WHO KILED DR BOGLE & MRS CHANDLER?



Teachers Notes

SYNOPSIS

At last, an answer to one of the great unsolved cases in crime history.

When the half-naked bodies of brilliant physicist, Dr Gilbert Bogle, and his lover, Mrs Margaret Chandler, were found in bizarre circumstances on a Sydney riverbank in 1963, it set into play an unprecedented forensic investigation.

Autopsies offered little clue as to how the couple died, only that there were signs of a rapidly acting poison. Despite assistance from the FBI and Scotland Yard, the poison was never identified. At the end of a long and controversial coronial inquest, no cause of death, killer or motive could be identified.

In the ensuing years, scores of tabloid theories have been put forward, from LSD to Cold War assassinations. But in the minds of many, including the police, Margaret Chandler's husband, Geoffrey, was the likely culprit.

Four decades later, this explosive documentary reveals startling new scientific evidence - evidence so powerful the police gave filmmaker Peter Butt unprecedented access to their forensic records.

It provides a stunning solution to one of crime's most baffling riddles: who killed Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler?

CURRICULUM LINKS

Curriculum links include SOSE/HSIE, English, Media, Science (environmental studies, ecology).

The film has received a PG classification from the OFLC with the consumer advice: mild themes.

AFTER VIEWING

- 1. What date did Dr Gilbert Bogle and Mrs Margaret Chandler die, and where were their bodies found?
- 2. What two observations did detectives make that immediately 'intrigued' and 'baffled' them about the two bodies?
- 3. Who was the initial prime suspect for the deaths, and why?
- 4. What reason does Geoffrey Chandler give for why he and Margaret were invited to Ken Nash's party?
- 5. Why did Geoffrey Chandler leave the party early?
- 6. Geoffrey returned to the party later, then left again, alone. What did he assume Margaret would do?
- 7. In Geoffrey's view, what did the police hope would happen when he visited the morgue? What actually did happen?
- 8. Without obvious evidence found from an autopsy, what was considered the only possible cause of Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler's deaths?
- 9. How did the media report the 'crime', and in what way did they link it to the Cold War?

- **10.** Why were a one-armed man and a greyhound trainer questioned by the police?
- **11.** What were the coroner's findings as to how Bogle and Chandler died?
- 12. In 1948, what gas did maritime scientist Maurice Fry discover coming from the river? What is the common name given to this gas? Describe its dangers.
- 13. What was the condition of the river at the time Bogle and Chandler died?
- 14. Why were Bogle and Chandler unable to smell the gas, and why was there probably a large build-up of it very close to where they were on the river bank?
- 15. What evidence was suppressed at the inquest, and why?
- 16. Why was this evidence vitally important?
- 17. Why does Vivian Mahoney, who was the government's chief toxicologist at the time of the inquest, now express annoyance about the Bogle-Chandler case?
- 18. What did Mahoney find in Bogle and Chandlers's blood that could have alerted him to the true cause of their deaths, had he been provided with more information about the case?
- 19. Describe the combination of circumstances that began in the late 1930s that are now claimed to have contributed to the deaths of Gilbert Bogle and Margaret Chandler decades later.
- 20. How does Geoffrey Chandler now sum up the events that probably caused his wife's death?

VOCABULARY

Write a definition for each of the following words in the program, and use each one in a sentence to show that you know what it means.

Anaesthetise, Autopsy, Coroner, Forensic, Haemoglobin, Hallucinogen, Hypothesis, Inquest, Noxious, Toxicologist

WHAT HAPPENED IN 1963?

The mysterious and sensational deaths in Sydney of Dr Gilbert Bogle and Mrs Margaret Chandler early in 1963 came during the era called the Cold War, when it seemed the world was on the brink of nuclear war and annihilation. In politically and socially conservative Australia the deaths created a huge media and social scandal, for they indicated that the principal players in the drama had been living somewhat shocking 'alternative' lifestyles to the commonly accepted standards of moral behaviour. It also indicated, in the words of Bob Dylan only one year later, that the times were changing.

• What was the Cold War? In order to gain an overview of the prevailing world mood at the time of the Bogle-Chandler deaths, research and write a 500word description of the main characteristics of the Cold War from the 1940s to 1963. Include in this description an explanation of the events surrounding the 'Cuban missile crisis', which had occurred only a few weeks previously, in October 1962. (Note: More class activities about the relationship between the Bogle-Chandler mystery and the Cold War may be found in the DVD Extras section, Bizarre Theories.)

