhibition and consumption (Dovey, Vanstone & Chie 2017).
Put simply, my research is aimed at documentary practitioners and scholars who, like myself, wish to expand documentary practice beyond the historic linear environment of cinema and broadcast television, into 21st century media and communication technologies and forms of expression. In simpler terms, it aims to provide linear practitioners with an understanding of which non-linear and interactive design principles and techniques may be applied to the documentary genre, so that they may engage in designing for what Murray describes as the digital medium. As Murray points out “Designing any single artefact within this new medium is part of the broader collective effort of making meaning through the invention and refinement of digital media conventions” (Murray 2011 p. 2).

This study addresses a gap in research as to where the documentarist may seek guidance on how to apply the procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopaedic affordances (which imply participation and interactivity) of the digital medium to a documentary project (Murray 2011). I investigate what specific new skills and theoretical understandings the documentary filmmaker requires to work in this digital medium; where they may find them and how they are applied. I address how I do this in the next section of this chapter.

1.4 METHODOLOGY: PRACTICE AND THEORY

1.4.1 Discipline areas, key theorists and practitioners

This is a PhD by practice-led research, that is research that is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for my practice (Creativity and Cognition Studios, 2019, para 6). My practice involves the production of design documents for an interactive documentary and implementing user centred, responsive and interactivity design to that design.

My exegesis includes a review of literature acknowledging existing research on documentary and interactive documentary theory, software theory, user centred, responsive and interactivity design theory, and communications theory for the not-for-profit sector. I follow this with a detailed discussion of my theoretical framework, applying documentary and interactive documentary, software, user centred, responsive and interactivity to my analysis. In later chapters I apply these theories to case studies and my own practice. In the final chapters I present my findings and the new knowledge that has arisen as a result of this practice-led research project.
1.4.2 Research Question One

*How may the key theories and techniques associated with user-centred, responsive and interactivity design inform interactive documentary?*

To answer this question, I look to the specific theory and practice of interactive documentary design, drawing on the work of Sandra Gaudenzi and her interactive ‘living’ documentary theory (Gaudenzi 2013). I also draw on the work of Kate Nash in relation to interactive documentary modes (Nash 2012, 2014). I investigate the computational context in which interactive documentary design sits through the work of Lev Manovich and software theory (Manovich 2013, 2014), and Janet Murray and interaction and digital culture theory (Murray 2011).

I investigate design principles within this computational context by interrogating the theories and techniques of user-centred and responsive web design. I look to the work of Chris Nodder (2016), Sal Cilella (2011), and Ethan Marcotte (2010, 2015).

Finally, I include documentary theory and practice, with an emphasis on activist documentary that aligns with the desire to influence social change that is inherent in the Lighthouse organisation. In these areas, I draw on the work of Bill Nichols (1991), Michael Renov (1993) and Thomas Waugh and his concept of the committed documentary (2011). Kate Nash and John Corner’s research into Strategic Impact Documentary (2015) is also included in this analysis. I look to the research by Evandro Oliviera, Ana Duarte Melo and Gisela Goncales (2016) into strategic and public interest communications for not for profits.

1.4.3 Research Question Two

*How may we apply these theories and techniques to the case studies?*

To answer this research question, I examine case studies using insights derived from the literature review and prior chapters. The case studies comprise two online factual communication sites. The Berry Street Childhood Institute is a service provider to similar sectors - those subject and responding to homelessness - as the Lighthouse Foundation. Its *Berry Street* website design principles and functionality draw on contemporary website design techniques and sits within the remit of strategic communications. Here, *At Home: In Search of a Cure for a 21st Century Crisis* is an interactive documentary built on a bespoke platform, hosted by the National Film Board of Canada. The project is the audio-visual and online manifestation of a longitudinal social
science research program on homelessness, carried out over four years by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Its subject and content deal with some of the themes of trauma and homelessness also addressed by the Lighthouse Foundation and is self-described as an interactive documentary.

In these case studies, I interrogate the application of user-centred, responsive and interactivity design to their sites. I analyse the application of documentary intent and technique to their content. I apply interactive documentary theory and practice and interrogate the communication aims of the sites in relation to strategic and public interest communications to determine their relationship to interactive documentary.

1.4.4 Research Question Three

How useful are these theories and techniques in the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary?

I answer this question through reflective practice, describing and analysing structures, methods and techniques in my design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary. I do this by drawing on the findings from the Chapter Three Research Methodology and Chapter Four case studies. Finally, I discuss and evaluate the design outcomes of these decisions and present theorisation of this practice-based process in relation to interactive documentary.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

My aim in conducting this research is to expand upon the theoretical and practical application of documentary in the digital medium. I therefore investigate how the principles of computer-based, user-centred and responsive design, and interactivity design, can be utilised and applied to the understanding and production of interactive documentary. The review of literature in this chapter provides a context for my study and its conclusions.

Documentary is interrogated through the discipline of documentary theory. I present its evolution from the notion of objectivity and truth telling (Grierson 1966; Rotha 1952) to the acknowledgement of the subjective nature of this enterprise posited by Winston (1995) and Bruzzi (2006), among others. Theorist Bill Nichols (1991) establishes documentary’s indexical relationship with the existing world, and its place alongside other disciplines in the sober discourses about the existing world. The identification of different ways that the documentary text may be organised is through the work of Rotha (1952), Nichols (1991), Renov (1993) and Corner (2002). Winston, Vanstone and Chie (2017) identify the many forms of documentary in the digital medium and the pressure they place on truth claims.

To contextualise the aims of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary in influencing social change, I include the history and aims of activist documentary production and theory. Practitioners such as Grierson and Rotha identify that the intent to influence and change society has been an element of documentary practice from the inception of the genre (Grierson 1966; Rotha 1952). Theorist Thomas Waugh (2011) chronicles how the methods of change or influence have changed over the decades. Documentary practitioners and theorists Corner and Nash (2016) analyse the recent development of the impact documentary as part of an activist transmedia strategy.

In investigating interactive documentary, I analyse major contributions to interactive documentary theory. The fragmentary granular nature, and the central role of the interface and user participation, are new considerations in documentary terms, according to Aston and Gaudenzi (2012), Gaudenzi (2013), Miles (2014), Nash (2012) and O’Flynn (2012). Nash (2012) and Gaudenzi (2013) identify the need for new taxonomies and propose an
organisational methodology or ‘modes’ of interactive documentary based on those of Bill Nichols. These privilege agency and interactivity as organising principles.

*Software studies* provides an understanding of the broader environment within which the interactive documentary sits. Designer and theorist Janet Murray proposes the centrality of software, computation and connectivity in the interactive space and privileges the notion of the digital medium to describe this environment (Murray 2011). Software designer and theorist Lev Manovich (2013, 2014) proposes the notion of the species environment of the digital medium, referring to the constant growth and evolution of the space. Murray identifies the affordances of the digital medium.

I also interrogate *interactive design theory and practice*, including user-centred and responsive design, to inform the creative and design process in the digital medium. Designers Nodder (2016) and Cilella (2011) argue for the centrality if not primacy of the user in this process. Designer and theorist Sal Cilella proposes the application of traditional screenwriting practices as a tool for establishing the world of the user. Nodder proposes that consistent and standard design are essentials of user-centred design. Designers and theorists Ethan Marcotte (2010, 2015) and John Allsop (2000) establish the notion of responsive design and the implications for legacy conventions in the digital medium.

Finally, in addressing the communications environment of the interactive documentary, I investigate *strategic communications theory in the not-for-profit (NFP) sector*. Theorists Oliveira, Duarte Melo and Goncales (2016) identify two area of communication in the not-for-profit sector relevant to this study. Strategic communication is applied by an organization to fulfil its meant mission and is often applied in the corporate sector. Public interest communications is evidence based communication with the goal to change behaviour that is in the public interest. Documentary theorists and practitioners John Corner and Kate Nash (2015) identify the commonality of these aims with strategic impact documentary projects, which can include elements of transmedia and/or interactive documentary practice. Activist and filmmaker Alexandra Juhasz (2014) argues that truth claims and representation of reality provide the historic basis for documentary expression, and in this way the interactive documentary can maintain its integrity in what she claims is often the strategic communications environment of the digital medium.
2.1 DOCUMENTARY THEORY

2.1.1 Documentary – history and application to film

Theorist Phillip Rosen looks to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) to establish the meaning of the words *document* and *documentary*. He states that in the 15th century when the word first appeared, it related to notions of teaching and/or warning, evidence or proof. In the 18th century this meaning was extended to written and artefactual evidence such as manuscripts, coins and official legal and commercial documents, such as insurance policies. The OED first included the word documentary during the mid-19th century, describing it as the provision of documentation. He notes that documentary film was not included in the OED in 1933 although it was a filmic form by this time (Rosen, 1993, pp. 65-66).

British filmmaker John Grierson is credited by Hardy (1979) with being the first person to apply the term to film production, when commenting in 1926 on the Robert Flaherty documentary *Moana*:

‘Of course *Moana*, being a visual account of events in the daily life of Polynesian youth, has a documentary value’ ... And so the word documentary was born … Grierson was later to have doubts about its value to the movement which was to attach itself to it. ‘Documentary is a clumsy description but let it stand' (pp. 42-3).

2.1.2 Documentary theory and practice

Practitioner Paul Rotha was one of the first in the Anglophone world to attempt to theorise documentary. In the 1936 edition of his work *Documentary Film: The use of the film medium to interpret creatively and in social terms the life of the people as it exists in reality*, Rotha (1952) proposed that documentary film was subject to different criteria from “story-films” and, in doing so, laid down some definitions of what documentary must do and how:

Documentary … must meet the acid criticism of time. Its aim is no Saturday night hit or miss … Its purpose is not only to persuade and interest imaginations today but several years hence … If its aim was simply to describe for historical value, accuracy would be its main endeavor. But it asks creation in dramatic form to bring alive the modern world. It asks understanding of human values and knowledge of the issues
governing our society today as well as in the past. It asks for the mind of the trained sociologist as well of these of the abilities of the professional film technician (p. 26).

Rotha’s mentor and leader of the British documentary movement John Grierson, not surprisingly, posited a similar position. He linked the poet’s ability to reveal the truth beneath the surface of life to the art of documentary. As Forsyth Hardy put it in *John Grierson, a Documentary Biography* (1979):

To him the choice of the documentary medium was as gravely distinct a choice as the choice of poetry instead of fiction. Documentary, he said, must master the material on the spot and come in intimacy to ordering it; and, rejecting the surface description of a subject, it must explosively reveal the reality of it…making poetry when no poet had gone before and which require not only taste but also inspiration (p. 66).

Grierson supported what he described as the Trotskyist notion that art is “not a mirror held up to nature, but a hammer shaping it” (Hardy 1981). Grierson and Rotha proposed that the purpose of the documentary film was to shape the public’s perception, with “cinema as a pulpit and (using) it as a propagandist” (Hardy 1979). Rotha (1952) added to Grierson’s still-quoted description of documentary as the ‘creative treatment of actuality’, determining what documentary was by describing what is was not:

… somewhat beyond the simple descriptive terms of the teaching film, more imaginative and expressive than the publicity picture, deeper in meaning and more skilful in style than the news-reel, wider in observation than the travel picture or lecture film, more profound in implication and reference than the plain ‘interest’ picture, there lies Documentary. And the documentary method may well be described as the birth of creative cinema (p. 71).

In the mid-20th century, and following the Second World War, a formal definition of documentary was proposed in June 1947 in a draft manifesto for the World Union of Documentary, subscribed to by 14 nations. It stated:

By the documentary film it is meant all methods of recording on celluloid any aspect of reality interpreted either by factual shooting or by sincere and justifiable reconstruction, so as to appeal either to reason or emotion, for the purpose of stimulating the desire for, and the widening of, human knowledge and understanding,
and of truthfully posing problems and their solutions in the spheres of economics, culture and human relations (Rotha 1952, p. 30).

This definition provided the spheres to which the documentary film may be applied, and reaffirmed Grierson’s and Rotha’s proposition that its core remit was the provision and stimulation of knowledge of and discourse about the real world, to and for those in it.

Some decades later, Nichols expanded upon the spheres proposed by the World Union of Documentary in 1947. He added science, politics, foreign policy, education, religion and welfare to economics. Nichols (1991) proposed a kinship between documentary film and these ‘nonfictional systems’ based on the ‘discourses of sobriety’ that they all shared:

… these systems assume they have instrumental power; they can and should alter the world itself, they can effect action and entail consequences. Their discourse has an air of sobriety since it is seldom receptive to ‘make-believe’ characters, events or entire worlds … Discourses of sobriety are sobering because they regard their relation to the real as direct, immediate, transparent (pp. 3–4).

Nichols (1991) further identified of the ‘discourse of the real’ as something documentaries share with other disciplines:

Documentary, like other discourses of the real, retains a vestigial responsibility to describe and interpret the world of collective experience, a responsibility that is no small matter at all. But even more, it joins these other discourses (of law, family, education, economics, politics, state, and nation) in the actual construction of social reality. (p. 10).

Further, Nichols (1991) asserted that there was a fundamental expectation of documentary that:

… its sounds and images bear an indexical relationship with the historical world. As viewers we expect that what occurred in front of the camera has undergone little or no modification in order to be recorded on film and magnetic tape (p. 27).

Writing in the late-20th century, theorist Brian Winston grappled with what he regarded as the contradiction inherent in Grierson’s claim of documentary being ‘the creative treatment
of actuality’. Winston (1995) agreed with the need for documentary film to make a claim on
reality but added:

… one does not have to be too much of a sceptic to spot the obvious contradiction in
this formulation. The supposition that any ‘actuality’ is left after ‘creative treatment’
can now be seen as being at best naive and at worst a mark of duplicity (p. 11).

Winston also called into question Nichols’s assertion that viewers expect little or no
modification of the recorded image. In the age of digital capture and reproduction, he argues:

Digitalisation destroys the photographic images evidence of anything except the
process of digitalisation. The physicality of the plastic material represented in any
photographic image can no longer be guaranteed. For documentary to survive the
widespread diffusion of such technology depends on removing its claim on the real

Filmmaker and theorist Trina T. Minh-ha (1993) also tackled the Griersonian definition of
documentary and the issue of actuality as opposed to representation:

The fathers of documentary have initially insisted the documentary is not News, but
Art … That its essence is not information … not reportage; not newsreels; but
something close to “a creative treatment of actuality” (Grierson’s renowned
definition) … Sure the documentary part is true, but all around the documentary
sections there’s an interpretation (pp. 97–8).

She posited that what is proposed as truth is, in actuality, a meaning. In a similar vein,
theorist Stella Bruzzi argued that documentary film is a performative act and that the truthful
and constitutive elements of documentary are in fact in the moments of filming themselves,
not the material being filmed.

It is perhaps more generous and worthwhile to simply accept that a documentary can
never be the real world, that the camera can never catch a life as it would have
unravelled had it not interfered, and the results of this collision between apparatus and
subject are what constitutes a documentary … documentaries are performative acts
whose truth comes into being only at the moment of filming (Bruzzi 2006, p. 10).
Bruzzi contends that audiences have little trouble understanding that the documentary film is a negotiation between reality and the filmed image that represents it:

Documentary is predicated on a dialectical relationship between aspiration and potential, that the text itself reveals the tensions between the documentary pursuit of the most authentic mode of factual representation and the impossibility of the aim (pp. 6-7).

As far back as 1995, Winston was writing about the challenge of what he termed digitalisation and documentary’s truth claims. He posited that the ability of digitalisation to manipulate the image meant that the image lost its claim to the real, and so therefore must the documentary. Winston and colleagues Gail Vanstone and Wang Chie bring this discussion into the current century with their publication *The Act of Documenting: Documentary Film in the 21st Century*. In it they contend that:

Of radical significance since the late 1980s has been the increasing acceptance, contrary to the dominant tradition of objectivity, of the legitimacy of subjective expression to documentary. Potently, subjectivity has combined with a rejection of analogue cinematography as the sole way in which documentary can be illustrated (Winston, Vanstone & Chie 2017, p. 2).

This proposition aligns with Bruzzi’s contention that the audience experiences the documentary in the intersection between technology and actuality, and accepts the impossibility of capturing reality or truth. In this sense all documentary is and always was representational and inherently subjective. Bruzzi (2006) suggests that the audience and filmmakers have known this all along. Nichols (1991) summarises the position of documentary as follows:

In sum, documentary gives photographic and aural representations or likenesses of the world. Documentary stands for or represents the views of individuals, groups, or agencies from a solitary filmmaker like Flaherty to CBS news or a state government. Documentary also makes a representation, or a case, and argument, about the world explicitly or implicitly. (p. 111-12)

**In summary**, this discourse reveals the tension that resides within the documentary genre regarding its representation of the real world. Rotha and Grierson emphasise the use of
creativity to reveal a deeper truth about the existing world as distinguishing documentary from the more descriptive or informational purposes of other forms of factual filmmaking. This is relevant to my study as I apply the same notion to the interactive documentary as a means of distinguishing it from the other forms of interactive factual digital production. More contemporary commentary argues that it is the use of creativity that positions documentary as an interpretive and subjective, as opposed to objective, act. Winston (1995) in particular points out that the affordances of the digital medium render even the audiovisual capture process as interpretive. What is common to these differing theories is the agreement on the centrality of discourse or argument about the real world in documentary.

2.1.3 Defining types of documentary practice

Rotha (1952) proposed four documentary traditions, defining them by their differing approaches to ‘natural existing material’ (p. 83). These were the naturalistic or romantic, exemplified by Flaherty’s *Moana*; the realist tradition exemplified by Ruttman’s *Berlin, Symphony of a Great City*; the news reel such as Vertov’s Kino-Eye; and the propagandist or persuasive tradition seen in Grierson’s work and Soviet documentaries.

According to Nichols (1991), the informing logic of a documentary is to make an argument about this historical world using procedures of rhetorical engagement. He developed a theory of documentary modes of representation that builds on Rotha’s traditions:

> Situations and events, actions and issues may be represented in a variety of ways. Strategies arise, conventions take shape, constraints come into play … Modes of representation are basic ways of organizing texts in relation to certain recurrent features or conventions (p. 32).

Nichols proposes six modes: the *Expository Mode*, where commentary directs the viewer and image serves to illustrate; the *Observational Mode*, stressing the non-intervention of the filmmaker during the filming process, relying on editing to ‘enhance the impression of lived or real time’; the *Interactive Mode* that places the testimony of the participant at the centre of the film and does not seek to obscure the presence of the camera and filmmaker behind it; and the *Reflexive Mode*, which addresses ‘how we talk about the historical world’ rather than talking about the historical world itself. In the *Self-Reflexive mode*, it is not just the filmmaking process but the filmmaker’s person that is part of the conversation and in front of
the camera. *The Poetic Mode* draws on the editing of filmic and aural material to create meaning through associations and evoke an emotional response from the audience.

Filmmaker and theorist Michael Renov (1993) looks more closely at the direct relationship between the filmmaker and the intentions driving the making of the work. He proposes ‘modalities of desire, impulsions that fuel documentary discourse’. These ‘tendencies’ are to record, reveal or preserve; to persuade or promote; to analyse or interrogate; or to express (pp. 23-5).

British filmmaker and theorist John Corner defines documentary intention less as a result of the filmmaker’s desire, and more as a function of a discourse with the viewing public. He names four functions: *The Project of Democratic Civics*, where documentary is used by the state to promote certain types of civic engagement by the state, a type of publicity; *Documentary as Journalistic Inquiry and Exposition*, a form most commonly used for television reporting, reportage being its central function; *Documentary as Radical Interrogation and Alternative Perspective* that claims no official position and may utilise unorthodox filmic approaches to support an independent authorial position; and lastly *Documentary as Diversion*. This last category Corner proposes as an element of a type of ‘post-documentary’ culture driven by the needs of the television market in a time of increasing disarray due to the disruptive influence of the digital medium. In this case, entertainment is the key function (Corner 2002, pp. 263, 266–67).

This tradition of classification of filmic documentary is relevant to my study because it is a framework utilised and applied by theorists and practitioners working in interactive documentary. In particular, I draw on the modes framework proposed by Bill Nichols to situate my creative project within interactive documentary practice.

### 2.1.4 The history and aims of activist documentary production and theory

This desire to effect change sits within an activist aim of documentary, which has a history nearly as old as the genre itself. Writing in 1936, theorist and practitioner Paul Rotha articulated his activist ambitions: “… the documentary film has an important purpose to fulfil and bring to life familiar things and people, so that their place in the scheme of things which we call society may be honestly assessed” (p. 26).
As stated earlier, filmmaker John Grierson saw documentary as a pulpit. One of his aims was to influence policymakers by bringing the world about which they made decisions to them via documentary film. Canadian filmmaker George Stoney (2010) says of Grierson:

… Grierson’s idea… was that your first duty was to educate… not so much the opinion makers as the policy-makers. He said many times that if he could get the right dozen people into a screening room to see a film, he was happy (p. 176).

Documentary filmmaker and theorist Thomas Waugh claims that historically, documentary has been a first priority resource for the political activists and committed artists, as evidenced by its use in revolutionary struggles throughout the 20th century and beyond (China in the 1950s, Cuba in the 1960s, Latin American in the 1970s and 1980s). This activism is expressed as the intent to intervene, as the films speak to specific publics to bring about specific political goals. He defines this as ‘committed documentary’, which is “… a specific ideological undertaking, a declaration of solidarity with the goal of radical socio-political transformation” (Waugh 2011, p. 6).

Quebecois film expert Scott McKenzie notes a shift in the thinking of the activist intention in the late 1960s and cites filmmaker Dorothy Henaut, who argued that filmmakers needed to eliminate themselves from the process and place media directly in the hands of citizens if they really believed in the peoples’ rights to express themselves. The director’s role was as facilitator, supervising technical aspects of filmmaking. The activism was driven by the process rather than the product – participation in and control of the process empowered and built a community. The filmmaker’s skills were put to the service of community expression, which Henaut likens to the role of a midwife during childbirth (McKenzie 2010).

This presented a challenge to the position and indeed desire to make the film on the part of the filmmaker. In his PhD thesis of 1977, David Jones points to the traditional role of the documentary filmmaker as ‘culture hero or political revolutionary’ who made films about people. The new paradigm saw the filmmakers’ skills being used on behalf of the people. Jones (1977) notes that the separation of artistic ambition from community development goals presented difficulties with regards to the ego and creative gratification of the filmmaker.

Educator and art and design academic Ron Burnett observes that the technology of video (introduced in the late 1970s) was embraced for political activism as a way of democratising
media production and distribution within and by communities and groups – an alternative to corporate and governmental systems. He comments on the deep antipathy that grassroots ‘video activists’ had for the dominant forms of popular culture (Burnett 2010). Marchessault (2010) observes that low-grade video images became an ontological tool in the claim of the superiority of video over film as the tool of authenticity, honesty and directness. The low-grade production values demonstrated there was no artist, auteur or commercial influence.

This historic repositioning of the filmed and the filmmaker and the democratisation of the medium due to technological change is of particular relevance to the interactive documentary. In the digital medium, the position of the filmmaker – the creator of a closed narrative – moves to that of a facilitator designing for interaction, placing the user, not the director, at the centre of the project.

Further situating documentary in the digital medium, activist filmmaker and academic Alexandra Juhasz contends that digital technologies and the internet demand that the activist linear documentary filmmaker move away from technologies of representation. Juhasz contends that the user-generated media systems of the video activist period and the participatory philosophy and practice that were part of it, have been commodified by corporate media concerns. Internet spaces run by corporate giants YouTube, Facebook and Google are now the platforms where independent, activist interactions take place. Juhasz (2014) therefore proposes that the activism of the internet-based activist practice needs to be strategic or ‘artful’, requiring activist filmmakers to know when to get on and off media ‘... knowing when to seed and cede the digital’.

Documentary theorists Corner and Nash situate an evolving transmedia practice in relation to the activist documentary. The ‘strategic impact documentary’ aims to achieve specific social change by aligning documentary production with contemporary communications practices. Nash and Corner cite Karlin and Johnson’s new definition of this form as ‘film based social action campaigns’, where the documentary and social action media elements are spread across a number of platforms but work together in a unified communication vision that guides or inspires audiences to take specific action, that is, a transmedia activist project.

Corner and Nash (2015) propose that there is a professionalisation of documentary activism as strategic communication is incorporated and embraced. New roles, such as impact producers, are emerging in this activist practice. The impact aimed for is part of the
production outcome, predetermined and measured in some way, rather than something that ‘just happens (or not) when an audience encounter a documentary film’ (Corner & Nash 2015, p. 4). There are questions, however, about the tools used to measure impact, such as trailer views, box office, social media hits, likes, shares, friends, followers, Tweets, key terms, hashtags, clicks, etc. The concern is that the indicators of interaction in a social media world do not have meaning beyond a fragmentary response that does not lead to the deep engagement required for genuine societal change. Filmmaker and academic Brian Winston (2017) argues that in fact the use of data such as counting social media mentions and likes the opposite of engagement with genuine social change.

In summary, I suggest that the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary resides within the tradition of documentary as activism to propose and promote social change. This approach informs my study because I seek to design a site that supports change in the provision of care for homeless teenagers and young people. I have established that documentary has a place in social and political activism and that technological change has enabled new ways of thinking about how documentary activism appears. As Juhasz (2014) posits, the current challenge to documentary activism in the digital medium is in the corporate control of the platforms within which the medium communicates, and the hypervisibility that is also part of the medium. Some answers lie in the next section of this Literature Review chapter.

2.2 INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY

In this section I draw on the work of documentary practitioners and theorists Aufderhiede, Dovey, Gaudenzi, Juhasz, Nash, O’Flynn and Miles. Their work provides theory and methodologies of interactive documentary design as background for my study.

2.2.1 The application of the documentary theory and practice to interactive documentary

Theorist Adrian Miles (2014) proposes that cinema and interactive documentary share the common problem of how to create something whole from fragmentary parts, “where in both cases these fragments are already whole” (p. 69). Miles proposes that the fragmentary structure of what he terms the computational documentary is relational, and that this relational fragmentation has much in common with cinema in the relation of frames to shots, and shots to scenes.
In her 2012 article *Modes of Interactivity: Analyzing the Webdoc*, Nash proposes that what she calls the ‘webdocumentary’ has continuities with many representational conventions of linear documentary. She posits, however, that the shift to the participatory space of the internet is transformative in terms of this documentary text and the maker–audience relationship. Unlike linear forms, the maker expects the audience or user to engage with this participatory text. The modes of engagement or user experience are shaped by the maker via the design of the interface (Nash 2012).

Nash’s descriptor of ‘webdocumentary’ for the non-linear interactive documentary form is disputed by practitioner and theorist Patricia Aufderhiede, who uses the same term to describe the static artefact the viewer accesses via the web i.e. a linear documentary distributed via the Internet. She proposes that ‘webdocumentary’ is just one of several emerging forms in the non-linear space. Works that place user participation as an essential element are described by Aufderheide as interactive documentary. She posits that another non-linear form is the transmedia documentary that runs across several platforms and may or may not have interactive elements (Aufderheide 2014).

Transmedia practitioner and theorist Siobhan O’Flynn supports and extends Aufderheide’s differentiation of webdocumentary and interactive documentary. According to O’Flynn, webdocumentaries utilise the World Wide Web as a broadcast platform for traditional linear documentaries and generate user communities around its presence and intention. It is the activity surrounding the linear documentary, not the documentary itself, which generates the participation. She cites the Kony 2012 “Invisible Children” campaign as a case in point. O’Flynn (2012) differentiates the interactive documentary as ‘databases of content fragments’ (p. 142). She supports Nash’s contention that it is the unique interface in interactive documentary, designed by the maker, that structures the modes of interaction; and that the narrative is open ended (O’Flynn 2012).

Theorist and practitioner Sarah Gaudenzi introduces the concept of the *living documentary* where software and usability are central to interactive documentary design. Living documentaries allow users to contribute content, thus creating a continuously mutable entity. She asserts that this new form requires a unique taxonomy and echoes Nash’s claim of the transformative impact of participatory relationships and roles. Gaudenzi also echoes Miles, emphasising the relational nature of the interactive documentary and the necessity of agency and participation of the user. Gaudenzi (2013) describes the interactive documentary as a
Relational object because the work cannot function as an independent entity (i.e. without a user), and so cannot be analysed using traditional film and documentary theory. This theory speaks directly to my study as to if, how and where interactive documentary theorists and designers may draw on theory and practice from outside the documentary field.

Filmmaker and theoretician John Dovey takes Gaudenzi’s living documentary theory a step further by proposing that this type of documentary actually resembles software in its structure and approach because it similarly makes the user the centre of the experience. He further positions the user and the documentary maker, describing this as being ‘... at the intersection of a series of vectors of indeterminacy between the machine’s procedural logic, networked affordances, and narrativisation, all literally rendered via an interface (Dovey 2014, p. 80).

The interactivity of computerised environments gives the user agency while the designer surrender some control. However, as with Nash, Dovey proposes that the effective action of the user is guided by the interface design, which is managed by the designer. Filmmaker and theoretist Alexandra Juhasz emphasises that the interactive documentary must be grounded in the documentary tradition of truth claims and representation of actuality (Juhasz 2014).

In summary this theorisation defines the interactive documentary with an emphasis on user agency and participation. The design of this agency through its software interface is a key role of the interactive documentary designer, who replaces the director in the linear documentary model. As Gaudenzi (2013) proposes, the shift of documentary to the digital medium requires a taxonomy that is not derived from linear documentary.

2.2.2 Interactive documentary modes

Kate Nash proposes modes of user engagement as a way of understanding the participatory nature of interactivity. The narrative mode explains and evaluates events, using dramatic movement and emotional force, and usually in a chronological structure. The categorical mode looks to textual organisation with an emphasis on categories. The digital artefacts are sorted in a simultaneous manner. The collaborative mode focuses on user contributions. Further drawing on linear documentary theory, she asserts that Renov’s modalities of documentary are applicable to this space (Nash 2012, pp. 203-207).
Gaudenzi proposes four modes. She calls selecting from a database the *hitchhiking mode*. The *conversational mode* suggests a system that can respond to user input. In the *participative mode*, users have a more active role in that they can contribute to the database. The *experiential mode* includes a physical environment as a site of interaction and may include augmented reality experiences (Aston & Gaudenzi 2012; Gaudenzi 2013).

The application of a mode methodology to the interactive documentary provides for the linear documentary practitioner a framework that draws on the established linear documentary theories of Nichols and Renov. In the practice-led element of my study and the theory that it embodies, I use Gaudenzi’s modes to identify organising principles.

### 2.3 INTERACTIVE DESIGN THEORY AND PRACTICE

The design for this study and the theory that supports it derive from disciplines related to digital media, software theory and interactivity design. I look to *software studies* through the work of software designer and theorist Lev Manovich to understand the affordances of the environment within which the interactive documentary sits, and *interactive design theory and practice* to identify functional and design considerations, drawing on the work of Cilella, Marcotte, Murray, Nodder and Williamson.

#### 2.3.1 Computation and software

Manovich (2014) describes software as being “the message … the interface to our imagination and the world – a universal language through which the world speaks, and a universal engine on which the world runs” (p. 80). He identifies a particular subdiscipline – media software – and argues that computers and the software that drives them are not just technology but ‘new media’:

> Just as there is no logical limit to the number of algorithms which can be invented, people can always develop new software techniques for working with media … Software-based media will always be “new” as long as new techniques continue to be invented and added to those that already exist (Manovich 2013, p. 156).

Interactivity and games designer Janet Murray supports the use of the term ‘new media’ in that it contextualises computers within the more complex environment of media. However, she has an issue with the implications of the word ‘new’ with regards to design thinking:
… the vagueness of the term encourages sloppy thinking about design by suggesting that novelty is the salient property of these phenomena ... Calling objects made with computing technology “new” media obscures the fact that it is the computer that is the defining difference not the novelty (Murray 2011, pp. 8-9).

Murray goes on to argue for the inclusion of digital in the theory behind the software-driven space of Manovich’s meta-medium. She argues for the privileging of hardware’s capacities over software’s and proposes that digital artefacts be thought of as parts of a single new medium “which is best understood specifically as the digital medium, the medium that is created by exploiting the representational power of the computer” (Murray 2011, pp. 8-9).

Murray proposes certain representational properties within the digital medium: “procedural, participatory, spatial, and encyclopaedic … that provide the core palette for designers across applications within the common digital medium” (ibid).

Manovich argues that there can be no such thing as digital media because it is defined by software. The user is not working with digital media but the software application within it. Both Murray’s and Manovich’s arguments have merit. However, I support Murray’s position because of the centrality of computational, networked and software properties in my study. Murray’s term ‘digital medium’ best describes the environment of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary. Manovich (2013) assists this contention by his analysis of the constituent parts of a medium being “an imaginary database of all expressive possibilities, compositions, emotional states and dynamics, representational and communication techniques, and “content” actualized in all the works created with a particular combination of certain materials and tools” (pp. 225-6).

Having argued for the use of the term the digital medium to describe the computational world, Murray identifies its key design consideration as being agency for the user. The satisfying experience of agency is of primary importance, where satisfaction is defined “by the matching of the interactants’ expectations to the way in which the procedures of interaction work in the design” (Murray 2011, p. 12).

**In summary**, Manovich and Murray describe an environment driven by the affordances of computer, software and connectivity. Previously separate physical elements and processes now exist in common and new synergies are emerging. Manovich calls this a new medium, a meta-medium in which change is a constant. In this study I privilege Murray’s definition of
this environment as the digital medium because it describes the context of the interactive documentary’s computational, networked and software properties.

### 2.3.2 Designing for the digital medium and interactivity

I draw from the disciplines of *user-centred* and *responsive design* as these disciplines articulate methodologies beyond the principles of documentary and interactive documentary theory. I suggest that they may contribute to interactive documentary’s new taxonomy, as suggested by Gaudenzi.

#### 2.3.2.1 User-centred (UX) and web design

Individuals engaging with a digital environment are designated variously the ‘user’, ‘visitor’ or ‘interactant’ (Nodder 2016, Murray 2011). For this thesis and my site design, I privilege ‘user’. I earlier identified the audience for the proposed Lighthouse Interactive Documentary as being high net-worth individuals, philanthropic organisations and policymakers. Designer Chris Nodder (2016) addresses the position of the user in site design, contending that identifying the user or group of users and their characteristics, before any content is devised, is the first step to good website design: “… you need to spend some time thinking about who exactly you’re going to optimize the site’s design for” (sec 1.1 para 1).

I also refer to the work of interactive designer and theorist Sal Cilella who, like Nodder, identifies the user as the first design step but goes further, building individual profiles based on user research. He proposes the use of ‘personas’ to inform and drive site design so that problems and satisfying agency specific to that user are identified. Cilella also proposes the use of traditional narrative screenwriting tools as design tools, commencing with story:

> … it’s the accessibility of story that makes it compelling—we can all tell stories. And so we begin our design process by crafting the three key components found in every story: a likable hero, an immersive setting, and a compelling script. In doing so, we create the context in which to generate design ideas (Cilella 2011, pp. 63-64).

The key element for both Nodder and Cilella is the primacy of the user for site design. Nodder also proposes certain design techniques based on a broader notion of how and why people browse the web. These techniques include standard design, which uses design conventions that are common to other sites identified as relevant to the user. Consistent
design emphasises the need for internal consistency. Both of these factors enhance the ability of the user to navigate a site, and leave and return easily; attributes identified by Nodder (2016) as important for a user-friendly interactive experience. Cilella advocates for more than successful functionality in computational design. Using the hero’s journey from screenwriting practice, Cilella (2011) argues:

> By focusing our design efforts around the hero’s perspective and harnessing the power of storytelling, we can deliver more than just functionality: We can deliver meaningful benefits that connect and empower (p. 66).

**In summary**, Nodder and Cilella argue for the primacy of user experience in site design. Cilella builds on Murray’s emphasis of user agency with notions of meaning and empowerment as benefits of effective design. Nodder specifies techniques that he contends are central to this aim. These provide a practical and theoretical basis for a design system for interactive documentary in the digital medium that I apply to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design and theorization.

### 2.3.2.2 Responsive design, legacy practices and the digital medium

Interactive designer and theorist Ethan Marcotte argues that digital designers are working in a transient setting of near-constant technological change. He advocates a flexible design approach that can adapt to evolution of the digital medium, which he identifies as *responsive design* (Marcotte 2010). Designer James Williamson points out that many people use the term to refer to techniques that allow designs to respond to different environments. He proposes that the emphasis is on freeing content from the restrictions of a single context (Williamson 2016), and points out the extent of the variables that web designers have to consider, and the implications for designers:

> [They] have to consider the wide variety of browsers and operating systems that people might be using, whether my content is accessible to screen readers or other accessibility-enabled devices … or whether they’re attempting to access my content on any one of the growing number of diverse web-capable devices (sec 1.1 para 2).

Williamson argues that the practice of designing for a fixed screen size or interface, with the assumption that your users will be accessing devices with connectivity in a similar setting,
no longer stands. Additionally, whatever current devices are, these only indicate what is possible in the future:

Already, we’re seeing cars, watches, shoes, and other devices with Internet capabilities … they’re really just the tip of the iceberg. To me, that simply underscores how important responsive design is. Unless we focus on ways to make our content and designs more adaptive across multiple environments, we’re going to be restricted to making sites that work part of the time for only part of our audience (Williamson 2016, sec 1.2 para 4).

Manovich proposes a way of thinking about the iceberg below the tip. He argues that the species model from biology is plausible because it encapsulates the idea of evolution “which implies constant development over time and gradually increasing diversity” (Manovich 2013, p. 235). Marcotte’s theories speak to Manovich’s proposition of species evolution in site design. He reflects on the influence of and need to think beyond the framework of the legacy disciplines in the context of designing for the digital medium, which has implications for interactive documentary:

… the idea of a “page,” that wonderful word we borrowed from print, is increasingly irrelevant to our work. We’re no longer building pages at all—instead, we need to think of our responsive designs as a network of small layout systems … Little pockets of design that can…be rearranged at any screen size to best convey a message … with the explosion of mobile computing, we realized that our desktop-centric view of the web was entirely too narrow (Marcotte 2015, pp. 2-3).

Adding to Marcotte’s observations on the tensions between the legacy media of print and contemporary site design, designer John Allsop looks to Taoist wisdom to shed light on the tension between older legacy conventions when a new medium, or species as Manovich describes it, is evolving. Allsop quotes from 38 Ritual in the Tao Te Ching for his 2000 article ‘A Dao of Web Design’:

Well established hierarchies are not easily uprooted;
Closely held beliefs are not easily released;
So ritual enthrals generation after generation. (Allsop 2000, Introduction para 5)
Allsop proposes that the while some borrowings make sense, much of it is thoughtless, a ritual that, as Marcotte observes, constrains the new medium. Allsop argues that in the context of design in the digital medium, this expresses itself in the relationship between the designer and the user. For example, the legacy of the print medium in relation to web design puts the designer in control. Allsop (2000) says:

> The control which designers know in the print medium, and often desire in the web medium, is simply a function of the limitation of the printed page. We should embrace the fact that the web doesn’t have the same constraints, and design for this flexibility (para 4).

Allsop also contends that, given time, the new medium or species develops its own conventions and discards legacy conventions that are no longer relevant. Given that my study situates documentary in the same evolving digital medium as print, I am interested in whether interactive documentary design can be informed by the evolution of print and design in the digital medium. I suggest that the challenge to the filmmaker is similar to that of the print graphic designer in ceding authority to the user (as specified by user-centred design principles). I also suggest that the filmmaker faces the same challenges in determining which of the legacy documentary theory and practice is appropriate in the evolving digital medium and which is going to inhibit interactive documentary design “making sites that work part of the time for only part of our audience” (Williamson 2016, sec. 1.2 para 4).

**In summary**, the design principles for user-centred and responsive design draw on a combination of traditional analogue techniques from narrative storytelling, the possible discarding of existing conventions originating in print-based graphic design and documentary filmmaking, and the articulation of a new paradigm that reflects the fluid environment of the digital medium. The application of user-centred and responsive design techniques to the practice-based component of my study, the consideration of legacy influences in this design and the theorising that follows may contribute new knowledge to the field of interactive documentary design.

### 2.4 COMMUNICATION AIMS AND THE INTERACTIVE SETTING

Alexandra Juhasz (2014) positions the documentary in the digital medium, which informs the central issue I grapple with in this study:
What can be gained by calling this new, distinct set of representational procedures a (digital) documentary? Might this kind of media project, as would be true for so much of online corporate and user-made material, be understood better as marketing or public relations? (p. 37)

The 2016 publication Strategic Communications for Non-Profit Organisations (Ed. Oliveira, E., Duarte Melo, A., Goncales, G., 2016), situates communication aims of the study. In it Louise van Dyk (2016) proposes that not-for-profit (NFP) organisations that provide social development services are not “sufficiently provided by the state” (p. 59). She goes on to argue that by offering these services, NFPs also aim to effect change both on a community and at a socio-political level. This reflects the position of the Lighthouse Foundation.

Van Dyk’s co-authors identify two types of communications in the NFP sector. The first, strategic communications as described as:

... the development and delivery of persuasive messages to target audiences with the purpose of influencing opinions, attitudes and behaviours (Hallahan et al., 2007), and it has been used for long in the corporate world to achieve higher performances (Duerte Melo, Balonas & Felicio 2016, p. 59).

This aligns with Juhasz’s proposition that much of the material in the digital medium is marketing. Echoing this, Van Dyk (2016) identifies the need for both NFP and corporate organisations to maintain successful relationships with stakeholders. Kotler (2016) notes:

… despite the social significance of NGO there is undeniably a clear parallel with the procedures characteristic of business marketing, based on "[...] attracting and keeping profitable customers (pp. 151-2).

Marfil-Carmons, Arroyo-Almaraz and Garcia-Garcia (2016) argue that the audience (user) of a charity campaign, particularly when given tools, actually becomes “a very important brand advocate” (p. 157). The strategic communications intent also fits into the realm of public relations, given its focus to build a relationship with or on behalf of the public (Fessmann 2016, p. 23 as cited in Oliveira, Duarte Melo, Goncales, 2016 p.154-5). Activist and filmmaker Alexandra Juhasz identifies the particular function of documentary in this setting in that “historically, neither marketing nor public relations share documentary's special provenance with the truth; in fact, quite the opposite” (Juhasz 2014 p. 37).
A second form of communication in the NFP sector is identified as public interest communication (PIC). It has more in common with the documentary intent as described by Juhasz and is defined as:

the development and implementation of science-based, planned strategic communication campaigns with the main goal of achieving significant and sustained positive behavioural change on a public interest issue that transcends the particular interest of any single organization (Fessmann, 2016 pp. 13-14).

Fessmann proposes that strong scientific or evidence base of a good PIC is essential in identifying the various aspects of the issue driving the need for the communications. The research also needs to identify “a specific community of influence on the issue (similar but different stakeholders), and tests of what the proposed solution to the problem is” (pp. 17-18). Finally and most importantly, given that public interest communication is developed and implemented to achieve a significant societal change Fessmann (2016) argues that campaigns without a good research base may cause actual harm to groups and individuals in a way not normally the case in marketing, public relations, or advertising.

This theorization assists me in identifying the communication aims of my study. This provides a methodology for the implementation of the documentary intention in a setting that, as outlined above, can be utilised for a variety of purposes other than documentary in the NFP sector.

2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I provide an overview of approaches to documentary, from Grierson’s (1966) creative treatment of actuality as a pulpit to provoke to social change, through to Winston, Vanstone and Chie (2017) whose contention is that in the digital medium, documentary truth claims must be seen as subjective. I establish that in documentary there is agreement on the centrality of discourse or argument about the existing world, which I apply to my study in future chapters. I also set out the role of documentary modes and functions as organising principles that inform interactive documentary design (Nichols 1991, Renov 1993). I investigate the activist role of documentary and suggest its relevance to my study in both theory and practice, which I also apply in future chapters (Waugh 2011).
Contemporary theory and practice about interactive documentary is then reviewed and I highlight the discipline’s relationship with documentary modes of practice established by Nichols, software and digital design (Aufderheide 2014; Gaudenzi 2013; Juhasz 2014; Nash 2012). I assert that the director in the linear documentary form take on the role of designer in the interactive documentary. The Literature Review suggests the centrality of user agency and participation and that the design of agency via the software interface is a key role for the designer. I apply these findings in Chapter Five.

I investigate software and interactivity design through the work of practitioners and theorists Manovich (2013) and Murray (2011), finding a dynamic space that Manovich likens to species development. I incline towards Murray’s description of this environment as the digital medium, which I apply to this study. I then investigate user-centred and responsive design theory and practice in relation to the digital medium (Cilella 2011; Marcotte 2010; Nodder 2016). The literature also shows tensions between legacy linear filmic conventions and designing for the digital medium (Allsop 2000; Marcotte 2010), however the former may contribute to interactive documentary design scholarship.

Finally, I acknowledge the position of communications theory in establishing documentary intent in site design for the not for profit sector (Oliveira, Duarte Melo & Goncales, 2016). Juhasz (2014) suggests that the function of documentary in the interactive space and its ‘special provenance with the truth’ distinguishes it from public relations and strategic communications; a claim I examine in the case studies and analysis later in subsequent chapters. The literature indicates that public interest communications aligns more closely with the documentary intent in the digital medium sought by Juhasz.

In Chapter Three, I analyse the application of key theories and techniques associated with user-centred, responsive and interactivity design for the interactive documentary. This analysis will provide the framework for the application of my findings to case studies in Chapter Four, and my own practice-based research, the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary site design, in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER THREE

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

*How may the key theories and techniques associated with user-centred, responsive and interactivity design inform interactive documentary?*

**Introduction**

To answer this question, I include the work of theorists working in the disciplines of documentary, interactive documentary software and interactivity design. I also draw on the work of theorists in the not-for-profit (NFP) communications sector. I apply an analysis of these theories to interactive documentary design from the perspectives of both designer and user.

To address interactive documentary theory and practice, I draw primarily on the work of Sarah Gaudenzi, one of the curators of the MIT Open Documentary Lab Docubase and co-director of the i-Docs project, a research strand within the Digital Cultures Research Centre at the University of West England in Bristol. Her PhD introduces the concept of the living documentary: placing software and usability at the centre of non-linear documentary design. Gaudenzi also frames documentary theorist Bill Nichols’s concepts of documentary modes in the interactive documentary space.

In investigating software theory, I refer to the work of Lev Manovich, a software designer and theorist whose published works included *Software takes Command*, and *Software is the Message*. In *Software takes Command*, Manovich argues that computers and the software that drives them are not just technology but a new medium. He observes that software is now a universal language and the engine on which the world runs. Media software drives communication, expression and culture.

I also include the work of designer and theorist Janet Murray. In her 2011 publication *Inventing the Medium: Principles of Interaction Design as a Cultural Practice*, Murray argues for the use of the ‘digital medium’ to describe the single new medium created by the exploitation of the ‘representational power of the computer’ (2011, pp. 8-9). She describes
four essential representational properties as being procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopaedic. Murray situates pleasurable agency as the goal for interactive design (2011).

In the discipline of interactivity design, web designers Chris Nodder and Sal Cilella address the design implications for web content creation, and the use of narrative fiction and analogue techniques in developing design and content (Cilella 2011; Nodder 2016). Interactivity designers John Allsop and Ethan Marcotte, with Janet Murray, articulate the tension between pre-existing media and the need to re-articulate form in the converging environment of software and devices (Allsop 2000; Marcotte 2010, 2015; Murray 2011).

Finally, I investigate the communications environment of the digital medium in relation to NFPs, in which the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary is situated. Oliveira, Duarte Melo and Goncales, editors of Strategic Communications for Non-Profit Organisations (2016), address the function of strategic and public interest communications for NFPs and non-government sectors. I apply their findings to the communications purpose of website design and investigate how documentary intent may be expressed in this environment.

I then look to the research of documentary theorists Kate Nash and John Corner (2015) in the development of the strategic impact documentary as a recent form of documentary activism, and how this intersects with the interactive documentary. These writings provide a context for the expression of documentary in the communications environment in which the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary sits.

3.1 FROM LINEAR TO THE INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY

Documentary as a genre within film and television production has existed for over 100 years. The definitions of linear documentary are well documented and discussed (Bruzzi, Corner, Grierson, Nichols, Renov, Rotha, Winston, inter alia). What is of further interest is how documentary may be expressed and identified in the digital medium. For the purposes of this study, I identify documentary as being the presentation of an argument or proposition about the historical world to provoke discourse, and in some cases effect change (Nichols 1991; Renov 1993). This argument or provocation utilises material that represents, and/or has an indexical relationship to, the real or historic world (Nichols 1991). Interactive documentary practitioner and theorist Sandra Gaudenzi proposes that both linear and interactive documentaries “try to create a dialogue with reality” (2013, p. 32).
Gaudenzi and theorist/practitioner Judith Aston also provide a definition of the interactive documentary as being “any project that starts with an intention to document the “real” and that uses digital interactive technology to realize this intention” (Aston & Gaudenzi 2012, pp. 124-5). Gaudenzi (2013) proposes that this definition places emphasis on two elements, one being the interactive-native nature of the design and the other being the documentary intent of the author.

The challenge for the filmmaker turned interactive documentary designer lies in the change in the relationship between the viewer/audience and the documentary artefact when interactivity is introduced. Aston and Gaudenzi (2012) propose that interactivity constructs a viewer/audience experience that is integral to the design itself. As Gaudenzi (2013) explains:

… their interactive nature demands an active participation of the user who, de facto, becomes a doer, rather than a viewer. The user needs to act on, interact with, the interactive documentary for it to materialize itself into a new screen. The user is therefore not an external but rather internal, “part of” the system (p. 15)

Gaudenzi positions linear documentary as representational whereas she claims interactive documentary is relational. Theorist John Dovey supports Gaudenzi’s proposition of the interactive documentary as a relational entity. He proposes that the need for some sort of interaction means that it does not exist as an independent entity and so cannot be analysed using normal film and documentary theory (Dovey 2014, p. 15). However, theorist Adrian Miles argues that film is also relational, being composed of fragments – individual shots – that, when edited together, bring the film into being. Miles (2014) posits that in fact cinema and interactive documentary share the common problem of “how to make something whole from smaller fragmentary parts where, in both cases, these fragments are already whole” (p. 69).

However, I suggest that the viewer/user experiences a difference between the relational nature of film and interactive design. In film, the viewer sits outside the relational activity of edited shots. Aston and Gaudenzi (2012) propose that the interactive documentary requires that the viewer/user:

… play an active role in the negotiation of the ‘reality’ being conveyed…interactivity requires a physical action to take place between the user/participant and the digital
While having some properties in common with the linear form, the interactive documentary therefore requires a different physical response from the user/viewer. Without this response, the artefact itself cannot come into being or, as Gaudenzi (2013) puts it, “The user needs to … interact with the interactive documentary for it to materialize itself” (p. 1).

Gaudenzi and theorists Gifreu (2011), Nash (2012) and Galloway (2014) categorise types of interactive documentary to organise the different ways that interaction can occur in the digital medium. Gifreu and Galloway propose models while Nash proposes structures. Gaudenzi (2012, 2013) draws on theorist Bill Nichols’s modes of documentary as a way of organising approaches to interactivity and agency.

In theorising on the linear documentary, Nichols (1991) describes documentary modes as “basic ways of organizing texts in relation to certain recurrent features or conventions” (p. 32). He triangulates this organisation around the author, the text and the audience, proposing six modes that are commonly referred to in the linear documentary filmmaker’s quest to represent or interpret reality. A mode focuses on how this is done and what it implies about the filmmaker’s relationship to participants and the actuality that is being captured and interpreted, rather than the actual meaning of the finished piece. Gaudenzi (2013) describes modes as being “… a meta-logic, as a frame that roughly summarizes the different positions that the filmmaker, the filmed subjects and the viewers have taken so far” (p. 24).

When applied to interactive documentary, the mode positions users, technology type and a specific type of action required by the interaction. Gaudenzi proposes four modes for interactive documentary, which I use as my organisational models for this study. Her primary organising principle is the type of interactivity and modes are as follows:

*The conversational mode* applies to projects whereby the user explores an environment or situation. The interaction is an open construct and there appears to be a ‘conversation’ driven and brought to life by the user in their choice of rules and actions from a world that is predetermined invisibly by the designer. Simulations are common in this mode where the user chooses a route through an environment as a way of experiencing that designer’s world. A key to this mode is the impression of an infinite database, and so infinite choice and
agency. It is this mode that is particularly applicable to the emerging documentary practice in virtual reality (VR).

*The hitchhiking (or hypertext) mode* gives agency to the user through hyperlinks from one area to another. Content may propose different points of view of a topic. The content within each point of view is fixed by the designer. The user explores ‘bits’ to understand their cumulative meaning:

What all hyperlink projects have in common is the attempt to portray a factual reality through a searchable archive, or database. The condition is that the database is closed – not extendable by the author or by the user. The way to explore the database is the hypertext – a word, a drawing, a picture or a moving image – that does re-direct the user to the continuation of the reality that she is exploring (Gaudenzi 2013, p. 53).

Gaudenzi proposes that the key to effective design in this mode is a central narrative that allows the user to form a perspective from the hyperlinked granules. This approach to design and interaction is often used in website design.

*The participatory mode* allows the user to contribute to the database, thus participating in the ongoing creation of the work itself. The role of the author is to set up the initial structure and content, and the rules within which users can access and contribute to the project. Gaudenzi (2013, p. 57) explains it this way: “Participatory interaction assumes that the interactor can add, change or circulate content – and therefore transform the artefact itself.”

Gaudenzi’s metaphor for this mode of interactivity is that of a building. There is one architect and planner, but various participants add to the design and structure at different stages. Web 2.0 and beyond has been a crucial element in the development of this mode.

*The experiential mode* implies embodied interaction with an environment. There need not be hyperlinks or any sort of participation in the content of design, and it is not a simulation. It is through the embodied as opposed to the screen-driven interaction that the user comes to understand the material. Gaudenzi explains:
The idea of documenting a place in locative documentaries assumes that physical engagement is a catalyst for a different type of meaning, a meaning that would be different if the participant was to sit in front of a screen (p. 65).

Her metaphor for this mode is that of a dance, which implies embodiment, and interaction with a physical environment that has endless possibilities. The invention and uptake of mobile devices and wireless internet has led to an increase of interactive documentaries designed in this mode. This mode is particularly applicable to augmented reality.

Gaudenzi brings these modes together in an overarching definition of the interactive documentary as being the living documentary (‘living’ replacing ‘interactive’ as the descriptor). She draws on the theories of human computer interaction, cybernetics, and autopoiesis, and looks to the hypothesis of assemblages, feedback loops and autopoietic open systems to support the shift from interactive to living:

A Living Documentary is...an assemblage composed by heterogeneous elements that are linked through modalities of interaction. It can have different levels of autopoiesis and can be more or less open to transformation (pp. 83-4).

**In summary**, the interactive documentary differs from linear documentary in several ways. The artefact is designed to be used rather than viewed as in linear delivery. The artefact may only come into being through the physical actions of the viewer/user. Gaudenzi’s interactive modes provide a way of categorising types of interactivity. This informs the design considerations central to my applied research, by establishing the mode of interaction required by the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary user and its design implications.

### 3.2 INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY AND THE DIGITAL MEDIUM

My background is as a linear documentary filmmaker. Given that so many people now access content and inhabit data-driven, software-designed worlds accessed via computational devices, it makes sense to me to expand my documentary practice into this space. So, how do I as a linear practitioner understand the affordances that are available in the environment in which the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary sits?

Software theorist Lev Manovich (2014) proposes that software is the dominant new media form of our time, and justifies this claim thus:
Software is the interface to our imagination and the world – a universal language through which the world speaks, and a universal engine on which the world runs … Like the alphabet, mathematics, the printing press, combustion engine, electricity, and integrated circuits, software re-adjusts and re-shapes everything it is applied to – or at least, it has a potential to do this (p. 80).

Manovitch also proposes the notion of a new meta-medium. He asserts that its importance and point of difference from historic, or what I will term as legacy, mediums, lies in its ability to remediate existing media, as well as augmenting it and also generating new working tools and types of media itself. As he explains, “… a computer can be used to create new tools for working with the media types it already provides as well as to develop new not-yet-invented media” (Manovich 2013, pp. 102-3).

Manovitch goes on to emphasise that it is software and not the computer alone that is at the centre of this new meta-medium. The computer is the machine and digitisation is the method to get the material onto the machine. It is the software that allows the digital affordances of the computer to bring meaning to the output. Manovich goes to some lengths to establish that the term ‘digital’ refers only to content that has no properties in and unto itself:

… the techniques, the tools, and the conventions of media software applications are not the result of a technological change from “analogue” to “digital” media … While digital representation makes it possible for computers to work with images … it is the software that determines what we can do with them. So while we are indeed “being digital”, the actual forms of this “being” come from software (Manovich 2013, pp. 149,152).

Manovich positions the adoption of software by the global cultural and communication industries as being as important as the invention of print, photography and cinema (Manovich 2013). Given this positioning of media software as a creative tool on par with the analogue mediums of the 20th century, his point is significant because it locates the centrality of software in the creative expression of the digital realm, providing some guidance to the linear practitioner.

Manovich also proposes that searchability, findability, linkability, multimedia messaging and sharing, editing, view control, zoom and other “media-independent” techniques are a given in software-driven environments. Gaudenzi’s modes, based on types of interactivity, organise
these functions and actions into specific design approaches. This combination of Manovich’s description of the affordances – what can be done – and Gaudenzi’s modes of interaction – how it can be done – provides the interactive documentary designer with a set of planning tools that could be compared to the affordances of camera, sound design and post-production in planning a linear film.

Interactivity designer and theorist Janet Murray argues for the inclusion of the digital in this new meta-medium. She agrees that there is indeed a new medium but argues for the privileging of computational affordances over software, and for the notion of a digital medium. She claims this is created by the exploitation of the representational powers of computation. Murray (2011) identifies four representational properties of what she describes as digital environments as being ‘… procedural, participatory, spatial, and encyclopaedic affordances … that provide the core palette for designers across applications within the common digital medium’ (pp. 8, 9). Manovich (2013) expands the notion of Murray’s digital medium, arguing that:

… in the larger ecosystem of the proliferating devices, network services, interface technologies, media projects, and over one million apps for mobile platforms available to consumers, the (medium) concept can no longer be stretched to describe them in a meaningful way (p. 235).

Manovich proposes a species model that reflects the growing number, links and constant evolution of the digital medium. This notion coincides with Gaudenzi’s proposition of the living documentary, being an artefact that is in constant evolution through user participation. Combined, the theories of Manovich, Murray and Gaudenzi articulate a design environment that is in constant change and flux with no beginning, end or time constraint. This notion of constant change is not entirely foreign to linear documentary. Nichols’s (1991) Representing Reality notes that:

Documentary as a concept or practice occupies no fixed territory. It mobilises no finite inventory of techniques, addresses no set number of issues, and the adopts no completely known taxonomy of forms, styles, or modes … Documentary film practice is the site of contestation and change (p. 12).
This theory is useful in that it identifies that a constantly changing environment is common to both linear documentary and the digital medium. It indicates a way that some legacy documentary theory may be applied to understanding documentary in the digital medium.

In summary, Manovich provides some ways of thinking about creativity and tools in the digital medium, positioning software at the centre of the creative process. He and Murray list tools, functions, techniques and their affordances at play in the digital medium. I suggest that combining Manovich’s description of the techniques and functions – what can be done – with Gaudenzi’s modes of interaction – how it can be done – provides means for interactive documentary design in the digital medium. Finally, the combined theories of Manovich, Murray and Gaudenzi articulate a design environment that is in constant change and flux, which I suggest provides a commonality between linear documentary and the digital medium. This commonality may provide linear practitioners with some way of using the legacy of film documentary in designing for interactive documentary.

3.3 INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY AND INTERACTIVITY DESIGN

Aston & Gaudenzi (2012) nominate documentary intent, that is the “intention to document the “real”” as a central facet of the interactive documentary (p. 125). Linear documentary theory and practice provides a rich resource from which to draw on notions describing documentary. I have established the agreement on the centrality of discourse or argument about the real world in defining documentary in Chapter Two.

The issue for the linear documentary filmmaker lies in where and how to apply existing documentary theory and practice to the non-linear world of Murray’s digital medium. Murray articulates the dilemmas that may arise when legacy disciplines are applied to the this medium:

When newspaper editors and television producers work together on a news site should they be thinking in terms of soundbytes or headlines? or both? or neither?

Design processes are often stalled by such unproductive attempts to apply legacy conventions to new digital frameworks (Murray 2011, p. 5).

My study explores how a filmmaker like me may move from making for the linear world of film production, with planned shots and edits in a closed system of delivery, to designing for systems of interaction and participation with infinite databases, hyperlinks and ever-evolving
texts. To answer at least part of this question, I look to the disciplines of user-centred and responsive design in website delivery and interactivity design.

### 3.3.1 User-centred design

Contemporary website design theory and practice provides a way of thinking about the affordances and demands of site-specific internet-based projects. Central to website design is the ability to attract or draw visitors, maintain their attention, and then persuade them to interact with the offerings of the site. These are important considerations in identifying an informing dynamic for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design. Web designer Chris Nodder (2016) contends that:

… when most people come to your site they’re doing so with a particular goal in mind … Because people are coming to your site with a specific goal in mind, it’s important that you help them quickly reach that goal (sec 1.2 para 2).

Nodder (2016) identifies establishing of the user and their needs as the first step in site design:

So, the first step in your process has nothing to do with the tools you use or the platform you’ll develop on. Instead, you need to spend some time thinking about who exactly you're going to optimize the sites design for. It's worth the time to sketch out the attributes of the visitors you care about, what they value, what their goals are, and what concerns might stop them from using your site. Some people call this type of sketch, a persona (sec 1.1 para 1).

Nodder proposes that unlike the visitor to a cinema, or a viewer of television, or even a gamer, the motivation of a site user is goal-oriented in terms of both information and time. They have arrived with the desire to get out with the information they want in the quickest time available and have not set aside several hours to watch a movie or explore an immersive online space.

Identification of the individualised user by the designer is in contrast to contemporary practice in filmmaking for a documentary audience. The audience (and its needs) is often defined by the commissioning body and/or exhibitor – entities with financial interests in the work. Audience needs are determined by demographic information, such as age, gender, and
socio-economic background. Nodder’s approach compels the designer to identify the user as an individual, developing ‘personas’ of the typical prospective user.

Interaction designer Sal Cilella (2011) proposes how the designer–persona relationship may develop:

> Our hero is our intended audience … Like a fiction writer, a designer should develop an attachment and healthy respect for their character and feel invested in helping the hero achieve success (pp. 63–4).

The use of terms such as hero and character draw on long-established scriptwriting conventions in the area of narrative fiction and mythological storytelling (Campbell 1949, Field 2005). The heroes and characters for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary have been identified as high net worth individuals, representatives of large philanthropic trusts, government policymakers and others working in the sector. The application of this first user-centred design principle to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary will be investigated further in Chapter Five’s case study.

The next stage in user-centred design is how these personas and their needs may be applied to site design. Nodder and Cilella both turn to another legacy media construct, the linear story or narrative, as a key to this stage of the user-centred design process. Cilella states:

> Through the use of story as a central framework for creating ideas, we are forced to find ideas that are contextually relevant and fit the hero’s needs … prompting conversations about what benefits the design ideas should provide and how the hero should experience them. Stories also help to reduce bloat … only the features that benefit the hero in some meaningful way make the cut (Cilella 2011, pp. 65-6).

Thus, Cilella resituates and repurposes character-driven narrative from linear storytelling as a tool for new media design and audience or user engagement. Many linear film practitioners have these skills. However, in a linear project the narrative is a superstructure that serves to move the story and its characters forward in a singular trajectory to a resolved ending. In a data-based software-driven project, the narrative is a substructure that serves to inform user-centred design so the user can interact with relevant site elements. The challenge for the linear filmmaker turned designer lies in the difference of application and identification of what success looks like in the different media. A successful narrative in web design is
implicit in the accessibility and usability of the design, rather than the linear measure of a story success of an engaged audience, looking at the screen for the duration of the film.

Other legacy media methods may also be applied to persona and user-centred design. Cilella describes the use of the narrative arc construction and the storyboards – legacy media techniques – for story development in website design:

With narrative arc construction, we create sticky notes for each of the primary plot points in our story, arranged in a vertical column … Storyboards bring our design ideas to life in a more visual, tangible way, beyond the sticky-note narratives that got us off the starting blocks (Cilella 2011, p. 67).

Creating and visualising characters and narrative arcs in the way suggested by Cilella is established practice in linear filmmaking and one that I apply to the scripting stages of documentary filmmaking (see Figure 1). The paper, pencil, pens, felt markers and sticky notes suggested by Cilella are material tools of pre-computer legacy media.

![Figure 1: Use of sticky notes for screenwriting](image-url)
Storyboarding – using images to visualise scenes before the film is shot, is also a legacy convention from linear filmmaking (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Storyboards by Ridley Scott for Ridley Scott’s Alien

My point in specifying these techniques and methodologies for actualising persona findings is to identify where legacy linear skills may be transferrable to interactivity design. As I have suggested earlier in this section, the challenge lies in the application of old methodologies to new settings and outcomes, and this method provides an example of how this may be done.

Finally, Nodder and Cilella draw on a well-established rule of linear film editing that if audio-visual content doesn’t contribute to, or move the story forward, then that content has no place in the final cut. Nodder (2016) applies this imperative to actual site content:
All elements of the page should be helping to tell the story, and if they don’t help, you should get rid of them (section 2.1 para 1).

These exchanges between legacy and new media further emphasise the possibilities and challenges in identifying which elements of legacy media can assist in and inform the design of the interactive documentary. Web designer John Allsop articulates the broad dilemma of drawing on legacy practices when working in new mediums:

When a new medium borrows from an existing one, some of what it borrows makes sense, but much of the borrowing is thoughtless, “ritual,” and often constrains the new medium (Allsop 2000, para 1).

Cilella provides the final argument for the application of user-centred design for interaction:

By focusing our design efforts around the hero’s perspective and harnessing the power of storytelling, we can deliver more than just functionality: We can deliver meaningful benefits that connect and empower (Cilella 2011, p. 66).

This issue will be dealt with in more detail in the case studies in Chapter Four and the analysis of the application of theory to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary in Chapter Five.

3.3.2 Standard design

User-centred design establishes who the users of a site may be and their needs in interacting with a site. Nodder observes that the user may not arrive at the site by the front door – the home page. They may arrive at any point in the site, often from another internet location. Users for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary site may, for example, arrive at any point of the site via a hyperlink from a government site that deals with youth homelessness. Nodder argues that navigation is the first priority for the user, and therefore designer, because the user must be able to quickly identify where they are when they arrive, and how can they navigate the rest of the site. Nodder (2016) proposes that a confused user may be a lost user, i.e. they will leave the site never to return, highlighting the centrality of effective navigation in website design:

To minimise confusion, Nodder proposes standard design. This means referencing successful contemporary design conventions from other sites so that the user can draw on prior
knowledge for visits to the new site. Nodder (2016) advises using the same elements as major sites and avoiding the elements that they avoid, pointing out:

> People spend much more time on other sites than on yours. They’re learning how the web works from all those other sites, so it makes sense to use a design layout and navigation that's similar to these other sites. In other words, to use standard design. That doesn’t mean making things boring, it just means you have to innovate with your content, not with the container that the content is placed in (sec 2.3 para 1).

User-centred design principles may be applied to identify exactly what standard design looks like to the user. As Nodder (2016) points out, not everyone has the same level of engagement with the latest site design, so the designer must establish what standard design actually looks like to the different users of the site.

Standard design is a familiar concept for the linear film practitioner. The linear documentary, for example, employs recognisable tropes such as the interview, the narrator, and an indexical relationship of imagery to the real world. Nichols’s modes of documentary identify and codify standardised methods of representation in the existing linear form. Gaudenzi applies the idea of modes to standardise methods of interaction in interactive documentary design providing an example of how the linear filmmaker may draw on legacy practices in creating standard design.

Having arrived at the site, the next step for the user is to move around or navigate it. Nodder (2016) proposes three elements to navigation: understanding location within the site, discovering what else it offers and moving around it. Standard design applies to understanding location within the site, and discovering what else the site offers.

> … It’s important that this first page they see lets them know whether they’re on track to get the information they need. Each page has to say what the site is about, and give visitors an understanding of how the information is laid out (Nodder 2016, sec 1.3 para 2).
In summary, standard design draws on the user’s previous understanding of site design and function to ensure the user feels sufficiently comfortable to continue to engage with the site once they have landed. Standard design is a common approach in many legacy mediums, including linear documentary.

3.3.3 Consistent design

Nodder proposes that consistent design within the site is another important element in getting the user to stay and return. He proposes that if it’s not clear how the user may access the information they need, they will leave. As stated above, standard design allows the user to establish broad concepts of functionality based on past experience. Consistent design means that users can easily access the information they are looking by following conventions set up within the site itself. Nodder (2016) explains:

Consistent design means having the same response whenever people perform an action. For instance, every time they click a text link, they should see another page, not a pop-up dialog, a video, or some other unexpected action (sec 2.2 para 1).

If, as Nodder asserts, the key issue for the website visitor is to get the information they seek as quickly and easily as possible and leave, the design must not impede this. Creativity derives not from the form but the content. As Nodder (2016) states:

Consistency pays off. Once visitors have learned how your site works, they'll be able to turn their focus to your content. Consistent design means they can learn faster and apply their knowledge to new areas of the site (sec 2.2 para 2).

The application of consistent design to enhance engagement with the content is a highly desirable element of the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary. In order for the users to advocate for the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care, they must be able to engage with the site content, as provides the evidence to support Lighthouse methodology.

Consistent design also applies to navigation. Navigation in a linear project is via the narrative that acts as a map continuously guiding the audience along the filmic road. The digital medium’s navigation exchanges the map for a compass, assisting the user to identify their location and move around confidently in an unknown multidirectional landscape. Successful navigation by map or compass, in a straight line or in many directions, ensures
there is no confusion, and high levels of engagement. The challenge for myself as a linear practitioner designing for the interactive space is in designing for the multiple choice that the compass-based interaction implies – a big leap from the more singular linear audience consideration of ‘am I engaged enough to watch this?’

Navigational consistency ensures the user does not get lost and can find their way back to areas of interest in the site. As stated by Nodder (2016) in the last section, a confused user is a lost user, so the next issue I address is, once the user has arrived and had a look around, how long should they be required to stay?

3.3.4 Engagement and Returnability

I have established that standard design is important for the user’s engagement with the overall site and so references pre-existing site design norms. Consistent design is important for engagement within the site and need only reference the site itself. These elements are used by the designer of interactive media to persuade the user to stay. But for how long?

Linear documentary filmmakers produce for an audience who commit to visit a cinema or turn on a TV on a particular day and time for a fixed and known period of time. However, the digital medium is a non-linear fluid environment with no beginning or end. In which case, how does the interactive documentary designer decide what time commitment is reasonable for interaction with the content in a meaningful way? How does the designer get the visitor to stay the necessary amount of time to engage with the content? Nodder proposes that design that allows visitors to get what they want from the site as quickly as possible, so they can leave as quickly as possible, is key to effective engagement. The key design issue is not the staying but the enticement to revisit because of the ease with which a visitor can arrive and then leave.

… by considering your users’ experience with your site, you’ll make it much more likely that they'll find what they need, leave with a good feeling, recommend your site to others, and come back to use it again and again in the future (Nodder 2016, sec. 2.2 para 2).

Engagement thus takes a different shape in the digital medium. It is not about arriving and staying as with linear films, but about an ongoing association comprised of multiple comings
and goings with no defined time commitment. However, Nodder (2016) also proposes that engagement relates to the content, which must also be readily accessible and engaging:

You need to make sure that your content speaks clearly to people right from the beginning. The Back button is only one click away, and you don’t often get a second chance (sec 1.4 para 2).

Standard design and consistent structure, including clear navigation, are therefore only part of the equation. Content is also a major consideration in enticing users to engage, and this is an element where linear skills may be applicable. Anyone producing documentary content for television in particular will be well aware of the pressure in getting the first five minutes “right” to ensure the audience does not switch off. The viewer is there for a one-off journey and the task it to provide a “hook” early in the piece to get the viewer to stay in their seat. In the digital medium each interaction could be seen as a hook, and for the linear practitioner, that is a lot of hooks. The application of user-centred design, that is, designing interaction based on the needs of the known user types, provides the designer with the predictive tools to ensure these hooks do just that – hook the user into forming a continuing relationship with the site.

Given the time and technological restraints of most of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary users, the application of design principles that support the site as a multi-return destination are a critical to a successful design. How this is delivered in the site design will be discussed in the Chapter Five.

3.3.5 Responsive design

Designer Ethan Marcotte (2010) proposed the term ‘responsive design’ to describe the design approach enabling the interaction between websites and a growing number of devices with differing screen size and functionality. His innovation and authority in this area is described by fellow designer Mandy Brown in the foreword to Marcotte’s 2015 publication, Responsive Design Patterns and Principles:

Ethan Marcotte didn’t invent responsive web design. He did something much more important: he named it. He observed what was, at the time, a sprawling set of nascent tactics and identified among them an underlying strategy which, once
named, became not just a way of doing web design, but the way of doing it (Brown in Marcotte 2015, Forward)

Design for desktop and laptop computers does not necessarily work for the affordances of tablets and mobile phones. Added to the increasing types of devices and software is the changing nature of access to these devices. Internet access mobility is an ever-growing and increasingly ubiquitous reality, as Marcotte (2015) notes:

Mobile is booming, with an estimated 7.4 billion devices on the planet … It’s quickly become the dominant way for people to access the web – and for large parts of the world, in both developed and developing countries, mobile is the only way to access the web. While the popularity of handheld devices shows no signs of slowing down, “mobile” has not, as many predicted, brought about the end of the desktop (p. 2).

Marcotte sees not just a shift but an explosion of new hardware, software and mobile capability, which shows no sign of slowing or abating. Manovich (2013) describes this as permanent extendibility – the constant invention of new (and modification of existing) hardware and software. Marcotte (2010) therefore proposes design principles that can be applied to all devices and all users, rather than specific device or software-based functionality:

Rather than tailoring disconnected designs to each of an ever-increasing number of web devices, we can treat them as facets of the same experience … In short, we need to practice responsive web design (p. 3).

This then requires a concomitant understanding that the content within the design must be accessible on any screen size and in any audio environment. In applying the principles of user-centred design to responsive design, I need to identify which type of device and environment the user of the Lighthouse site has and is in (a smart phone in a crowded train, for example) to ensure maximum engagement with the site.

### 3.3.6 Interactivity and agency

Interaction is also described as a key element of website design because both software and device demand some action from the user to move beyond first contact (Gaudenzi 2013;
Murray 2011). This interactivity may be via a mouse, keyboard, stylus, touchscreen, voice activation, webcam, or GPS positioning. Clicking, drilling down and swiping are all forms of interaction (Manovich 2014). A linear documentary practitioner, when moving into interactive design, may see even these mechanistic types of interaction as a big leap from producing work that does not require any physical input from the viewer to come into being.

But which interaction is effective more than simply novel? Interaction designer and theorist Janet Murray argues that interactivity in and of itself is not automatically “good”, and that there can be “bad” types of interactivity. The key criterion for good interactivity is the agency it provides the user, and satisfaction or pleasure is a tool with which to assess agency success. Murray (2011) describes the attributes of effective agency:

Agency results when the interactor’s expectations are aroused by the design of the environment, causing them to act in a way that results in an appropriate response by the well-designed computational system. This matching of the interactor’s participatory expectations and actions to the procedural scriptings of the machine creates the pleasurable experience of agency (pp. 12-13).

In summary, how does the designer know how to match the “interactor’s participatory expectations and actions to the procedural scriptings of the machine”? In this section I have identified how the application of user-centred, standard, consistent and responsive design may be appropriate to interactive documentary design. If, as my early research indicated, that my target users for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary are time poor, and in the main technologically disinterested, then pleasurable agency for them will be the ability to access the site, find what they seek and leave quickly and easily on devices and software with which they are familiar, in whichever environment. The application and theory of these findings is in the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary, and is discussed in Chapter Five.

3.4 SUMMARY

This chapter investigates the way in which the principles of user-centred responsive design and interactivity design may be applied to the interactive documentary. This has a direct application to the practice and theorizing of this study as I investigate and apply methodologies to develop site plans for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary, and theories to contribute to knowledge in the field of interactive documentary.
I have identified that the interactive documentary differs from linear documentary in the repositioning of viewer as the user with agency that drives the interaction (Aston & Gaudenzi 2012). I nominate Gaudenzi’s (2013) modes of interaction as an organisational methodology for types of interaction and agency. I then situate the interactive documentary in the broader context of computation and software. Gaudenzi (2013), Manovich (2014) and Murray (2011) describe a dynamic environment with no beginning, end or time constraint. Murray identifies the affordances of this environment as being procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopaedic. I privilege Murray’s (2011) use of the term ‘digital medium’ to describe the environment in which the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary sits.

I suggest contemporary site design principles as a methodology for interactive documentary design. I position user-centred design and the identification of users and their needs as key features of successful website design (Cilella 2011; Nodder 2016). Based on the user identified for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary, I suggest the application of standard, consistent and responsive design as key to meeting their needs.

I also identify the use of traditional techniques of linear narrative story-telling – character development and story arcs – as useful for user-centred design (Cilella 2011). This provides an example of how legacy methodologies can be used in new media. I establish that the emphasis of the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary site is to prioritise engagement with the content, which provides the evidence for the Therapeutic Family Model of Care advocated by the Lighthouse Foundation being the appropriate response to youth homelessness. Finally, I suggest that in summary, Murray’s (2011) notion of pleasurable agency is the key to identifying successful site design.

The findings of this chapter provide me with a methodology for the case study analysis in Chapter Four. It also provides a methodology for the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary and the theory that follows in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER FOUR

THEORY APPLIED TO A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Research Question 2:

How may we apply the theories and techniques of user-centred, responsive and interactivity design, and interactive documentary to the case studies on the factual websites for ‘The Berry Street Childhood Institute Website’ and ‘Here At Home, an interactive documentary’?

In the previous chapter, I examined the disciplines of documentary, software, user-centred, responsive and interactivity design, and applied them to interactive documentary design. My aim is to inform the evolving theory and practice of interactive documentary by investigating disciplines outside documentary to understand how they may assist the linear filmmaker moving into interactive documentary practice.

I apply the theories discussed in Chapter Three to two case studies, each a website that deals with issues of homelessness. ‘Berry Street Childhood Institute’ is a website for another Melbourne-based organisation that works in the same area as Lighthouse. ‘Here at Home’ is a bespoke site for a Canadian homelessness project. I apply the theories and practice of communications in the not-for-profit sector to site design. I then apply user-centred, responsive and interactivity design principles, and interactive documentary theory to the analysis of these case studies. In Chapter Five, I apply my analysis results to my site design plans for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary.

4.1 CASE STUDY #1: BERRY STREET WEBSITE

4.1.1 Rationale for selection of case study

The suitability of this site for a case study resides in three areas. First is the similarity of the Berry Street Childhood Institute and the Lighthouse Foundation, which both deliver residential care for homeless children and young people in the same jurisdiction. Both use a mental health care (trauma-informed) approach to their service delivery and operating principles. They seek to influence the family care sector through their institutes’ delivery of trauma-informed services, training and research. Each seeks to input and influence on government policy, directly by consultation and indirectly through service delivery.
Secondly the site design draws on standard contemporary website design principles so provides the opportunity to examine how this may apply to the interactive documentary.

Finally, the *Berry Street* site provides an opportunity to analyse the communications driving this type of website design, and how it intersects interactive documentary theory and practice which I address in the next section of this analysis.

### 4.1.2 Identifying the user and communications strategy

My first consideration in the analysis of the Berry Street site is the communications intent. This is because the success or failure of design decisions can be measured against this intent, i.e. how it succeeds in eliciting the desired response from the identified user. For this, I draw on the communication theory and practice, as outlined in the Literature Review, within the not-for-profit (NFP) sector. This enquiry is useful also informing the communication aims of the Berry Street Childhood Institute.

Social theorist Louise van Dyk (2016) proposes that social development (NFP) organisations provide services that are not “…sufficiently provided by the state” (p. 59). The Berry Street Childhood Institute fits this description. The fact that it is an NFP receiving government funds to run programs indicates that the state is unable or unwilling to sufficiently deliver its own services directly in this area. Van Dyk (2016) goes on to argue that by offering these services, NFPs also aim to effect change, both at a community and socio-political level.

Van Dyk (2016) proposes that the target audience of an NFP are often donors because they provide the financial support required to achieve the NFP’s program. She suggests that communications in the not-for-profit sector are often strategic in that they are designed to deliver persuasive messages to target audiences, with an aim to influence opinions or behaviours – not unlike strategic communications used in the corporate sector. Theorist Sara Balonas (2016) further identifies strategic communications aims as being “to set goals and identify the means to achieve them… strategic communication also contributes to spread organisation's values and actions in order to achieve its ideal in a world context” (p. 171).

The Berry Street organization communication strategy and its recipients are evidenced on the front page of its site, which is a scrollable page of five tabs and large DONATE buttons (see *Figure 3*). Emphasising the recipient/user as also donor, the front banner has four other sliding photos/headings that lead to stories about why people have needed their services and
inviting donation of money or time volunteering as a foster or another support (see *Figure 4*). Individual personal stories and low-dollar amounts (starting at $40) of suggested donations envisage a donor as being a community member with a non-professional interest in the social services/family violence/youth homelessness area, as opposed to the larger-scale philanthropic or corporate sector. (see *Figures 5 & 6*)

![Berry Street Site home page – opening slide](image)

**Figure 3: Berry Street Site home page – opening slide**

![Berry Street Site home page – Donations section](image)

**Figure 4: Berry Street Site home page – Donations section**
Figure 5: Berry Street site home page: Donations information

Figure 6: Berry Street site home page: Donations information
Marfil-Carmons, Arroyo-Almaraz and Garcia-Garcia (2016) argue that the target audience of a charity campaign becomes “… a very important brand advocate” (p. 157), particularly when given tools to become an active agent, as is the case with Berry Street donors. It may be argued that developing this donor group’s loyalty to the Berry Street ‘brand’, so allowing the organisation to continue its work, assists in its aim of affecting social policy and service delivery. This fits with the strategic communications aim of spreading an organisation's values and actions in order to achieve its ideal in a world context (Balonas 2016).

In summary, I identify the communication intent in the Berry Street site lying within that of strategic communications, aimed at building a relationship with their donor group, to affect an outcome. I identify Berry Street donors as being small net worth individuals who are not professionally involved in the organisation's area of delivery. These donors are also the site users. Persuasive messages are utilized to influence their behaviour in the direction of donations of money, time or housing. The donor/users assume a role as stakeholders and brand advocates, that may be drawn to support the Berry Street Childhood Institute when attempting to affect social and government attitudes and policies.

4.1.3 Application of User centred, responsive and interactivity design

I have established the primary communication intent of the Berry Street site as strategic communications with a focus on building a relationship with the target user who is a small net worth individual donor. I analyse the effectiveness of the site design through the application of user centred, responsive and interactivity design.

4.1.3.1 User centred design

Designers Chris Nodder (2016) and Sal Cilella (2011) contend that design starts with the identification of the user, not of technology or platform. This is the informing logic of user centred design. Cilella proposes the use of traditional linear story telling methodologies as essential tools in user centred design, the user being identified as the hero in traditional narrative fiction terms. The designer must assist the hero by identifying and removing obstacles within the design that inhibit a successful hero’s journey, which results in what in designer Janet Murray’s terms would be described as pleasurable agency (Cilella 2011; Murray 2011).
I have identified the user in the *Berry Street* design as being an individual small net worth donor, this user being Cilella’s ‘hero’. Scrolling or clicking through the site takes the user through the present day Berry Street Childhood Institute, their 140 year history, current focus areas, some personal stories about why their work is necessary, how the user can donate and how the funds are spent and on whom. The hero/user goes on a journey through the site interacting with images and information about homelessness, family violence and solutions. The site design invites the user to assist in creating a happy outcome to the problems posed on the site - that is well supported children and families. Each section of the site has a prompt as to how, what and how much a user may donate, and to what effect, indicating the premise that the user is either there to donate or may be persuaded to donate.

Overall the site user is clearly identifiable. The site is designed to engage them in the Berry Street projects and provides a strategy for how the user may be involved in and support it. This site effectively applies user-centred design to support its communication strategy.

### 4.1.3.2 Standard Design

Having established the user/hero and their function in the greater scheme of things, how does the *Berry Street* site ensure their engagement? Nodder (2016) proposes that a design that allows visitors to get what they want from the site as quickly as possible, so they can *leave* as quickly as possible, is a key to engaging design. In the same vein, Murray (2011) proposes that pleasurable agency is the criteria for measuring effective interactivity in digital design.

Nodder nominates the use of standard design, that is design that references successful contemporary website conventions so that the user can draw on prior knowledge when engaging with new sites, as a way to enhance user engagement. He proposes that the less time a user has to spend figuring out the site functionality, the more likely they are to engage with its content (Nodder 2016).

To analyse if the *Berry Street* site corresponds to standard contemporary website design, I have nominated the sites of the retail multinational Target, and one of Australia’s largest banks, The National Australia Bank (NAB). I have identified the Target site as relevant because of the large size of the organization and the volume of users likely to be interacting with the site. As an on-line shopping site for a major retailer, site design is affects commercial success. The NAB is also relevant because of the large numbers of its users and the centrality of its site to doing business.
The Target site lists site areas across the top of the page. Search bar and purchase/payment functions are also clearly visible. Access to other areas is through hovering over a heading and clicking on an item in the drop-down menu that appears (see Figures 7 & 8).

Figure 7: Target Home page indicating standard design features of contemporary websites

Figure 8: Target Home page indicating standard design features: drop down menu

As with the Target site, the home page of the Berry Street site menus drop down under headings, the search function is in the top right-hand side, and access to various layers is by
clicking on the drop-down menus under the headings at the top of the page or at various points in the scroll down front page (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Example of standard design on Berry Street site

The site of the National Australia Bank (NAB) also has headings and search area across the top of the page, a visual and topic in the centre (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: NAB Home page, an example of standard design, similar to the Berry Street home page
When the user scrolls down the Home page, story or topic boxes are revealed, a device also applied in the *Berry Street* site (see *Figure 11*).

*Figure 11: NAB Home page; example of story windows as per the Berry Street site*

As Nodder points out people are “… learning how the web works from all those other sites, so it makes sense to use a design layout and navigation that's similar” (Nodder, 2016, Sec. 1.2 para 1). The examples of the Target and NAB sites demonstrate that the *Berry Street* site draws on standard design conventions, thus enabling the user to draw on pre-existing knowledge to engage with site as soon as they arrive.

**4.1.3.3 Consistent Design**

Designer Chris Nodder also emphasizes consistent design within the site itself. Nodder proposes that time spent on working out how a site behaves takes time away from engaging with content. More importantly a user is likely to leave if they cannot get to content easily. As he notes:

…Each page has to say what the site is about and give visitors an understanding of how the information is laid out… Consistent design means they can learn faster and apply their knowledge to new areas of the site (Nodder 2016 See 1.3 and 2.2).
The *Berry Street* site applies consistent design principles in two ways. Each page has the same layout, with the Berry Street logo at the top left hand of the page and the same headings with drop down menus, across the top of the page. (see *Figures 12 & 13*).

**Figure 12:** Get Involved Page – indicating consistent design on Berry Street site

**Figure 13:** About Us Page – indicating consistent design in Berry Street site
Additionally, each dive into the different areas within the topics via the drop-down menus function in the same manner, via scrolling and clicking. So, layout and function combine to produce a repeatable experience wherever the user goes on the site. In this way the Berry Street site fulfils the criteria of consistent design and so makes a pleasurable interaction with the site a likely outcome for the user.

4.1.3.4  Engagement and Returnability

Through the application of standard and consistent design to the Berry Street the user can apply knowledge gained from using other sites to the Berry Street site and rely on a consistent set of interactions to make their way around the site. In this way the site removes obstacles to user engagement. Nodder (2016) also proposes content as an important element and emphasises the need for a user-centred approach in its development. The content needs to make sense to the user not just the designer. Nodder explains:

> They may not have the same level of knowledge about the topics you cover, or the same level of interest in them as you do. You need to make sure that your content speaks clearly to people right from the beginning (Sec 1.4 para 2).

The Berry Street content fits this brief. Through use of plain language text and images it informs the user about what the organisation does, why, for whom and how the user can help. The content is distributed throughout the site in bit sized chunks or “pockets of design” (Marcotte 2015 p. 3) that require only a short time to engage with. This method of content delivery combined with the ease of engagement with site functionality means the user can leaving and return without effort.

4.1.3.5  Interactivity design and agency

Having established how the user centred, standard and consistent design have been applied to the Berry Street, site, and to what effect, I now turn to Janet Murray’s concept of pleasurable agency (Murray 2011). Murray argues that interactivity in and of itself is not immediately ‘good’, and that there can be ‘bad’ types of interactivity. She argues that the key criteria for good interactivity is the agency it provides the user, and pleasure is a tool by which to assess agency success. This is achieved by matching the users “participatory expectations” with the functions of the site design agency (Murray 2011 pp. 12 -13).
User agency comes in two forms on the *Berry Street* site. One is through the interaction with the site via clicks and scrolls, as the user explores what Berry Street is, was, does and wants. This agency and interaction leads the user to the conclusion that the work Berry Street does is important in assisting children and teenagers and their families experiencing stress, particularly around housing. This agency is pleasurable because the information is readily available and accessible and the navigation in exploring and accruing this information is intuitive and repeatable because of the application of standard and consistent design.

The second level of agency is in the ability to act as invited, that is make a donation. There are multiple avenues to do this through the site and the act is further facilitated by suggestion of what type and if monetary, how much and how often you may donate and to what end (see *Figure 14*).

![Figure 14: Donations information accessed by clicking on the Donations button](image)

Thus, the site design allows the user to go on a journey exploring the Berry Street history, the families, children and homes they provide care for, and the need for assistance with the provision of this care. The user can become a real-life participant by donating funds, goods or time. The *Berry Street* site design, by combining types of agency, achieves Murray’s definition of pleasurable agency and therefore successful design for the digital medium.
The question is whether this in and of itself is sufficient to place the site within the remit of interactive documentary rather than website design. The answer to this question lies in the application of documentary principles to the site design which I address later in this case study.

4.1.3.6 Responsive Design and legacy conventions

Elliot Marcotte argues that because of the proliferation of devices and Internet access, design should not be device specific but respond to whatever the user is working on (Marcotte 2015). The Berry Street site works across devices that have access to the internet, from desktop to laptop to smart phone. In keeping with responsive design principles, the site changes layout according to device type. The layout of the site content also fits in with Marcotte’s responsive design principles. Content is delivered in stand-alone granules which correspond to Marcotte’s notion of pockets of design. Legacy conventions within the site are expressed in the application of documentary techniques to content which I discuss later in this case study analysis.

In summary, the Berry Street site successfully utilizes the principles of user centred, responsive and interactivity design. By analysing the site design, I have established that the user is a small net worth donor. I have also established that the Berry Street site design is standard in that it draws on contemporary design principles and that design is consistent within the site itself, thus ensuring ease of navigation and engagement. The content is relevant to the user and accessible through interactions that do not require much time. The granulated design ensures ease on leaving and returning to the site. The design is responsive as it is available to view on any type of device with internet access. The combination of standard, consistent and responsive design provides pleasurable agency for the Berry Street site user, meeting Murray’s criteria of the experience of pleasurable agency as an indicator of successful design in the digital medium. This element of the study then provides a useful example of how the principles of user centred, responsive and interactivity design may be applied effectively to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary.
4.1.4 Application of interactive documentary design theory and practice

Practitioner and theorist Sandra Gaudenzi provides a definition of interactive documentary as being:

… any project that starts with an intention to document the “real”, and that does so by using digital interactive technology, will be considered an interactive documentary (Gaudenzi 2013 pp. 31-2).

As described in Chapter Three, a number of theorists have applied systems of modes to interactive documentary, transposing Nichols’ theorisation of the linear documentary to the digital medium. For this study I privilege the modes of interactivity as proposed by Gaudenzi (2013), these being conversational, hitchhiker/hypertext, participatory and experiential. The Berry Street site sits within the remit of the hitchhiker/hypertext mode which gives agency to the user through hyperlinks from one area of the interactive documentary to another, with the content within each point of view being fixed by the designer/author. The user explores ‘bits’ so as to understand the cumulative point of all these bits. As Gaudenzi puts it:

What all hyperlink projects have in common is the attempt to portray a factual reality through a searchable archive, or database. The condition is that the database is closed - not extendable by the author or by the user (Gaudenzi 2013 p. 53).

The Berry Street site demonstrates this description. The content is delivered through a combination of professional photography, text, graphics and one short promotional video. The user cannot contribute to, or change the content. The physical engagement that Aston and Gaudenzi propose activates the interactive documentary is expressed through scrolling down or clicking through the site (Aston & Gaudenzi 2012). Interactivity is also through the choices made by the user in their search for information via the clicking or scrolling. Other interactivity is expressed though the decision to participate (or not) in donating or registering as a foster carer or support person, collecting information about services and contact details, clicking through to other sites via supplied links or downloading PDFs. However, the route through the site and materials acquired are dictated by the site designer indicating a closed data base as per the conventions of this mode.

Earlier in this chapter, I identify the various sections on the scrollable front page of the Berry Street site that provide a narrative around trauma and homelessness, culminating in the act of
donating. This meets the design objective of the hitchhiker/hyperlink mode which Gaudenzi (2013) describes as the articulation of a central narrative that allows the user to form a perspective from the hyperlinked granules. The act of donating indicates sufficient engagement with the granules to create a narrative resulting in an outcome. This indicates a successful implementation of the hitchhiker/hypertext mode of interactive documentary in the Berry Street site design.

4.1.5 Application of Documentary theory

So, what is the link between the Berry Street site and documentary? I have identified documentary as being the presentation of an argument or proposition about the historical world to provoke discourse, and in some cases affect change (Nichols 1991, Renov 1993). Gaudenzi proposes that both linear and interactive documentaries “try to create a dialogue with reality” (Gaudenzi 2013). Theoretician Bill Nichols proposes that:

Documentaries take place around an informing logic. The economy of this logic requires a representation, case, or argument about the historical world... A paradigmatic structure for documentary would involve the establishment of an issue or problem, the presentation of the background to the problem, followed by an examination of its current extent of complexity, often including more than one perspective or point of view. This would lead to a concluding section where the solution or path toward is solution is introduced (Nichols 1991 p. 18)

The central feature of the documentary therefore is to provoke a discourse, dialogue or argument about or with the historical world. It is possible to identify elements within the Berry Street site that correlate with Nichols’ position. There is an informing logic evident in the site, being the issue of family violence and break down, resulting in families and individuals needing support and intervention in numbers of ways. In a sense this is a proposition about a problematic aspect of the historical world.

The site also provides information about its advocacy, research and training activities, which can be read as another element of their argument. Solutions to these problems are proposed, in the delivery of the Berry Street programs and training, and the donation of time, funds or homes to assist this delivery (see Figure 15).
However, the site does not present the wider background to the problem as proposed by Nichols. There is no discourse. A documentary (interactive or linear) approach may investigate what is happening in society that causes or contributes to the issues of family violence and breakdown. Issues interrogated may include what else is being done outside of Berry Street, by who and how. How do Berry Street’s programs compare with what else is being offered? Are they more effective? Why? Why in fact is Berry Street needed at all if there are government services being offered in the same area? These and other questions are required within the site to meet Nichols requirement of “…an examination of its current extent of complexity, often including more than one perspective or point of view. “(Nichols 1991 p. 18)).

The site could also demonstrate documentary intent if strategic impact documentary techniques were in place. This practice is identified by theoreticians and filmmakers Nash and Corner in their 2015 paper, Strategic Impact documentary: Contexts of production and social intervention. They describe this as:

... the emergence of a new kind of documentary-making that marries documentary story-telling and the principles of strategic communication. Strategic impact documentary is a transmedia practice that aims to achieve specific social change by aligning documentary production with online and offline communications practices (Corner & Nash 2015 p. 1)
Corner and Nash describe how the documentary and strategic communications (the driver for the Berry Street site as established earlier in this chapter) are bought together by this contemporary activist communications practice. The linear documentary is just one element of a transmedia or cross platform strategic communications campaign (Corner & Nash 2015). The Berry Street site however, has not been designed as part of a transmedia activist campaign. It is a stand-alone and self-contained site, the on-line face of the Berry Street organization. Its’ strategic communications intent has more in common with the corporate communication development and maintenance of “...successful relationships with stakeholders” (van Dyk 2016 p. 124) than social change.

However, production techniques common to documentary production are used in the site. These include character driven fact-based stories (the personal stories), imagery and text derived from the historic world and information to support the aims of the site. But these documentary techniques are used as just that: techniques rather than intent. Corporate videos demonstrate how documentary techniques can be utilized for strategic communication messaging. The on-line Hyperdictionary describes the intent of the corporate video as having the purpose to introduce a company or business in a positive way, in order to familiarize the viewer with products or services, thus having an educational and informational purpose.
Lokomotion is a Sydney based company that produces corporate videos. They provide a very specific definition of the role of the corporate video:

A Corporate Video communicates key aspects of the organisation’s values, philosophy, and ethics, as well as showcasing product ranges or spread of services…Your Corporate Video should make the viewer respect your organisation, feel positive and confident about engaging in a relationship with you, and look forward to doing business with you (Lokomotion, 2018, Corporate Video – What)

The content is from the real world setting of the organisation, but is not deployed to provoke discourse, but to build relationship. The Berry Street site design intent aligns with the corporate video intent – to present the organization and their business activities in a positive way so that the user will engage and return – even become loyal to and advocate for ‘the brand’. The site is designed as a piece of strategic communication, providing clear messaging about their mission, values and delivery and how the user may engage with this
In summary, the Berry Street site contains some documentary elements. It proposes a problem, and the context in which this problem sits, and some solutions for it. However, the site does not invite a discourse, argument or dialogue. It does not provide information about how the problem has come into being, or any solutions outside of that offered by the Berry Street organisation, i.e. there are no multiple points of view. Its intent fits within strategic communications and corporate video, communicating key aspects of their philosophy, and ‘products’ to encourage donor/users to ‘do business with them’.

4.1.6 CONCLUSION

The Berry Street website is a case study in the use of contemporary website design by a not-for-profit organization delivering services in the family care sector. The nature of the organization aligns with the activities and remit of Lighthouse. Their use of an on-line site for communication provides an opportunity to investigate the application of user centred, responsive and interactivity design in a non-linear web-based delivery. It also allows the analysis of interactive documentary design and documentary intent.

Through the application of user centred design, the Berry Street site user is identified as being a small net worth donor. The site design uses strategic communications to deliver a focused message using persuasive techniques, to a very specific stakeholder/user group, for a very specific outcome – donations.

In terms of site design the Berry Street site successfully applies standard and consistent design, ensuring navigability and engagement. The site design has much in common with a major retail and banking websites, demonstrating the application of standard design. Once in the site the user can enter and exit quickly to find information and/or inspiration. This assists engagement with content and the site as a return destination, which Nodder (2016) identifies as an important consideration in site design. There are limited types of interaction all fixed and determined by the sites’ designers, and navigation is by hypertext links. There is no invitation for user contributions to the site content, thus fitting the hitchhiker/hypertext mode of interactive documentary design proposed by Gaudenzi (2013). The site also utilises responsive design principles in that it can be accessed across devices, as proposed by Marcotte (2010).

I have established that the communication intent of the Berry Street site lies within the strategic communications sphere as opposed to that of documentary. There is no exploration
of broader issues such as the socio-economic context within which the problem the Berry Street organization seeks to address, sits. There is no comparative analysis with other methods of service provision or analysis of why these are services are required beyond individual cast studies. In summary, there is no discourse. The site does however use documentary techniques, but for effect rather than intent. This leaves it outside of what theorist Juhasz (2014) identifies as the distinct function of documentary and its “… special provenance with the truth”, distinguishing it from strategic communication in the interactive space. Thus I suggest the Berry Street site cannot be identified as an interactive documentary.

This case study therefore, provides ways of thinking about web-based production, user-centred and responsive design, and their application to a project with a documentary intent. According to Juhasz, that intent indicates that the site design must move beyond the imperatives of corporate and strategic communication, identified as a persuasive message to engender a positive engagement from stakeholders (Balonas 2016). For a non-linear site to be considered as a documentary, there must be contextualization and discourse, argument or dialogue. However, for a designer to maximise the affordances of what Manovich calls new media and Murray describes as the digital medium, a site is advised to also provide the user with a design that utilises many of the assets of a strategically designed website such as the Berry Street site. These elements are user centred, standard, consistent and responsive design. Therein lies the challenge for documentary practitioners from the linear world which I respond to by applying these findings to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary analysis in Chapter Five.

4.2 CASE STUDY #2: HERE AT HOME: AN INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY

produced by National Film Board of Canada and the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

In this case study, I examine the interactive documentary Here At Home and establish why it is a suitable case study for this research. I apply communications and activist documentary theory and practice to establish the Here At Home communications intent. I interrogate the identity of the user, and the use and implications of user centred, responsive and interactivity

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7 The site went off-line in July 2018. Enquiries to the host organisation NFB indicated that the technology driving the site could no longer be updated to allow on-line access.
design for the projects’ design and use. Finally, I identify where the Here At Home project sits in terms of the interactive documentary theory and practice.

4.2.1 Rationale for selection of case study

There are several ways in which this case study is relevant to my research. The subject matter of Here At Home deals with homelessness, its causes, effects and possible solutions. The content is an audio-visual, web-based articulation of a social science research project delivered in text-based form. The Lighthouse Interactive Documentary is similarly proposed as an audio-visual web-based articulation of theory and practice currently embodied in text, real world practice and training workshops. Additionally, as a self-described interactive documentary, Here At Home fits with the design intent of the Lighthouse project. This allows me to investigate the principles of user centred, responsive and interactivity design in relation to an existing interactive documentary. It also enables me to interrogate the functionality of the project in relationship to interactive documentary theory and practice. I can then apply the findings of these interrogations to the practice-based elements of this study, the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary study in Chapter Five.

Additionally, there are similarities in the evolution of the Here At Home interactive documentary project with that of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary. Here At Home was commissioned as a response to a social science research program on homelessness, ‘At Home’, which was carried out over four years by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The aims and design of the At Home research project are described in an article on the NationTalk website, self-described as the world’s first indigenous hyperlocal network:

At Home’s primary objective is to determine how to best assist homeless people with mental health issues...The Commission intends to share its results with every level of government, as well as with service providers and community organizations (NationTalk 2017, Here At Home, an NFB web documentary about mental illness and homelessness para 10).

The outcomes of the At Home research were published by the Mental Health Commission of Canada and are accessible on their website. Another website, The Homeless Hub - Research Matters, Finding Solutions for Homelessness, is dedicated to the issue of homelessness in Canada. Its’ summary of the ‘At Home’ project outcomes is as follows:
With over 1,000 people housed this project has provided opportunities for extensive research into homelessness and has proven, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that Housing First solves homelessness (Homeless Hub 2017. Canadian Housing First Tool Kit para 4).

In 2012, the National Film Board of Canada collaborated with the Mental Health Commission to build and design an interactive on-line documentary *Here At Home*, to articulate the findings of the At Home project. The MIT Open Documentary Lab Docubase site provides an insight into the design, intent and content of the site:

The documentary profiles homeless people, both housed and unhoused, as well as the doctors and nurses in charge of their care, peer support workers, landlords, housing agents, and researchers. By combining data from the study with the personal stories of the people who participated, Here at Home creates a qualitative and quantitative analysis of Housing First. (MIT Open Documentary Lab 2012 Here At Home para 1).

The *Here At Home* site was nominated for best online Film & Video Documentary: Series, in the 2013 Webby awards. In summary the *Here At Home* interactive documentary was developed as response to pre-existing materials (the At Home study) and as a collaboration with a pre-existing organization, the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Similarly, the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary is a response to the existing research, practice and text-based materials of the Lighthouse Foundation. The point of the At Home/Here At Home collaboration was to support the work and aims of the Canadian Mental Health Commission in relation to the At Home findings. In the same way the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary seeks to provide an on-line audio-visual articulation of the research and methods of the Lighthouse Foundation, in order to support their work and aims in the area of youth homelessness.

Having established the rationale for this case study I now apply an analysis of communications strategy to the *Here At Home* site in order to establish the user, their needs and the communications intent of the site.
4.2.2 Identifying the HERE AT HOME user and communications strategy

As with the analysis of the Berry Street site, my first consideration in this case study analysis is the communications intent. For this, I draw on communications for the not-for-profits and activist documentary theory and practice.

The Here At Home interactive documentary is part of a two stage project. The Mental Health Commission of Canada stated that the intention at the inception of the At Home study was to share the results of the study with government, service providers and community organizations. The Here At Home site was produced in the final year of the ‘At Home’ project, providing an audio visual, on-line interactive iteration of the findings. It was accessed for this study between 2015 and July 2018 when it was taken off on-line.

On the face of it the combination of the ‘At Home’ study and the Here At Home site equates to a strategic impact documentary and thus aligns with the remit of strategic communications. Theoreticians Kate Nash and John Corner define this documentary form and its divergence from the stand-alone linear documentary. They describe it as part of a hybrid communications product that utilizes cross media platforms, as opposed to the discrete and stand-alone media object of the traditional film and television documentary. Nash and Corner propose that the social impact planned for is something that is worked on by the production team through the processes of strategic communication, “…rather than something that just happens (or not) when audiences encounter a documentary film.” (Corner & Nash 2015 p. 4).

The Here At Home site takes the place of the linear documentary film in a strategic impact project. The site aims are contained in the objectives section of the site itself:

Is it possible to end chronic homelessness? Is the Housing First Strategy the answer? Can we afford it? With more than 40 films and data from the study Here At Home offers a window on a cutting-edge social experiment that could change your heart, your mind and the bottom line (NFB, 2016, Here At Home)

The intent of Here At Home is to challenge feelings and perceptions of homelessness (changing your heart), so provoking discourse (changing your mind), to improve the way the issue is managed at present (the bottom line). This aligns with activist filmmaker Thomas
Waugh’s notion of committed documentary, being “…a specific ideological undertaking, a declaration of solidarity with the goal of radical socio-political transformation” (Waugh 2011, p. 6). In line with linear documentary conventions, the site provides a human face to the statistics, written content and resources of the text based ‘At Home’ research and study project through its use of audio-visual material in particular the documentary profiles, mentioned in the MIT description of the site.

However, the combination of the Here At Home site and ‘At Home’ study and report fails as a strategic impact documentary project because, to put it simply, the Here At Home site is quite hard to find. There are no links to the Here At Home site on the Canadian Mental Health Commission’s website, even in the At Home project section, despite the fact that they are co-producers of the interactive documentary. Here At Home is only directly accessible via The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) site, but they do not provide contextual information about who the site is intended for nor links to the Mental Health Commission of Canada or the At Home report and findings.

An internet search to locate the site outside of the NFB, there was little joy. When I entered the following search terms into Google: homelessness in Canada, video resources for homeless in Canada, websites homelessness in Canada and on-line resources homelessness in Canada Here At Home did not come up. The Homeless Hub provides a link to Here At Home when the title is entered into the search bar, but you must know the title of the site.

However, when I googled documentaries, homelessness in Canada, the Here At Home site is mentioned seventh and eighth on the front page (see Figure 16). This indicates that the site is a documentary (as opposed to interactive documentary).

Figure 16: Google search
Nash and Corner propose that the strategic impact documentary has deliberate, specific goals and communication actions applied using strategic communication principles (Corner & Nash, 2015). The fact that the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the co-producer of the Here At Home, does not mention the site or provide a link to it, and that the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) site provides access to Here At Home but no mention or link to the At Home research project and findings, the overall project and site itself falls short of the aims of a strategic impact documentary project. The two facets of the project are not linked and so cannot inform each other or the user, indicating an absence of a strategic communications and impact strategy intent.

Here At Home could be seen as a piece of public interest communications. Theorist Jasper Fessmann proposes that areas considered public interest may include an issue where “dissonance exists between how society should be to be as fair to everyone is possible and the actual situation” (Fessmann 2016, p. 17). This applies to the issues addressed in the At Home and Here At Home projects in relation to housing and those experiencing mental health difficulties. Fessmann proposes that public interest communication must be based on evidence-based research which identify the various aspects of an issue and provide a solution that has been tested as part of the research process. This is because “public interest communications campaigns without a good research base may cause actual harm to groups and individuals in a way not normally the case in marketing, public relations, or advertising” (p. 17-18). Here At Home communicates the findings of the At Home research project which is explores a social issue and proposed and evidences based solution so in this way fits with public interest communications.

Fessmann (2016) also stipulates that there be “a specific community of influence on the issue (similar but different stakeholders)” (P. 17-18). Stakeholders in Here At Home are the homeless, their families and friends. The community of influence are those nominated by the Mental Health Commission as recipients for the ‘At Home’ study findings - the government, service providers and community organizations who can drive the change identified by the At Home research project - that is providing homes as a way of addressing mental health issues that often lead to homelessness.

However because the Here At Home interactive documentary site can’t be easily located by either group, or the public at large its public interest impact is weakened. The absence of a specific end user suggests an absence of a communication strategy beyond the making of the
artefact. In contrast, the Berry Street site comes up immediately in a search using the organizations name, or under a number of broader search terms referring to family violence or homelessness. As described in the Berry Street case study, the type or role of the user is quickly identifiable, as is the aim of the site, important design considerations according to Nodder (2016) and Cilella (2011). The communications strategy and intent are also clear.

In summary, Here At Home is the audio-visual and online articulation of a four year social science study on homelessness, At Home, carried out by the Canadian Mental Health Commission. The Here At Home site itself outlines its aim to change hearts, minds and the bottom line aligning with Waugh’s proposition of documentary as a force for social change (Waugh 2011). However, it is not hosted or linked to the Canadian Board of Mental Health At Home study and is difficult to find via a general internet search. The absence of connection between the two components indicates that the site is not part of a strategic impact documentary campaign as this requires a number of platforms to work together in a unified communication vision to guide or inspire audiences to take specific action (Corner & Nash 2015). Here At Home does meet the criteria of public interest communications but the difficulty in locating the site, and non-standard design weakens its possible affect.

The absence of a communications strategy fails to support the objectives stated on the Here At Home site, of changing hearts, minds and the bottom line. This analysis highlights the importance of a communications intention and strategy for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary, if it is to fulfil its aim of provoking discourse and change in the area of youth homelessness.

4.2.3 Application of User centred, digital and responsive design

Having established the issues regarding the Here At Home site in its communications strategy, I now apply user centred, responsive and interactivity design theory and practice to the functionality of the site with an emphasis on pleasurable agency. As demonstrated in the Berry Street site analysis, I suggest user centred design to ensure this outcome.

4.2.3.1 User Centred Design

As discussed in Chapter Three, Nodder (2016) contends that identifying the user or group of users and their characteristics, before any content is devised, is the first step to good website design. Cilella (2011) suggests that the designer of a user centred interaction may commence
with the development of a user ‘persona’, based on real world research into the needs of those identified as likely to use the site. This research then reveals the user’s needs, and obstacles to that user’s engagement, solutions to which can then be applied to the site design. The centrality of this notion is supported by both Gaudenzi (2013) who positions the user as a doer rather than viewer and identifies varying types of interaction. She contends that it is only by interaction that an interactive documentary comes into being. As stated, Murray (2011) positions ‘pleasurable agency’ as the key to assessing the success or failure of interactivity design, the satisfaction or pleasure coming from the user’s expectation of the interaction being met.

So, who are the Here At Home users? As the Canadian Mental Health Commission is the co-producer of the project it is not unreasonable to assume that it is designed in part, for the same use as the report – that is to inform government policy and practice in the sector dealing with the homeless in Canada. However the only direct indication of who the user may be for Here At Home, is in the objectives section of the site itself, quoted earlier, which poses a number of questions and states that the site will “…change your heart, your mind and the bottom line.” (NFB 2017 Here at Home). But who is this ‘your’?

As I have established, it is not easy to find the site, so cannot be easily located by those who may benefit from it, in particular those nominated by the Canadian Mental Health Commission as recipients for the At Home study findings - the government, service providers and community organizations. The ‘your’ appears to speak to anyone who happens to interact with the site, in the same way that a singular linear documentary will impact on whoever happens to encounter it on-line, on TV or at the cinema (Corner & Nash 2015). Given the emphasis of pleasurable agency as an indicator for successful interactivity design (Murray 2011), the indeterminate ‘your’ is a barrier to assessing whether there is agency and if it is pleasurable in terms of the user. This indicates an absence of a user centred design approach, contributing to the Here At Home site’s inability to deliver in any measurable way its aim to “change the hearts, minds and the bottom line". So the Here At Home site design is not a useful model for interactive documentaries that aim for user impact to affect change. Once again, it does provide an argument for why the application of user centred design principles is relevant to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design, in designing for maximum affect.
4.2.3.2 Standard Design

The *Here At Home* site is a bespoke design that combines linear documentary elements of self-contained stories with website design strategies of multiple navigations. First contact is a title page that combines visuals and audio, in the style of a linear documentary, or DVD menu page. Unlike contemporary website design there are no navigation or search features on this page. The only way into the site is by clicking on the ‘enter’ arrow and there is no indication of content or navigation (see Figure 17).

![Figure 17: Here At Home site, opening page](image)

Once the user clicks on the Enter arrow, a short audio/visual introduction to the site sequence plays out, using animated text on screen, enhanced by music and sound effects. It resembles, and in fact could be used as the introductory sequence of a linear documentary. Just as in a linear documentary, the user has no agency in terms of interactivity or navigation, apart from the ability to click on the arrow at the bottom of the screen to go to the next page before the clip has ended (see Figures 18 & 19).
Once the introduction has finished, a door with the text *enter here* appears. This approach to the site design is different to that of the user centred design approach proposed by Nodder (2016). He proposes the use of design features common to other sites so that users can draw on pre-existing knowledge to engage with the site. The only usual convention that the *Here At Home* site draws on is the clickability of the arrow to move to the next area of the site. However, neither a site menu nor outline of content, indicated by headings in standard design, are included in the design. The navigation is in a sense linear, moving forward from one page to the next, similar to the progression of shots and scenes in an edited film.

Once the user lands on the page with the *Here At Home* text and the door, they can access content and by clicking on the door. It is only then that the main navigation page of the site appears. This differs from the *Berry Street* site, which implements standard design principles of
the navigation on its home page. The navigation page on the *Here At Home* design has animated circles moving around like bubbles, while a mournful loop of music plays (see *Figure 20*). The design inspiration for this element of the site is described by the National Film Board of Canada’s Digital Team on the MIT Open Documentary site:

> The inspiration for the navigation structure was in image of neurons interacting in the brain. Each of the cities involved in the study was imagined to be a neuron, communicating with the others via multiple synaptic paths. The resulting design serves as a metaphor for the issue of mental health and…exchange of information generated by the study (Here At Home, para 1).

![Figure 20: Navigation Page Here At Home site](image)

Access and interactivity take place via the five large city circles, and the smaller bubbles that feature the face of a person. This is where the site navigation convention is revealed, as clicking on each city bubble takes the user to a page dedicated to relevant findings. This design delivers the same type and order of information for each city on the site, presented as a series of headings with statistical information as text on screen, and a choice of character-led mini documentaries that are accessed by clicking on the central bubble (see *Figure 21*).
Figure 21: Specific City page Here At Home site

The second navigation device is via the smaller bubbles with human faces in them, on each city navigation page. When clicked on, the user is taken to a short documentary, which may be about a homeless person, a landlord, or a health care or social worker (see Figure 22).

Figure 22: Short documentary Here At Home site
They are filmed using conventional documentary methods of interview, some observational material and overlay, capturing the activities of the featured person and are between three and seven-minutes duration. The voice of the participant is given primacy.

The third navigation device is via tabs at the bottom of the page (see Figure 23). These are significant because they provide access to information about the larger background of the Here At Home project. Clicking on the three large semi-circular tabs allows the user to access the backstory to the Here At Home project, the At Home experiment and the results. (that is the four-year longitudinal study which informs the site content).

Figure 23: Navigation tools, Here At Home site

This approach to design is in contrast to that of the Berry Street site, which, as discussed, implements standard design. Nodder (2016) argues for standard design because most people visit a site with an objective in mind and the more quickly they can meet their objective in a meaningful way, the more likely they are to connect with the site and its content. The bespoke design of Here At Home requires the first-time user to spend time exploring the site and
navigation page in order to understand how it functions, before being able to access and engage with content.

This raises a central issue with bespoke or non-standard design - time. That is how much time does the intended user have to work out how to navigate when visiting the site? If the time it takes to work out the navigation and therefore access to content is longer than the user can dedicate, then the design becomes problematic in terms of Murray’s pleasurable agency (Murray 2011). As Nodder states, other sites are just a click away. The answer to the question lies in the application of user centred design principles to identify user needs. However, as indicated in the previous section, the Here At Home user is an unidentified person with unidentified intentions or needs indicating that persona design as proposed by designer Sal Cilella has not been applied. It is difficult to ascertain if the non-standard design will evoke pleasurable agency.

4.2.3.3 Consistent design

Once the user of the Here At Home site has engaged with and understood the navigation mechanisms, consistent design is applied. The largest circles on the main navigation page represent five different cities, which are all named. Once the user has clicked on a city, a variety of experiences and information can be accessed by clicking on the smaller circles linking to short documentaries, or text on screen with various types of data that provides the context in which the more personal stories of the documentaries sit. These design mechanisms are consistent throughout the site. As Nodder (2016) contends, “Consistency pays off. Once visitors have learned how your site works, they'll be able to turn their focus to your content” (2016: Sec 2.2 para 2).

It can be assumed that the use of consistent design in Here At Home assists with the pleasurable agency of site (Murray 2011). Once the user has learned how to navigate their way to the area of the site that has consistent design, and therefore consistent navigation, they can interact and engage with the content. Users soon learn that when they click on a city, they will get access to graphics that provide information about several core issues, and short documentaries that provide the human story behind the text-based information. The Here At Home case study therefore provides a useful example of the effective application and use of consistent design in a bespoke environment.
4.2.3.4 Engagement and Returnability

Nodder identifies the desire and ability to easily return to useful areas of a site as another important design element for a successful site. He proposes that users enter a site with a specific goal in mind so designing so that the user can attain their goal and leave as quickly as possible are key elements in ensuring on-going engagement with the site. This type of functionality is not part of the Here At Home site. It takes several clicks to get to the main navigation page. The user cannot go directly to a particular city from the Home page. There is no search bar to quickly find and get to specific topics or areas. Leaving and then returning to re-engage with the site requires that the user has time to drill through to the site areas.

Additionally, given the audio-visual nature of the site in both the sound design that plays throughout the site and the soundtracks of the embedded documentaries, engagement requires the user to be in an environment where they can access the site audio. This may be through head-phones, or accessing an environment where others will not be disturbed and where the audio is not competing with other sound. As it stands, the site design restricts the user to a person who has the time and patience to get to the main navigation page and is able access a suitable audio setting to engage with the material. These design features are not in and of themselves problematic, if the user is identified as a person who wishes to interact in that manner. But given the difficulty of identifying who the user may be, and therefore their needs, there is little to assist in ascertaining if this design approach is effective in terms of engagement and user satisfaction.

4.2.3.5 Responsive Design and legacy conventions

Designer Ethan Marcotte identifies the challenge that the growing numbers of digital devices presents in designing for the digital medium. He argues that design purposed only for desk-top and lap top computers does not necessarily work for the affordances of other devices. He proposes the notion of ‘responsive design’ that allows the user access across devices and environments. Software designer Lev Manovich (2013) also proposes that given the constant expansion of connectivity, designers need to think in terms of permanent extendibility, being the constant expansion and change in devices and the software that drives them. This also aligns with Gaudenzi’s proposition of the living documentary - that is an interactive documentary that is constantly evolving and changing through the participation of the user facilitated by the software interface (Gaudenzi 2013). In summary
Marcotte, Manovich and Gaudenzi describe the digital medium that is in a state of constant change in terms of access, devices and design. Web designer James Williamson sums up the design challenge in this environment:

Unless we focus on ways to make our content and designs more adaptive across multiple environments, we're going to be restricted to making sites that work part of the time for only part of our audience (Williamson 2016 Sec 1.2 para 4).

The *Berry Street* site design incorporates Marcotte’s notion of responsive design as it is accessible across devices from desk-top computer through to mobile phone – that is mainstream contemporary digital devices. The *Here At Home* site however, is only accessible via a desktop or laptop computer. The only other access is via the National Film Board of Canada smart phone app which hosts a number of the short documentaries that play as stand-alone pieces, thus depriving the viewer of the contextualizing information available on the site itself. The difficulty in defining who the *Here At Home* user may be means that the impact of this decision on the success of the design is difficult to determine. However, given the aims articulated in the objectives section of the *Here At Home* site to change hearts, minds and the bottom line around the housing and mental health crisis in Canada, the lack of access beyond the computer is a serious limitation in the world of Marcotte’s responsive design and Manovich’s permanent extendibility.

This design decision by the *Here At Home* brings into play the issue of legacy conventions in digital design. The explosion of internet enabled devices and software led Marcotte (2010) to conclude that, in terms of website design, it was time to move beyond the legacy design considerations of print, that influenced early web design (hence the term web page). Given the restriction of the *Here At Home* site to a computer screen, I suggest that the design decision not to incorporate responsive design demonstrates the influence of linear documentary. Linear projects are produced for the larger fixed screens of television and cinema. The visual design of the *Here At Home* site, with its complex and detailed content is best accessed on a larger computer screen (see Figs 4.15 to 4.21). The audio design of *Here At Home* is also replicates linear documentary convention as it supports the visuals by evoking a particular mood. Much of the content is rendered as short form documentaries.

8 As noted earlier in this section, from early 2018, is not available at all as the software supporting it could no longer be updated to support the site.
with spoken interview content. Engagement requires an environment which replicates that of broadcast television, that is a location where the audio can be accessed without disturbing other people.

Designer John Allsop proposes that much of what a new medium borrows from an existing one “is thoughtless, “ritual,” and often constrains the new medium” (Allsop 2000 para 1). Applying both Allsop and Marcotte’s observations regarding the legacy of print design and contemporary website design, I suggest that interactive documentary design that draws on conventions relevant to the fixed screen television or cinema viewing environment is increasingly irrelevant. The absence of responsive design in the Here At Home site provides a good example of the barriers that legacy linear documentary practices may produce in the digital medium.

**In Summary**, the Here At Home site, once located (which is not easy), requires time to navigate as it does not use standard design. It utilizes notions of consistent design within the site itself but is does not have easy returnability due to the absence of standard design and is not accessible across devices. A substantial and indeterminate time commitment is required to find and then interact with the content. There is no clear indication of particular users and in this way the outcome of the design has more in common with the stand alone, general exhibition linear documentary whose audience is comprised of a diffuse group of viewers who encounter the material in a non-specified manner, for a non- specific purpose. This case study provides the linear filmmaker moving into design in the digital medium with in the main unsuccessful design decisions in terms of it being a site that can deliver on its mission statement to change hearts, minds and the bottom line.

### 4.2.4 Application of Documentary theory

Gaudenzi proposes that both linear and interactive documentaries “try to create a dialogue with reality” (Gaudenzi 2013 p. 32). Nichols (1991) proposes that “Documentaries take place around an informing logic” (p. 18), in the representation of, and argument about the historic world. He suggests a paradigmatic structure which consists of the establishment of an issue, a background and present-day examination of that problem, often with more than one perspective, resolving in a solution or indication of the path ahead.

The central proposition of Here at Home is articulated on the title page, *Here at Home: In Search of a Cure for a 21st Century Crisis*. ‘In search of a cure’ suggests a discourse or
examination of the issue. This narrative is proposed in an introductory piece of text on screen on the second page: “A Radical Experiment to end chronic Homelessness” (see Figs 4.16 and 4.17). The argument, via the short form documentaries and text on screen, is laid out and substantiated once the user reaches the navigation page three clicks in (see Fig 4.18). The documentary intent is expressed in both the structure and the content of the Here At Home site. The structure of the site proposes the issue, provides access to multiple points of view, and hard information. The content comprises documentaries from a wide variety of locations and perspectives, including the homeless, their friends and families, those who house them, and those from services that support them. There is contextualizing information in the form of text on screen, statistics and factual information delivering the larger background to the personal stories and commentary. The sound design enhances the engagement by establishing a tone of serious contemplation.

Theoretician Michael Renov's fundamental tendencies in the communication aim of documentary, further situates Here At Home as documentary. Renov describes modalities of desire within documentary making as being those that fuel discourse with varying motivations being to record, reveal, or preserve; persuade or promote; analyse or interrogate or express (Renov M, 1993, p. 21). Here At Home can be situated in Renov's second and third tendencies, that is to persuade, analyse and interrogate. As stated earlier the objectives section of the site itself propose that “Here At Home offers a window on a cutting-edge social experiment that could change or heart, your mind and the bottom line”. This also places the site within the remit of documentary as an instrument of change, or the activist documentary. Filmmaker and theoretician Thomas Waugh articulates how the documentary film acts as an instrument of change, when commenting on the films analysed in his 2011 publication:

They attempt to act, to intervene - whether as a gut level call to immediate, localized action or as more cerebral essays in long-term, global analysis... they must be seen also as films made by activists speaking to specific publics to bring about specific political goals (Waugh 2011 p. 5).

Here At Home is part of a legacy of documentary projects as instruments of change supported by the National Film Board of Canada, Challenge for Change, cited in the Survey of Literature in Chapter Two is one of the most well-known. Here At Home combines Waugh’s notions of nonfiction, education, the attempt to act or intervene, and is made not
only about people but with and for those people as well. The main participants in many of these films are homeless citizens of the five cities featured in the study and that their voice is given primacy through the use of the interactive mode of documentary as proposed by Nichols (1991). In this mode “Textual authority shifts to toward the social actors recruited: their comments and responses from the central part of the films argument” (p. 45). The social actors or participants in Here At Home invite the audience into their world via the camera and their relationship with the filmmaker, which is clearly consensual. This filmic approach gives participants some agency in provoking the change that they need.

**In summary** both the site design and content of the Here At Home site aligns with the documentary intent, which I define as being the desire to present an argument or proposition about the historical world to provoke discourse, and in some cases affect change. This is evident in the site’s objectives statement, the multiplicity of view-points supported by underlying facts and contextualizing commentary. The activist intent is expressed in the objectives statement which aims to change hearts, minds and process. I have established that Here At Home draws on and sits within the legacy of documentary as an instrument of change, fuelling discourse by persuading, analysing and interrogating. However, as established earlier in this section, it is unclear as to who the site is having the discourse with, and what tools the site gives them to bring about change. I suggest therefore the apparent absence of user centred design principles to establish the user, their needs and a desired outcome significantly weakens the impact the site may have in terms of both disseminating information and providing activist tools for the change that the study indicates is needed.

### 4.2.5 Application of Interactive Documentary and Interactive Design theory and practice

Theoreticians and practitioners Judith Ashton and Sandra Gaudenzi provide a definition of the interactive documentary as any form that has the “…intention to document the "real" and that uses digital interactive technology to realize this intention” (Ashton & Gaudenzi 2012, p. 125). The documenting of the real in the Here At Home site is through the forty short video stories following the lives and work of various participants, and the text on screen that articulates the statistical findings of the four year At Home research project. The site can be accessed on digital interactive technology in the form of desk or lap top computers with internet connectivity.
Gaudenzi proposes a classification system of types of interaction that is based on Bill Nichols modes theory. As with the Berry Street site, the interaction in the Here at Home site is in the hitchhiker/hyper-text mode. This mode is based on branching structures that allow the user to jump from one element to another by clicking or selecting. The user in this mode is an explorer. Gaudenzi proposes that the designer or author maintains control through the material that is available on the site and the way in which the user can access it. She describes the role of the user as explorer:

… a large part of the motivation is the curiosity of seeing “what is this all about, and where is this leading to”. The expectation is still to find what the author wanted to communicate. ... The hitchhiking mode gives no guarantee of arriving at destination, or of having an interesting journey, it assumes that the journey is the most important part of the experience (Gaudenzi 2013 pp. 50,53).

In keeping with the hitchhiker/hypertext mode, the Here at Home site is explorable with no finite end. In common with the Berry Street site, Here At Home site offers discrete packages or data-bases of information that can be accessed via branching navigation. The interactivity takes place via the clicks of a mouse or track pad.

This type of interaction, common to most websites, could thus be seen as rather unimaginative. However, Murray (2011) privileges pleasurable agency as an indicator of design success arguing that the degree of interactivity is not in and of itself an indicator of successful interactive design. It is the matching of the interaction design with the user expectations and needs that achieves the ‘pleasurable experience of agency’ (Murray 2011 pp. 12-13). The hitchhiker/hypertext mode of interaction in Here At Home is via clicks and swipes to access a data base. What then in this mode constitutes pleasurable agency?

Gaudenzi proposes that it is the discovery by the user of what the author wants to communicate through an exploration of the data base. Authorship is expressed in several different ways on the Here At Home site. Text on the home page tells the user that this is a search for a cure of a 21st century crisis (see Fig. 4.15). The following page tells the user that the way things stand, the huge cost of mental illness and homelessness is born by everyone. This section introduces the At Home experiment – providing some homeless people with a home as a first response to responding to their issues – and poses the question as to whether it worked. (see Fig 4.16 and 4.17). The next page, which is where the site structure and
navigation is revealed, provides multi point access to the methodology and results of the experiment, both statistically and factually through text on screen, and personally through the video stories (see Fig 4.19 and 4.20). The more elements are explored, the more the user builds a picture of how the original At Home experiment was carried out, how it affected the various players in the homeless sector, and what the criteria and outcomes were for measuring success. The statistics on the site, and video content indicate that by most measures the experiment was a success and that this is the way forward for dealing with homelessness and solving the crisis posed on the opening page.

By applying the broader expectations of the hitchhiker/hypertext mode, as opposed to the specific needs of user centred design, some measurement of pleasurable agency can be arrived at. In this way this case study indicates that the broader interactive experience as defined by Gaudenzi’s modes of interactivity, may be utilized to identify pleasurable agency when user centred design methodologies have not been applied to the site design.

In summary, the Here At Home site meets the criteria of interactive documentary as proposed by Ashton and Gaudenzi (2012), as a site intending to document the real utilising interactive digital design. The site design sits within the hitchhiker/hypertext mode of interaction as proposed by Gaudenzi, a mode that positions the user as an explorer of a data base with no fixed destination. In terms of designing for the digital medium, there is no application of user centred design to identify a specific user. This is a barrier to establishing what the pleasurable agency that designer Janet Murray situates as central to effective design for the digital medium is in the design. However establishing pleasurable agency may be addressed by applying the Gaudenzi’s theorisation of the user as explorer in the hitchhiker/hypertext mode.

4.2.6 CONCLUSION

Here At Home is an interactive documentary that is an appropriate case study for this research because of the intersection with the Lighthouse project in the content it articulates, the documentary intent and the mode of interaction - the hitchhiker/hypertext - it utilises. It provides a contrasting case study to the Berry Street site, in that it is a bespoke creation that draws on the conventions of documentary as an instrument of change, as opposed to the strategic communications remit and conventional website design approach of Berry Street.
Here At Home is the audio/visual and on-line digital manifestation of a longitudinal social science qualitative and quantitative research program on homelessness, At Home, carried out over four years by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. I have established that the Here At Home site seeks to change the users’ thoughts and feelings about homelessness, and does this using a combination of text, screen and audio that is accessed via the internet, in an interactive setting. While privileging original design, it draws on some website design conventions in the utilisation of clicking as a way of access, and repeat navigation systems between windows. However, it draws more heavily on linear documentary legacy in its identification of audience/user than website design principles of user centred design. This is indicated by the all-encompassing use of ‘your’ as a description of the user in the ‘About’ interactive documentary description and absence of suggestions of specific viewer action as a result of the viewing/interaction.

I have established that the Here At Home site meets the criteria of documentary as being a discourse about and of the real world (Nichols 1991) and meets the criteria of interactive documentary as established by Ashton and Gaudenzi (2012), being a project that intends to document the real using digital interactive technology. Although it sits within the remit of activist documentary as instrument of change (Waugh 2011), and Renov’s tendencies to persuade, analyse and interrogate (1993), it does not meet the criteria of the strategic impact documentary as per the transmedia definition provided by Corner and Nash (2015). This is because the text-based site of the original study does not mention the Here At Home site and neither site provides a way of linking to or accessing the other as is practice in a transmedia project.

Access and engagement with the Here At Home site are problematic for a number of reasons. It is not available on hand-held devices, its bespoke (non-standard) design takes an unspecified time commitment to engage with, it is not searchable and specific returnability relies on bookmarks and visual recognition. Apart from the site conclusion that the At Home project is an improvement in many areas of current delivery of mental health and housing services in Canada, indicated by the statistical information on the site, there are no suggestions as to how user may contribute the ‘cure’ that the opening page of the site asserts is being searched for.

Finally, Murray posits pleasurable agency as the key consideration for interactive design, privileging this above the ability to interact and amount of interaction (Murray 2011).
suggest that given the lack of information about the intended user, the pleasurable agency of the *Here At Home* site cannot be measured by applying user centred design methodology. I also suggest that establishing pleasurable agency may be addressed by applying the Gaudenzi’s theorization of the use as explorer in the hitchhiker/hypertext mode.

**4.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter I apply the methodologies established in Chapter Three to two case studies. The first is the *Berry Street* site, which uses contemporary website design as the on-line presence for an organization that works in the same area at Lighthouse and is also based in Melbourne, Australia - the Berry Street Childhood Institute. The second is *Here at Home*, an independent bespoke site that is the on-line iteration of a research program about homelessness in Canada. I apply the disciplines of user centred, responsive and interactivity design, documentary theory, and the theory and practice of interactive documentary to both case studies.

The *Berry Street* site design sits within the remit of strategic communications, through its delivery of a focused message using persuasive techniques, to a very specific stakeholder/user group, for a very specific outcome – donations. In terms of site design the *Berry Street* site provides an example of the successful application of standard and consistent design. Interaction and navigation is by clicking and scrolling between hypertext links thus fitting the hitchhiker/hypertext mode of interactive documentary design proposed by Gaudenzi (2013). The site also utilises responsive design principles in that it can be accessed across devices.

I establish that for a non-linear site to be considered documentary, there must be contextualization and discourse, argument or dialogue. The *Berry Street* site does not explore or address context nor does it seek to provoke or contribute to a discourse or dialogue. The site uses documentary techniques, but for effect rather than intent and so cannot be considered an interactive documentary.

However, to maximize the affordances of the what Manovich (2014) calls new media, a site must also provide the user with a design that utilises many of the assets of a strategically designed website such as the *Berry Street* site: user centred navigability and content, returnability and accessibility across all devices. I suggest that this is the challenge for documentary practitioners from the linear world when working in the digital medium.
Here At Home provides a contrasting case study to the Berry Street site, in that it is a bespoke creation that draws on the legacy conventions of documentary as an instrument of change, as opposed to the strategic communications remit and conventional website design approach of Berry Street. I establish that the Here At Home site seeks to change the users’ thoughts and feelings about homelessness, and does this using a combination of text, screen and audio in a web-based interactive setting. The Here At Home site meets the criteria of documentary as being a discourse about and of the real world (Nichols 1991), and also of interactive documentary as established by Ashton and Gaudenzi (2012), being a project that documents the real using digital interactive technology. I further propose that it sits within the remit of activist documentary as instrument of change (Waugh 2011), and Renov's tendencies to persuade, analyse and interrogate (1993). I also assert that it does not meet the criteria of the strategic impact documentary as per the transmedia definition provided by Nash and Corner (2015). In common with the Berry Street site, I situate it within Gaudenzi’s interactive documentary hitchhiker/hypertext mode.

I identify a lack of user centred design methodologies in the Here At Home site design which is problematic. Its’ bespoke (non-standard) design takes an unspecified time commitment to engage with and there is no application of responsive design principles, limiting access to desk or lap top computers. This reflects the influence of linear documentary as a legacy medium, which is also reflected in the visual and sound design. The site does apply consistent design to good effect once the navigation page is reached. Finally, I identify that the features of the user within the hitchhiker/hypertext mode as proposed by Gaudenzi, being that of the explorer, may be utilized to establish the pleasurable agency where use centred design has not been applied.

The Berry Street and Here At Home site case studies provide contrasting environments for the analysis of user centred, responsive and interactivity design applied to the interactive documentary. The studies establishes user centred design, which identifies the type of and needs of a user, as an effective method for design success. Documentary intent, discourse about the historic world, lies at the heart of interactive documentary design. The challenge to the linear documentary filmmaker in combining these two elements. This challenge is interrogated in Chapter Five, with the application of the findings of these case studies to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary
CHAPTER FIVE

THEORY APPLIED TO MY PRACTICE

Research Question Three:

*How have the findings from the reflections on theory, and case studies analysis informed the design of The Lighthouse Interactive Documentary?*

In previous chapters I have investigated the theories of communications in the not-for-profit sector, user-centred, responsive and interactivity design as well as documentary and interactive documentary theory and practice. I have applied these to the case study of two existing sites that are relevant to the area in which The Lighthouse Foundation works – trauma, family violence and teenage homelessness.

In this chapter I reflect upon how these theories and practices have informed the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary. I establish the need for delivering documentary intent to the Lighthouse interactive documentary site and the way in which the visualisation and organisation of the content constitutes the paradigmatic structure for documentary proposed by Nichols (1991). I also suggest how the application of these theories and practices to my own project offers new knowledge in designing for interactive documentaries, and how that may assist linear film practitioners entering this field.

### 5.1 Rationale for the Lighthouse interactive documentary project

The Lighthouse project commenced with consultations with the Lighthouse Foundation leadership team, including the CEO and philanthropy manager. We explored the production of a linear documentary as a means of communicating the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care (TFMC), the theoretical framework and practice of their trauma informed approach to the care of homeless teenagers and young people. A range of issues were discussed, including the topic, documentary type or mode, audience and delivery platform. In effect the discussion covered what, how, for whom and where? The central issue was that given the cost of making, distributing and exhibiting a documentary and the time and effort involved, what was the benefit, for whom, and would it be worth the human and financial investment?

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9 *Lighthouse Foundation trauma informed approach provides around-the-clock therapeutic care built on evidence-based responses to childhood trauma (Lighthouse (2019). About the Lighthouse Foundation, para 1)*
These discussions led to the conclusion that a one-off linear documentary, even with an impact strategy in place, was not an appropriate vehicle for advocating for the Therapeutic Family Model of Care. This is because Lighthouse is a relatively small not-for-profit organisation that is financed by donations. It was agreed that the organisation did not have the financial or human resources to produce a documentary and run a strategic impact documentary campaign.

An on-line site seemed a more appropriate response to their needs. Costs to produce a site are generally lower than producing a film. Rather than finding screens for people to engage with and then getting them to it, once made a site is a singular destination, accessible for all users through a singular pathway - the URL or via a search engine. Given that the Lighthouse Foundation already has a website, providing a link to the new site, or including a new area to the existing site, was considered not too big an task. The central issues were who the users would be, the purpose of the site with regard to these users and how this site would differ from the already existing website.

To address these questions, target users for the proposed new site were identified. Three groups considered essential to the on-going and enhanced provision and dissemination of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care were nominated. These are high net-worth donors, (individual and organisational), those involved in policy development and delivery and other service providers. These groups have an established relationship with the Lighthouse Foundation through donations of money, materials and expertise in the case of high net worth individuals and organisations, and through policy development and skill acquisition in the case of policy makers and service providers. It was agreed that they are not served by the current Lighthouse Foundation site or text-based materials. It was then decided that the aim of the site would be to provide these users with the tools to advocate for the Therapeutic Family Model of Care as an effective evidence-based response to teenage homelessness.

To ensure the veracity of this decision I analysed current Lighthouse communication materials, including the existing on-line presence. There are currently four sources. A book, *Therapeutic Residential Care for Children and Young People: An Attachment and Trauma-informed Model for Practice*, provides detailed information about the research that supports the Lighthouse TFMC delivery model. It is available as a hard copy or digital version and can be purchased through the Lighthouse Institute via the Lighthouse website. The academic
and professional language of the book indicates that it is intended for professionals working in the sector.

The research and training arm of Lighthouse, the Lighthouse Institute\(^\text{10}\), has developed a manual. This print manual is a guide to those working within the Lighthouse system, and for organizations who receive training to apply some or all of the Lighthouse methodology. The manual systematises much of the information in the book, so that it can be applied in training or real-life settings. It is available in print form only, from the Lighthouse Institute. Access to the manual is overseen by the Lighthouse Institute, on a case by case basis. It is not available in electronic form.

A report, *Lighting the Way: Delivery and Outcomes Report* was produced in 2017 to mark the Lighthouse Foundation’s 25th year. It outlines the methodology of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care, its outcomes and the wider context within which the issues of youth homelessness sit. The report includes stories from some of the teenagers and young people who have been part of the Lighthouse program. It also contains evidence of what Lighthouse describes as “the life-changing outcomes of our work” (*Lighting the Way: Delivery and Outcomes Report 2017*). It is available as a hard copy and also downloadable from the Lighthouse Foundation website as a PDF. The report is designed as a strategic and public interest communications piece, providing hard data and real-life content in a persuasive manner. It is pitched at donors large and small, prospective supporters and policy makers.

There is also a Lighthouse Foundation website. The website provides on-line access to information on both the Lighthouse Foundation and Institute. It has a similar communications intent as the *Berry Street* site, aimed at eliciting funds, resources or donations from the user. This is indicated by the four headings across the top of the home page: Participate, Learn, Fundraise, Volunteer, with a large Donate button the right and side. Like the *Berry Street* site, the Lighthouse Foundation site content combines personal stories to evoke empathy, using photos, graphic design and print content, and guides users as to how to respond to their call to action. As with the *Berry Street* site, its users appear to be small net worth individuals indicated by the types of actions and level of donations the site invites. (see *Figure 24*).

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\(^{10}\) The Lighthouse Institute is the research arm of the Foundation. Its communication activities are aimed at Service providers and professionals working with, and providing care, for homeless teenagers and young people and government policy makers and departments.
The Lighthouse Institute section of the website has a banner page that leads to print-based content. There are also contact links if the user is interested in further information about workshops and training, purchasing print material or downloading. It is aimed at those working in the sector and allied industries and has an educational remit (see Figure 25).
Combined, these resources contain the evidence-based research and methods supporting the Therapeutic Family Model of Care, and Lighthouse claims to its effectiveness. However, these resources are not combined and are spread across a number of mediums. The Lighthouse Interactive Documentary resolves this issue by bringing these resources together via the digital medium.

In summary, the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary project was conceived in consultation with key personnel from the Lighthouse Foundation. It is a response to the organization’s desire to advocate for the Therapeutic Family Model of Care beyond their current communications strategy. Consultations established the key users for the proposed site as being high net-worth donors, (individual and organisational), those involved in policy development and delivery and other service providers. These groups have an established relationship with the Lighthouse Foundation but are not served by the current Lighthouse Foundation site or text-based materials. The aim of the site is to provide these users with the tools to advocate for the Therapeutic Family Model of Care.

5.2 Application of User-Centred Design Principles

In the case study analysis of the Berry Street site, user centred design is applied effectively, with the target user and the outcome for their engagement made very clear. The users can easily interact with the site across internet connected devices and take action if desired. The Here At Home interactive documentary provides an example of a site design with a lack of clarity as to who the user is and what their needs are. Access to the site and initial navigation is difficult and time consuming, as are return visits. The site is only accessible on computers and in a suitable audio environment. This impedes the ability of the site to impact in the way it describes in its objectives section – that is ‘to change your heart, your mind and the bottom line’ about homelessness in Canada.

Based on these findings, I apply the design methods used by the Berry Street site and the user centred design theories proposed by designers Nodder (2016) and Cilella (2011) to address identification of the user and their needs in the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary.
5.2.1 Identifying the user and communications strategy

As in the analysis of the Berry Street and Here At Home sites, my first consideration in the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary planning is the communications intent. This is because the success or failure of design decisions can be measured against this intent.

Lighthouse Foundation sits within the remit of a not for profit organization that provides services that are “not sufficiently provided by the state” (van Dyk, 2016, p. 59). Van Dyk proposes that these organizations not only provide services not offered by the state, but by offering these services, also aim to affect change, both on a community and at a political/social level. This definition reflects the position of the Lighthouse Foundation. The proposed interactive documentary aims to effect change in the delivery of services and programs in the youth homelessness sector by advocating for the Therapeutic Family Model of Care (TFMC).

The proposed Lighthouse site users, high net-worth donors, policy makers and service providers, have an established relationship with the Lighthouse Foundation so do not need persuasion to connect with or donate to it. The interactive documentary aim is to provide these user groups with on-line resources relating to the methodology of the TFMC, and evidence that supports its efficacy. Access to these materials allows the user groups to advocate for it by influencing public policy, service delivery and fund raising.

I established the position of communications in the not-for-profit sector when examining the Berry Street and Here At Home sites. Duerte Melo, Balonas, Ruao and Felicio (2016) identify strategic communications as one possibility. “(It) refers to the development and delivery of persuasive messages to target audiences with the purpose of influencing opinions, attitudes and behaviours” (p. 59). This fits the aim of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary in relation to its’ particular users. As stated, the site aims to provide evidence (persuasive messages) as to the efficacy of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care. It is proposed that this will influence and enhance the user groups support for the program (opinions and attitudes) and lead to (behaviours) that will support its dissemination. This will take place through advocacy, increased financial support and, in the case of policy makers adoption of the TFMC methodology in the provision of care for homeless teenagers.

However, this is not a closed site so can be accessed by the general public, placing it within the remit of public interest communications. This has been defined in Chapter Four as the
implementation of a science based, communications campaign aimed at achieving positive
behavioural change on an issue of public interest (Fessmann 2016). Fessmann emphasises
the importance of science-based evidence in public interest communications in identifying
“…various aspects of an issue, a specific community of influence on the issue…and tests of
the proposed solution to what the problem is” (pp. 17 -18). The need for evidence lies in the
impact that the communication may have in seeking to change behaviour. As Fessmann
notes, without good research more harm than good may result, which is not generally the
case in marketing, public relations, or advertising. The Lighthouse Interactive Documentary
advocates for the adoption of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care. Its advocacy is based
on evidence based research of the program and seeks to influence attitudes to and delivery
of care for homeless teenagers. The identified site users are the community of influence and
the TFMC program is the solution to the problem of teenage homelessness.

In summary, the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary incorporates a strategic
communication aim with regards to the identified users, and a public interest communication
aim for broader use. Having established the user identity and communication aims of the
site, I now apply the theory and practice of user centred, responsive design and interactivity
design, incorporating the findings of the case studies in Chapter Four, to my own practice-
based research.

5.2.2 Application of User centred, responsive and interactivity design

5.2.2.1 Identifying the user and their needs

Designer Chris Nodder (2016) proposes that developing a specific understanding of types
and needs of users is the first step in the design process, taking place before content or
functionality. Developing user ‘personas’ is a designers’ tool to identify what appropriate
functionality and content may be (Cilella 2011).

In keeping with this user centred approach, I have applied persona development to the
Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design. My persona development draws on informal
communications and interactions that occurred as part of the creative development of the site
design. This included a variety of people from the three groups nominated as users: high
net-worth philanthropic organisations and individuals, government policy makers, and
practitioners working in the field. The final personas are an amalgam of these people. The
central issues that needed addressing were the extent and source of existing knowledge of
Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care program within the
user groups, gaps in this knowledge, appropriate ways in which knowledge could be transmitted and for what purpose.

I was also interested in issues affecting functionality informed by the outcomes of the case studies in Chapter Four. The *Berry Street* site provides an example of clearly identified users and a design that appears to match their needs. It is easy to access and navigate and is available on any internet connected device. It does not require advanced technological skills for the interaction. The ease of navigation allows the user to access specific site areas quickly, so allowing the user to take as much or as little time as they need to engage with the material and return with ease. In contrast, the *Here At Home* site is only available on computers and full engagement with the content requires a controlled audio environment. The navigation takes some time to discover, there is no search function and the user cannot go direct to site areas but must enter through the three levels of the home page. These findings indicated to me that the areas of functionality that I needed to explore were access to technology, (i.e. desk top or lap top computer, tablet, phone, internet access), level of skill with technology (i.e. ability to interact and participate) where and when interaction with the proposed site may take place (office, public transport, home, café), and what a realistic time commitment would be when visiting the site.

It is possible to able to apply formal ‘legacy’ linear documentary interviewing skills to the persona research. Interviewing for documentary considers the documentary type/mode, the purpose of the interview, and desired outcome. Although my interactions with users were informal and often spontaneous my experience allowed me to apply this method. I also applied an additional legacy filmmaking skill proposed by designer Sal Cilella. He nominates the use of character development and story arcs, traditional script writing devices, for the persona design process:

…And so we begin our design process by crafting the three key components found in every story: a likable hero, an immersive setting, and a compelling script…. By focusing our design efforts around the hero’s perspective and harnessing the power of storytelling, we can deliver more than just functionality: We can deliver meaningful benefits that connect and empower (Cilella 2011:63, 66).

The likeable hero is the user, whose character traits are identified by the persona research. The immersive setting is the world in which they are likely to interact with the site and the
compelling script is how they will be interacting and what may stop them. This approach provides an example of where legacy skills can be utilized in a new setting to good effect, as opposed to the its application as “…thoughtless ritual” (Allsop 2000, para 1).

My interactions with potential users clarified the type of content and design that is relevant to the identified user groups. Their needs range from evidence based statistical information that supports and prove the need for and efficacy of Lighthouse methods, material communicating the underlying philosophy and supporting research of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care, and examples of its methodology in practice. This aligns with documentary intent of provoking a discourse and possible call to action, as opposed to the communications remit of establishing a relationship to attract and keep donors/customers/clients (Duerte Melo, Balonas, Ruao, Felicio, 2016), reinforcing the appropriateness of an interactive documentary as a response to the user needs.

Functionality needs revolve around the pressure on the user’s time. As Nodder (2016) contends, users are likely to arrive at a site with a goal in mind. Intended users for the Lighthouse site are highly focused on what they want and need and are, by and large time poor. They do not require nor want an open ended and immersive experience. This finding emphasises the importance of searchability and returnability: that is access to desired destinations easily and quickly (searchability), and that allows this to be repeated any time a site visit is made (returnability). It is also clear that users need access to the site across devices and in a wide variety of locations, indicating the need for responsive design.

This information gave me the parameters around which pleasurable agency could be measured. Berry Street provides an example of successful site design and pleasurable agency in the fulfilment of their communications aim and their users’ needs. However, the aim of the Lighthouse site is as an interactive documentary, which I have established the Berry Street site is not. My analysis of Here At Home supports its claim as an interactive documentary. The site seeks to provoke discourse through multiple points of view in order to inform and influence opinion and policy on homelessness in Canada. However, the Here At Home site does not use the principles of user centred or responsive design. It provides my practice with some of examples of what not to do to meet the needs of my users, but not many examples of what to do, despite sharing communication intention and subject matter. My design challenge was to marry the successful elements of two different sites; that is effective user-centred
design (*Berry Street*) and interactive documentary design (*Here At Home*). These findings will need to be tested via a low-fi prototype again before full-implementation.

5.2.2.2 Application of Standard Design

Nodder makes the point that different users may have different ideas about what standard design is. The Lighthouse Interactive Documentary users are all active on-line and website users so standard design to them is whatever the dominant convention of the day is. Given that my users are time poor, the application of standard design principles, drawing as it does on the users existing knowledge of contemporary site functionality, ensures minimal time requirement to understand site functionality. Examples of standard design are the *Berry Street* site and the current Lighthouse Foundation site (see Figures 26 & 27).

![Figure 26: Lighthouse Website home page](image)

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Figure 27: Berry Street Website home page

Their home pages are quite similar, and reflect the design of two major commercial sites, that of the retailer Target and NAB bank (see Figures 28 & 29).

Figure 28: Target retailer website home page
Figure 29: NAB bank website home page

On all sites the home page lists site areas across the top of the page. The search bar is clearly visible. Access to other areas is through clicking on a heading and then clicking on an item in the drop-down menu that appears or scrolling down the home page to other clickable areas. This method applies to other areas of the sites and the means to return to the home page is made clear (see Figure 30 & 31).

Figure 30: Lighthouse Foundation website with drop down menu
This is in contrast the *Here At Home* bespoke design, with has a singular entry point, and the requirement to click through two additional layers before navigation can take place. (see Figure 32). The user must spend time working out how the site functions before they can engage with content and find what they want. There is also no search function for users to locate areas of the site they may wish to get to straight away, so time is required to find the relevant site area. Given that my users are time poor this design approach does not deliver the pleasurable agency identified by Murray (2011) as an indicator of interactivity design success.
Having established current standard design conventions as suitable for Lighthouse Interactive Documentary users, I needed to identify the topics appearing as home page headings and define and organize the content within them. This stage of the interactive documentary design process was similar to the research stage for a linear documentary. Given that documentary indicates a discourse or argument about the historic or real world, propositions and assertions that are a part of the discourse must be evidence based (if not it falls into the remit of conjecture or propaganda). As Nichols puts it:

The world, in documentary, is destined to be propositions. “This is so, isn't it?” is the jist of the most common and fundamental proposition we find. It is the basic proposition made by realism...In documentary what “is so” is a representation of the world, and the question, “isn't it?” has to do with the credibility of the representation (Nichols 1991, p. 114).

To establish this credibility, the documentary filmmaker must be able to point to the evidence that supports claims about the real world made in the project. This material may or may not have a place in the final project, but the research and gathering of materials and information provides the basis upon which the credibility of the project content lies. It is in the synthesis of the research materials that the project content begins to take shape.

In the gathering of material for the Lighthouse interactive documentary content, I drew on the three areas of published Lighthouse theory and practice. These were the published book: *Therapeutic Residential Care for Children and Young People: An Attachment and Trauma-informed Model for Practice*, the instruction and training manual authored by the Lighthouse Institute and the *Lighting the Way: Delivery and Outcomes* Report (2017).

The book provides the theories and research that supports the Lighthouse model of care. Areas include definitions of trauma, trauma neurobiology, attachment theory, object relations theory and psychological wellness theory as well as theory on trauma informed organizations which Lighthouse claims to be. The manual provides an articulation and systemisation of these theories for application in the real-world setting of both program delivery and training. The report is a synthesis of both these publications. It uses personal stories of present and former residents and workers, via photos, graphics and text, as a way to humanise the practice that is described in the report. It also provides hard information about the greater context in which Lighthouse program sits, with statistics on the rate of homelessness in
Australia, types of homelessness, and major risk factors for becoming homeless. There is information on services provided by the state and the financial and personal costs and outcomes. There is also a detailed breakdown of the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care system, cost and benefits in contrast with state provision of care.

In order to synthesise the content of these publications, I organised a series of topics that covered all the areas I considered important for the site these being: What is it (i.e. Lighthouse)? What do we do? How do we do it? And How do we measure performance?(see Figure 33).

**Figure 33: Initial Site Headings**

I built content notes by using file cards under each of these headings, collating relevant information from all three publications into the heading areas. This technique is not dissimilar to that utilised in the scripting stages of both linear documentary and narrative fiction writing. The writer uses analogue materials – in this case file cards and blue tack – in a non-linear system – i.e. stuck to a wall - to synthesise material and create a narrative structure (see Figure 34). This reflects Cilella’s methodology of using sticky notes and storyboards to synthesise persona findings to inform site design (Cilella 2011).
This process of organisation indicated a site structure. Following a meeting with the Lighthouse CEO to user-test my ideas, I reduced and renamed my original four headings. Three new headings were *Therapeutic Family Model of Care* combining What is it, What we do and How we do it and process. *Impact and Results* covers measurement of performance and impact and *Youth Homelessness* provides the broader context within which the first two topics sit. It also contains the supporting research for Therapeutic Family Model of Care method in the Lighthouse book (see Figure 35 & 36).

This design resembles the standard design features of contemporary sites such as Target and the NAB, the topics being clickable headings on the home page. The design satisfies Nodder’s proposition of standard design, and the needs of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary users.
Figure 35: Final Headings for Lighthouse interactive documentary home page

Figure 36: Design Wire Frames for Lighthouse interactive documentary home page
In summary, the application of user-centred design principles in early stage site planning provides a framework for taking the project forward. Having established the identity of the users and their needs in terms of communication, site design and content, I synthesise existing Lighthouse print-based materials, which result in the development of an organising principle around headings, and content. The adoption of three headings, Our Program, Impact and Results and Youth Homelessness, established early in the design process, is consistent with the home page layout and navigation of widely used sites such as Target and NAB, and reflected in the current Berry Street and Lighthouse Foundation sites. This design fits the criteria for standard design as proposed by Nodder (2016) and identified in my persona research as important for pleasurable agency of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary user.

5.2.2.3 Application of Consistent Design

Nodder suggests the next step in the design process is to identify how the user moves about the site and to what effect. He proposes consistent design within the site as important element in designing for user satisfaction. Standard design removes barriers for the user to engage with the site by drawing on pre-existing conventions. Consistent design fulfils a different function in that it provides the user with a compass with which to explore the site they are now engaged with via standard design. Nodder (2016) suggests that in the digital medium, a confused user is likely to abandon a site and that consistent design ensures that user does not get confused.

Having established site headings and allocated relevant content to them as part of the standard design planning, I moved from blue tack and file cards to white boards and different coloured white board markers to develop my ideas for consistent design within the site. This process allowed me to set up subheadings within the three home page subject headings (see Figures 37 & 38). I then broke the information I had transposed from the Lighthouse publications onto file cards during the standard design phase into stand-alone granules of content. I placed these within a number of subheadings. As part of this process, I also commenced the planning and visualisation of how this content could be produced e.g. video interview, text on screen, short documentary or animation. I used coloured coding to identify which of these techniques I was applying to which granule.
Figure 37: White Board story construction for consistent design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theories That Support TPEMC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attachment Theory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bowlby</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Attachment</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Trauma</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Emotion</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Being</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Theory</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Relational Theory</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Winnicott</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Collective Interactions</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Personal</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Emotions</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Environment</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Communication</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Learning</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Attachment</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Development</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Behavior</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Theory</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 38: White Board story construction utilising colours to indicate media**

- **Figure 37:** White Board story construction for consistent design
- **Figure 38:** White Board story construction utilising colours to indicate media
The consistent design approach I developed for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary is best described by Gaudenzi in her description of the hitchhiker/hypertext interactive documentary mode. She states that:

By clicking on a word, by moving a mouse, by selecting within a menu the user navigates between a number of pre-set options…The logic is the one of conscious choice. The author creates scenarios, the software links assets of a database and the user chooses routes (Gaudenzi 2013, p. 50)

The site map and wire frame of a sub-page illustrate the implementation of this principle. As Figure 39 indicates, under each home page heading are a series of sub-topics. As demonstrated by the flow chart of Figure 40, each subtopic has further topics within it that are stand-alone granules. The different colours indicate different types of media used within that granule.

Figure 39: Lighthouse site map illustrating consistent design principles
Figure 40: Flow Chart of subsections within the first home page topic – colours denote type of media used for the section

Figure 41: Wire Frame of submenu structure under “How it Works’ heading
The wire frame in *Figure 41* shows that each sub-topic page has a search function and home button that allows the user to find other site areas or return to the home page at any time. The overall design allows the user to access specific areas of interest without having to click through site layers. This is in effect a branching structure also utilised in the *Berry Street* and *Here At Home* sites. As noted in the case study analysis, both sites provide examples of effective use of consistent design. The *Here At Home* site is of particular interest because it provides an example of how consistent design is useful for bespoke sites. I have identified that both of these sites also fall within the hitchhiker/hypertext interactive documentary mode indicating that the branch structure is common to this mode.

**In Summary,** I have applied the principles of consistent design as defined by Nodder (2016), to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design. The branching structure of the design allows for easy and consistent movement between topics, enhanced by the placement of a Home button on each page to allow instant return to the home page as an orienting tool. The consistency of the design aligns with the needs of the users of the site in not requiring the dedication of too much time to the understanding of how to move about the site. This provides another element of the pleasurable agency identified by designer Janet Murray as central to effective design in the digital medium.

### 5.2.2.4 Engagement and Returnability

I have established that standard design, the referencing of pre-existing site design norms, can be important for the user’s engagement with the overall site. Consistent design also contributes to engagement within the site. The difference between standard design and consistent design is that consistent design need only reference itself. Designers Nodder and Cilella propose that the use of these elements is likely to persuade the user to stay. But how does the interactive documentary designer work out what time commitment is reasonable to ask of a user, in order to interact with the content in a meaningful way once they have decided to stay?

Nodder (2016) proposes that an effective design allows visitors to get what they want from the site as quickly as possible, so they can *leave* as quickly as possible. Thus, the issue is not the staying, but the enticement to revisit. This approach resolves the issue about how much time a user needs to spend to engage effectively with the site content because it places that
decision in the hands of the user. By applying standard and consistent design principles, the user should be able to come and go from specific areas of the site as often and stay for as long as they like.

Based on the case study outcomes in the previous chapter, I have identified that the challenge for my design is the application of user centred design principles successful in the Berry Street, which is not an interactive documentary to my project, which is. I achieve this by identifying the communication aim of my site, the user and their needs, and applying standard and consistent design principles. This has resulted in a site design that is easily accessed and navigated, and that allows the user ease of return. My persona research makes clear that my users are not in a position, nor desire to engage in an immersive experience to work out how to access site content (as is required for the Here At Home site).

The flow chart of the home page topic Impact and Results in Figure 42 demonstrates the design response to this need. Sub-topics lead to granules of information that are delivered through a variety of media which is indicated by colour on the diagram. A search function and drop-down menus on the homepage and major subtopics pages will enable the user to quickly navigate their way to the discrete granules. In this way my site design this provides elements of pleasurable agency for my users.

Figure 42: Flow Chart of third home page heading ‘Impacts and Results’
Website designer Ethan Marcotte is credited with articulating both the concept of and the term ‘Responsive Design’ (Marcotte 2010). A responsive design is one that reacts to screen sizes and device type, affecting considerations about screen size and touch controls. As Marcotte explains, “Rather than tailoring disconnected designs to each of an ever-increasing number of web devices, we can treat them as facets of the same experience…In short, we need to practice responsive web design” (Marcotte 2010, p. 3).

Added to the increasing types of devices and software is the changing nature of access to these devices. In 2015 Marcotte observed that there were an estimated 7.4 billion handheld devices globally and that these devices were becoming the dominant, and in some areas the only way to access the web. In support of responsive design Marcotte notes that unlike predictions, the uptake of handheld devices has not led to the end of the desktop. The result is a proliferation of devices, such as the smart watch, rather than one replacing the other.

Another argument for a responsive design approach lies in software designer and theorist Manovich’s notion of permanent extendibility, that is the constant invention of new (and modification of existing) hardware and software (Manovich 2013). Manovich likens this development to that of the evolution of a species (as opposed to that of a medium):

… The key advantages of a “species model” over a “medium model” are their large numbers (Earth contains many million species—at least for now); their genetic links (which implies significant overlap in features between related species); and the concept of evolution (which implies constant development over time and gradually increasing diversity) (Manovich 2013, p. 235).

In Chapter Three, I align Manovich’s concept of permanent extendibility and speciation with Gaudenzi’s notion of the living documentary, being the notion that the interactive documentary “can have different levels of autopoiesis and can be more or less open to transformation” (Gaudenzi 2013, p. 83-4). Combined, the theories of Marcotte, Manovich and Gaudenzi articulate a design environment that is in constant change and flux with no beginning, end or time constraint.

In this setting, I suggest that an interactive documentary that is designed to be accessed via a computational, internet connected device needs to also incorporate responsive design. The
Here At Home site provides as example of an interactive documentary that has not utilised responsive design and is only accessible via a computer. Given the aims articulated in the objectives section of the Here At Home site - to change hearts, minds and the bottom line around the housing and mental health crisis in Canada - the lack of responsive design is a serious limitation in its ability to do this.

For the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design, the decision to investigate functionality in the persona research affirmed the need for a responsive design approach. I identified that the users accessed a variety of devices and in a wide variety of environments. Some assumed they would be accessing the site via their desk top computer in their office, others via a smart phone in a crowded train on the way to or from work, others via tablet in a café. Restricting the site access to a computer as in the Here At Home site would have a negative impact on user access and therefore the ability of the site to assist in bringing about the change it seeks.

The absence of responsive design in the Here At Home interactive documentary does provide an opportunity to reflect on the impact of legacy conventions when moving into a new field.

In the previous chapter I suggest that the decision not to incorporate responsive design in the Here At Home interactive documentary demonstrates the influence of linear documentary on the site design. Linear projects are produced for the larger fixed screens of television and cinema. The visual and audio design of the Here At Home site requires an environment similar as that of broadcast television. I suggest that these design conventions are increasingly irrelevant to interactive design and that the implementation of responsive design in the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary addresses this issue.

In summary, I establish the use of user centred design methods in the planning of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary. I identify the needs of the users through the application of persona research and establish the usefulness of legacy skills from documentary and narrative fiction in this stage of user centred design. This persona research indicates the need for the application of standard and consistent design methodologies to ensure pleasurable agency for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary users. I outline my method for organizing content within the parameters of standard design. I also outline my method for synthesising existing Lighthouse materials and their position in the structure of the consistent design for the site. I establish the relevance of responsive design in interactive documentary design. I identify the necessity to move away from the legacy of designing for a large fixed screen.
when working in the Manovich’s permanently extendable and Murray’s digital medium environment and apply these findings to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design.

5.2.3 Application of Interactive Documentary theory and practice

In their paper “Interactive Documentary: Setting the Field” (2012) Gaudenzi and practitioner/theoretician Judith Ashton propose any project that starts with an intention to document the ‘real’ and that uses digital interactive technology to realize this intention can be considered an interactive documentary. The Lighthouse Interactive Documentary fits within this description. It articulates the methodology and supporting research of the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care, by documenting its delivery in the actual world. The material will be accessed via computational and networked devices, that is digital interactive technology.

Gaudenzi (2013) draws on documentary theorist Bill Nichols ‘modes’ of documentary to organize types of interactivity, as a way of systematising interactive documentary design. Nichols describes documentary modes as “…basic ways of organizing texts in relation to certain recurrent features or conventions” (Nichols 1991, p. 32). Gaudenzi describes modes as “…a meta-logic…a frame that roughly summarizes the different positions that the filmmaker, the filmed subjects and the viewers have taken so far” (Gaudenzi 2013, p. 24). In the digital medium, she proposes that modes of interactivity “illustrate the ways interactive authors have positioned their users, and used technology, to portray the reality they were interested in” (Gaudenzi 2013, pp. 37 -8). I have utilised Gaudenzi’s modes of interactivity as the organisational framework for interactive documentary design in part because it provides ways of categorising interactivity that references the theory of linear documentary modes. This provides linear documentary practitioners with continuity and context when seeking to understand principles of interactive documentary design.

Gaudenzi identifies four different interactive documentary modes: the conversational, participatory, experiential and hitchhiker/hypertext modes. The consistent design principles I have developed for the site indicate that my design fits the hitchhiker/hypertext mode. The user navigates their way through a closed data base in the manner of an explorer. The content within each point of view is fixed, but the user may explore the various topics and granules in their own way and in their own time and arrive at their own conclusion. Gaudenzi (2013) proposes that in this mode it is the journey and not the destination that is the point of the
interaction and that the user is an explorer. This mode is also utilised in the *Berry Street* and *Here At Home* sites.

An example of the application of the hitchhiker/hypertext mode to the Lighthouse site design is contained in the flow chart covering the Youth Homelessness section of the site (see *Figure 43*).

**Figure 43: Flow chart of Youth Homelessness section of site indicating hitchhiker/hypertext mode**

I provide six sub-headings that can be clicked through to access further subheadings and content in a variety of formats. Content is available able via text and visuals on screen, audio/visual interviews and short documentaries. This structure resembles that of the *Here At Home* site where text on screen is interspersed with short documentaries that can be accessed by navigating between headings. The audio-visual content will also be available as stand-
alone content on platforms such as YouTube (with for example a Lighthouse YouTube Channel accessed by password). Some text content will be available as downloadable PDFs.

I have positioned designer Janet Murray’s notion of pleasurable agency as the measure of successful design in the digital medium and so I apply this to the assessment of the hitchhiker/hypertext mode in the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design. Murray describes the attributes of agency and its measure:

Agency results when the interactor’s expectations are aroused by the design of the environment, causing them to act in a way that results in an appropriate response by the well-designed computational system. This matching of the interactor’s participatory expectations and actions to the procedural scriptings of the machine creates the pleasurable experience of agency (Murray 2011, pp. 12-13).

Knowing what ‘pleasurable experience of agency’ is relies on the identification of users’ (interactors) needs. The user types of the Lighthouse site are high net worth people or organisations, policy advisors and those working in the sector. They will visit the site to access relevant material to support or advocate for the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care system. The persona design research established that pleasurable agency for them is accessible and familiar navigation to access content that can be absorbed quickly, returned to easily and downloaded or linked to where necessary. The hitchhiker/hypertext mode best suits these users as it takes place via navigation to stand-alone granules that can be easily accessed and re-found, both important user functions.

The other modes proposed by Gaudenzi require more onerous types of interactivity and engagement than that which the Lighthouse site users desire. The conversational mode applies to projects where the user explores an environment or situation and simulations are common in this mode. This design does not suit delivery of the granularized content of the Lighthouse site. The participatory mode allows the user to contribute to the database, with the ability to “…add, change or circulate content - and therefore transform the artefact itself” (Gaudenzi 2013, p. 57). The Lighthouse users expressed no desire to contribute content and given the pressure on their time, no ability. The experiential mode, implying embodied interaction with an environment similarly requires a type of interaction not desired and in the main not possible for the Lighthouse site users.
In applying the hitchhiker/hypertext interactive documentary mode therefore, I meet the needs of the users and so provide the pleasurable agency required by designers working in the digital medium.

**In summary**, I establish that the documentary intent of the site is expressed in the content through the real-world articulation of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care. The project utilises digital interactive technology in the form of any internet connected computational device. Combined, these elements meet the criteria of interactive documentary established by Gaudenzi and Aston (2012) as being any project that starts with an intention to document the ‘real’ and that uses digital interactive technology to realize this intention. I also establish that the application of the hitchhiker/hypertext interactive documentary mode satisfies the user needs for easy access to all areas, with commitments of time that can be regulated by the user. The interactive documentary mode also gives them the ability to link to or download materials needed for advocacy identified as one of the key functions of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary.

### 5.3 Application of documentary theory and practice

My persona research establishes that the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary users require a design that supports access to evidence-based and statistical information supporting Lighthouse methods; materials explaining the philosophy and supporting research of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care (TFMC); and examples of its methodology in practice. This is to assist them in on-going discourse and advocacy around youth homelessness and the application of the Lighthouse TFMC program, in order to affect change. The content and discourse align with the definition of documentary intent.

The Lighthouse *Lighting the Way: Delivery and Outcomes Report (2017)* provides a method for applying this intent to the site design. The report is structured around personal stories of present and former residents and staff, addressed to the reader. These provide the central spine around which broader issues are addressed. The personal stories provide proof of the efficacy of Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care. The report combines these personal stories with hard information and descriptions of the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care process. Its readers are similar to the users identified for my site design. It is in a sense a text-based template for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary.
Based on this I aligned the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary with that of the *Lighting the Way: Delivery and Outcomes Report* (see Figure 44).

Figure 44: Lighthouse Lighting the Way Outcomes and Delivery Report 2017
To implement this approach, I combined content notes compiled from the Lighthouse written material and the personal stories of the report. I applied two personal stories from the report to each of the three established headings, allocating particular story elements to relevant areas (see Figure 45, 46 & 47).

**Figure 45:** Example of personal stories from report applied to content

**Figure 46:** Application of personal stories to site topics
This resulted in what designer Ethan Marcotte (2015) calls the ‘little pockets of design’. The process evolved into a detailed diagram that I could then translate into a site map, flow chart and wire frames.

The next stage in the design process was the application of audio-visual techniques to the text-based material. This is a task the linear documentary filmmaker is familiar with when developing and presenting a discourse through the use of audio-visual materials. These materials may include archive, interviews, actuality and narration. I have applied linear documentary conventions to the personal stories which will be delivered as short documentaries broken into themed granules using the ‘interactive’ documentary mode (Nichols 1991). This mode gives primacy to the voice and lived experience of the participant, allowing them to be the driver of access and discourse. The filmmaker is an
interested observer, the audiences’ representative, who engages with the participant in an exploration of their world.

Other content provides the remaining structural elements. My plans indicate areas of the site where expert opinion will be delivered through a traditional audio-visual interview. I also propose to film the embodied practice of the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care method through a series of short documentaries, in the style of those in *Here At Home*. An example of this is ‘A day in the life of a Primary Carer’, capturing a central element of the TFMC method. I have also identified a number of areas where interactivity may provide insight. For example, an interactive 360 degree tour of a Lighthouse residential home and one of a state-run ‘residential-care’ home allows the user to contrast, compare and engage with this point of difference (see Figure 48).

**Figure 48: Site mock-up: access page for 360 degree ‘real world’ interactivity**

This site structure reflects Nichols paradigmatic structure for documentary. This is comprised of problem, background context, complex multi perspective examination of the problem and proposition or pathway to a solution. *The problem* proposed is homeless teenagers and their care. The *background context* is the larger issue of family violence and breakdown, the traumatizing effect on the children from these families and historic and contemporary societal response to these issues. The *complex multi perspective examination* is through the differing perspectives of the homeless teenagers, their families, researchers, experts, policy makers, and providers in the field (Lighthouse in particular). The Lighthouse system of care, the Therapeutic Family Model of Care, is the *pathway to a solution*. The
Lighthouse Interactive Documentary expresses this paradigm through the mediums of text on screen, graphics and audio-visuals.

Two of Renov’s four documentary modes of desire also apply to the site design. The site content and design analyses and interrogates the issues around youth homelessness and the responses to it, in a persuasive manner, articulating the desire to persuade or promote, and to analyse or interrogate (1993). The persuasion is supported by the application of the graphics established in the 2017 Lighthouse Outcomes and Delivery report, maintaining a continuity between the two communication platforms. It is a means of delivering the reports text-based content in an engaging audio-visual manner, available across devices so increasing the impact of the report in line with strategic impact documentary (see Figure 49).

**Figure 49: Mock-up of possible integration of site design and Outcomes report design**

The site also sits within activist documentary traditions. The aim of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary is to embed and spread the Therapeutic Family Model of Care methods as widely and as effectively as possible to address chronic issues around homelessness in teenagers and young adults and effect change in policy and delivery. This activism is expressed as the intent to intervene, as the films speak to specific publics to bring...
about specific political goals (Waugh 2011). The intervention will take place by empowering the users to advocate for the efficacy of the TFMC and providing public access to evidence-based the methods that support it.

**In summary**, I have applied my linear documentary skills to the gathering, organising and visualisation of this content. I have established the need for delivering documentary intent to the Lighthouse interactive documentary site. To deliver this intent I have applied the methodology and design features of the *Lighthouse Outcomes and Delivery report* to the site design, using personal stories as an organising principle. This combined with other visualisations and organisation of the content constitutes the paradigmatic structure for documentary proposed by Nichols. All content will be delivered as stand-alone granules to maximise the user experience, based on my persona research and satisfying Murrays notion of a pleasurable agency as the indicator of interactivity design success. The site design also expresses the historic role of documentary activism.

### 5.4 Conclusion

#### 5.4.1 Project Overview

The Lighthouse site design project came about as a desire by the Lighthouse Foundation to advocate for their model of care for homeless teenagers and young people. Given the moderate size of the organization and its not-for-profit status, a linear documentary, while at first considered, was found to be inappropriate in terms of both the finances and human resources required. It was decided that a website would be appropriate and could build on the already existing on-line presence of the organisation.

Consultations with the appropriate members of the Lighthouse team identified the types of users that the organization sought to affect with the site, being high net worth individuals and organisations, those who could affect and advise on policy in a wider setting and other service providers. I apply the user centred design principles discussed in Chapter Three and applied in the Chapter Four case studies of this paper, through persona profiling, to determine the needs of the site users. These are identified as being easy and quick access to content through all computational devices with internet access in any setting. Content needs to provide rigorous and evidence-based examination of the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care and the wider issues that surround it. The purpose of the site and its content is to enable the users to advocate and justify support for the wider implementation of the
Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of Care method. A secondary function is as a piece of public information communication to the broader community.

In line with Nodder’s principles of user centred and website design (2016), I apply standard, consistent and responsive design principles to the site, and nominate the hitchhiker/hypertext interactive documentary mode as being the most appropriate mode in relationship to user needs (Gaudenzi 2013). I have incorporated existing Lighthouse materials into the site architecture and content. Home page topic/headings are based on a synthesising of these materials. I propose that linear documentary filmmakers have skills that can be transposed to that stage of site design. These skills lie in the gathering and synthesis of material to form and support a discourse.

Having applied user centred design to the site design through the synthesising of the content, I position documentary intent. I suggest that the necessity of documentary intent in the Lighthouse site is indicated by the needs of the users. I propose that documentary Nichols’ paradigmatic structure is replicated in the non-linear format and outline of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary site design (1991). Renov’s theory of modes of desire identify the documentary aim as being to persuade, promote, interrogate and analyse (1993) and the activist documentary aim is also evident (Waugh 2011). I then describe how documentary is expressed in the transposing of the content into audio visual artefacts, by using a number of audio-visual techniques including animated text on screen and mini documentaries.

5.4.2 Key Findings

Ashton and Gaudenzi (2012) define interactive documentary as a project that intends to document the real using interactive digital technology. I propose that documentary goes further than simply documenting the real. It does so in order to present an argument and provoke a discourse about the real world. This is often in order affect change, creating an activist project. If a site is to affect change through documentary discourse, then the designer needs to identify what that change is, who can affect it and how.

The ‘who’ is the key to identifying the site user and their needs. The question is how to identify who this user is and what their needs are. The findings of this study suggest the answer lies in the implementation of user centred design. Nodder (2016) and Cilella (2011) propose that the identification of user groups and the application of persona research as the first step in user centred design. I suggest that the research and interview techniques of linear
documentary filmmaking may be effectively applied to persona research, in establishing the identity of the user and their needs. Thus legacy linear skills can be re-deployed for new outcomes in the digital medium.

I identify other elements of documentary theory and practice that can be utilized in interactive documentary design. One is the application of the paradigmatic structure of documentary proposed by Nichols (1991) being main concept, background and context, multiplicity of viewpoints as an exploration and discourse, and conclusion or call to action. Another skill is the ability to transpose written content to the audio visual medium. Additionally, the act of linear film making itself may be applicable in some interactive documentary modes, where stand-alone content areas are part of the granular structure of the site.

It is in functionality that the linear documentary filmmaker may look to disciplines outside of documentary and filmmaking when moving into the digital medium. As theorist and interactive documentary designer Sandra Gaudenzi proposes, when encountering the interactive documentary, the viewer becomes a doer (Gaudenzi 2013). And as theorist and designer for the digital medium, Janet Murray suggests, it is the pleasurable expediting of that doing by the user that indicates successful interactive design (Murray 2011). I propose that the disciplines of software and website design offer ways of thinking that allow the documentarist to shift documentary intent into the what Murray identifies as the digital medium. The tools I identify as being offered by these disciplines are user centred, standard, consistent and responsive design.

Finally, interactive documentary design invites the linear documentary filmmaker to look to new disciplines, whilst keeping their toolkit of skills at the ready for use when required. Interactive documentary invites a move from the provider of discourse in the linear form to the enabler of discourse in the interactive form. Enabling discourse and change via effective application of interfaces, site maps and flow charts may not be as gratifying as a directors’ credit on the big screen. But given the increasing prevalence of software driven, networked computational devices, I argue that working in the digital medium may provide a suitable environment to support documentary intent and provide a platform for documentary discourse that embraces what Manovich describes as the permanent extendibility of the digital medium.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 CONCLUSION OF STUDY

I have identified several key considerations in the design of interactive documentary that I propose will assist the linear and interactive documentary practitioner and add to the theoretical body of knowledge in this discipline. I have named user centred, responsive and interactivity design as areas of consideration. I have also looked to documentary, interactive documentary and communications theory as a lens through which to view these design tools.

6.1.1 The application of user centred, responsive and interactivity design to interactive documentary

Based on the findings of the case studies and the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design in Chapters Four and Five, I propose that a key criterion for assessing the success of interactive design is the level of pleasurable agency experienced by the user (Murray 2011). My findings show that the application of user centred design techniques at the first stage of the design process is useful in determining what pleasure and agency is. I have identified the technique of persona design, which requires the identification of actual users, and their needs in relation to the proposed project as a useful method in the first step of user centred site design (Cilella 2011; Nodder 2016).

A further finding is that the linear documentary filmmaker has pre-existing skills - interviewing and developing a narrative arc – that can be redeployed to persona and user centred design. I have applied this technique in the design on the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary, as demonstrated in the Personas section of the site design document and the Chapter Five analysis of the design process.

In my next finding, based on the Chapter Four case studies and Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design process, I propose two website design fundamentals as useful for the linear practitioner entering the non-linear space of the digital medium. The first, standard design, references existing contemporary site design techniques and allows the user to quickly engage with the site by drawing on pre-existing knowledge of how sites in general work. The second, consistent design, references only itself within the site, but conventions
need to be quickly established and repeated throughout the site to allow the user to engage with the content as quickly as possible (Nodder 2016).

A third key finding, based on the Chapter Four case studies and Lighthouse Interactive Documentary design process, establishes that the application of standard and consistent design enhances user engagement by assisting the user to leave and then return to the site as they wish. This returnability supports a high level of on-going engagement with the site. The design aim, as Nodder points out, is not to get users to stay as long as possible, but rather to stay and go as they wish (Nodder 2016). This finding is a key change for linear practitioners, whose design focus is to attract an audience to stay for the duration of the film. This finding resolves another issue that I have identified in this paper, of how the designer determines the amount of time required for the user to engage with content once engaged with the site. As established in Chapter Four, design that supports easy returnability places control of time in the hands of the user.

Finally I propose the application of responsive design as an important consideration for interactive documentary design, particularly if the activist aim to affect change is part of the project. This finding is supported by the Chapter Four case study analysis of *Here At Home*. The site’s aim to influence hearts, minds and the bottom line in relation to homelessness in Canada is hampered by the fact that it is only accessible on computers and in a setting that allows for reasonable audio access. Designer Ethan Marcotte nominates a design approach that can be responsive to a full range of contemporary devices in a variety of settings (2010). I propose that the necessity (or not) for a responsive design approach can be established in the persona research at the very beginning of the design process, by establishing how, on what devices and where the user will be accessing a site. Given the notion of the permanent extendibility of the digital medium as established by theorist Lev Manovich (2014), I propose responsive design as a default approach for interactive documentary design, unless the persona design research reveals otherwise.

### 6.1.2 Application of documentary theory

Through the case studies in Chapter Four, I identify the necessity of establishing documentary intent to differentiate an interactive documentary from the corporate and strategic communications intent of many websites. This is particularly relevant when applying standard design that may draw on dominant contemporary web design, such as the
Target and NAB sites cited in Chapters Four and Five. These, as well as the Berry Street and existing Lighthouse website provide examples of strategic communications design, that is design that seeks to build a relationship between the user and an entity or product (Duerte Melo, Balonas, Ruao, Felicio 2016).

In the Here At Home case study analysis I establish that the site meets the criteria of documentary and so provides an example of what this looks like in the digital medium. In this study I propose documentary as being the desire to present an argument or proposition about the historical world to provoke discourse, and in some cases affect change. It is also assumed that documentary content has an indexical relationship with the real world (Nichols 1991). In the analysis of the Berry Street site I find that it cannot be described as an interactive documentary. The site successfully applies user centred, standard and consistent design principles and includes some documentary techniques, but for effect rather than intent. I have established that the aim of the site is to persuade small net worth individuals to donate, through the application of strategic communication that builds a relationship between the user and an entity, being Berry Street This leaves it outside of what theorist Juhasz identifies as the distinct function of documentary and its “… special provenance with the truth” (Juhasz 2014, p. 37).

My findings conclude that a site can apply the paradigmatic documentary structure (Nichols 1991) to both form and content to be considered a documentary in the digital medium. This finding has been applied to the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary as discussed in Chapter Five. The Lighthouse site is intended to provoke and contribute to discourse around the issue of youth homelessness and provide material and inspiration for change. The design of the site is framed around the individual stories of your people who have experienced homelessness and been involved in the Lighthouse Therapeutic Family Model of care, establishing the issue of youth homelessness. The multi- perspective background and present-day examination of that problems around youth homelessness are through the youth’s stories, interviews with experts, text-based information about the causes and effects of youth homelessness on a state and national basis and short documentaries. The solution or change to the current situation is proposed in the increased application of the Therapeutic Family Model of Care in caring for homeless teenagers and young people which is described on the Lighthouse Foundation website as being “proven to be one of the most
cost-effective social programs in existence “(Lighthouse 2019, Homelessness in Australia para 5).

**In summary** the identification of Nichols’ paradigmatic structure of documentary as a useful framework for ensuring documentary intent in the interactive setting, and application of it to the design of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary, provides a methodology for linear practitioners moving into interactive documentary design.

### 6.1.3 Application of interactive documentary theory

My findings position the user as the central figure in an interactive documentary and user centred design as an appropriate tool in interactive documentary design. This is supported by Gaudenzi’s proposition that the interactive documentary does not come into being until action is taken by the user to interact with the project (Gaudenzi 2013). My analysis of the *Here at Home* interactive documentary provides an example of Gaudenzi’s proposition. The site is activated through the choosing of and movement between hyperlinked granules, or pockets of design that contain the content within the site (Marcotte 2015). Without this interaction it exists only as an inanimate home page.

My findings locate the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary within Gaudenzi’s modes of interactivity used to systematise types of interaction between site and user. She names these the conversational, participatory, hitchhiker and experiential (Gaudenzi 2013). In the case of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary the user explores a searchable but closed data base via hypertext, be it a word, picture or moving image. Gaudenzi describes this as the hitchhiker/hypertext mode and role of the user as that of an explorer. In my analysis of the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary I propose website design fundamentals, being standard design, consistent and responsive design, as appropriate tools for the implementation of Gaudenzi’s hitchhiker mode to the Lighthouse site design (Nodder 2016; Marcotte 2015). The standard design allows the explorer/user to draw on previous knowledge of on-line site to commence the quest. The consistent design between site areas means the user/explorer can apply the accumulated site-based knowledge to each area, and also move back and forth easily. Navigation is intuitive and obstacle free. These design elements also mean that the user/explorer can devote as much or as little time as desired in the knowledge that they can easily return to the site to continue exploring at their own pace.
The site design documents for the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary demonstrate the application of these elements. The design documents include standard website design elements such as drop-down menus and buttons, replicating design in the wider computational and website setting. Within the site itself, design is consistent from page to page, supporting ease of navigation and returnability. This ease supports the findings from the user centred persona design that reveals these elements as being essential to satisfying user agency for the Lighthouse site user.

**In summary,** Gaudenzi’s proposition that the interactive documentary does not come into being until action is taken by the user to interact with the project positions the user as the central figure in an interactive documentary and user centred design as an appropriate tool in its design. My findings support the application of Gaudenzi’s modes to the Lighthouse Interactive Documentary, the hitchhiker/hypertext mode being applicable to the design. My findings also indicate that the application of standard, consistent and responsive design to the hitchhiker/hypertext modes of interactive documentary provides the linear documentary filmmaker with a methodology by which to work in the interactive digital medium.

### 6.2 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

My research findings offer new knowledge in the ways in which documentary practitioners may approach and engage with interactive documentary design. These results suggest further opportunities for a range of theorists and practitioners, including those in fields and disciplines such as interactive design, website design and documentary theory and practice. As a result of this study I have identified two main directions for future research.

Narrative fiction story telling is a dominant form in the linear film world. Future directions of research may lie in the application of the affordances of the digital medium, as outlined by designer Janet Murray, to narrative fiction film. Murray (2011) identifies these as being procedural, participatory, spatial and encyclopaedic. Further research into the effect of these settings on narrative fiction film may further develop interactivity in the fictional film story telling process.

In this PhD I have established the means by which a linear documentary practitioner may approach the design for an interactive documentary. Future research into teaching methodologies may assist teachers to include interactive documentary into the curriculum and introduce this practice to students, the future documentary makers. The argument for
this inclusion lies in the permanent extendibility of the digital medium as proposed by software designer and theorist Lev Manovich. I propose that linear delivery is likely to occupy less and less space in the world of screen and device-based engagement. If documentary is to maintain its place as a provider and provoker of discourse about the world in which we all live, teachers must be the ones to lead the students into the world of the digital medium and provide the tools they require.
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