- In pairs, select for research one of the following events that took place in 1963. Prepare and present a poster about the topic. Incorporate the display into a brief, informative talk to the class. (Note: History teachers in particular could choose to undertake this as part of a decade study.)
 - January: Viet Cong guerillas shoot down five American helicopters in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, killing 50 American military personnel; Russia agrees to hold on-site inspections of nuclear tests.
 - February: The Beatles record their first LP; in Iraq, army rebels seize power and execute the Premier, Abdul Kassim.
 - March:Sensational scandal begins involving British Government minister, John Profumo and London call girl and model, Christine Keeler; Australian Government announces that America will establish a military communications base in Western Australia.
 - April: In the USA, Martin Luther King is arrested for leading a civil rights march, while the Governor of the state of Alabama, George Wallace, defies the American government's new desegregation laws; blockbuster movie, *Lawrence of Arabia*, wins seven Oscars.
 - May: The first James Bond film, *From Russia With Love*, is released; Colonel Oleg Penkovsky, a Soviet Union military officer, is sentenced to death in Moscow for passing political and military secrets to a British businessman, Grenville Wynne, who is sent to a forced labour camp.
 - June:Soviet Union sends first woman into space, Lieutenant Valentina Tereshkova; death of Pope John XXIII; US President, John F. Kennedy, visits West Berlin, a city split into two by a wall erected by the Communist government of East Germany.
 - July: The first stage of the Ord River irrigation project in Western Australia is opened by the Australian Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies; Kim Philby, a former British diplomat accused of spying for the Soviet Union, is granted Soviet citizenship.
 - August:Gang hijacks train in England, escaping with over £1 million, in what becomes known as the Great Train Robbery; Australia is first nation to sign the nuclear test ban treaty in Moscow; Martin Luther King delivers 'I have a dream' speech.
 - September: Federation of Malaysia is created, leading to widespread riots and martial law; Alabama Governor George Wallace orders state troopers to seal off a high school to halt racial

integration, while President Kennedy orders the state's national guard to enforce integration.

- October: Republic of Nigeria is proclaimed; United Nations votes against admitting Communist China into its organisation; Australian government announces decision to buy 24 revolutionary F111 bombers from the USA for the RAAF.
- November: President Kennedy is assassinated; military coup in South Vietnam overthrows unpopular President Ngo Dinh Diem.
- o December: Trial of Nelson Mandela, accused of treason, begins in South Africa; Kenya achieves independence from Britain.
- Selecting either the topic you have researched, or one of the others listed above, write a short story, drawing from it in any way you wish, and in any style of presentation (e.g. first or third-person narrator, diary, journal, log book, report or letter etc). You may wish to add illustrations for presentation in a magazine or on a website.



INVESTIGATION, EVIDENCE, HYPOTHESIS AND PROOF

The program shows us three interrelated types of investigations into the Bogle-Chandler mystery:

- The criminal investigative work carried out by the police at the time
- The testing carried out by scientists either in the field or in laboratories, both at the time and later
- The inquiries carried out by the filmmaker, Peter Butt, many decades later.

In all investigations the method of inquiry is generally to gather pieces of evidence by various means which, when examined, point to a hypothesis, or valid explanation, as to what may have happened, and perhaps why, how, where and when it happened, and who was involved.

A hypothesis developed as a result of any kind of legal, scientific and historical inquiry is only regarded as proven when all other, alternative hypotheses are found to be inarguably wrong, and the evidence can only lead to one possible conclusion. In many cases, though, this does not happen. All we can do until more evidence is found, or until improved research and testing methods are developed, is to accept the probability that one hypothesis is the likely truth, because it seems more logical and more accurate than all the alternatives. Is the program's solution to the Bogle-Chandler mystery merely another of the many hypotheses? Is it the 'best' of them, or may it now be regarded, at last, as proven?

- Discuss in class your own reactions to the program's findings about the deaths of Bogle and Chandler. Was it what you expected? Are the findings plausible? Is there a case for government compensation or apology warranted to the surviving families of those involved?
- In pairs, research the methods police detectives and forensic experts use to investigate a crime scene such as a suspicious death, then prepare a two-page item about these methods and techniques aimed at readers of a popular magazine for young teenagers, looking at how evidence is collected and tested, how interviews (or interrogations) are conducted, and how a case against a suspect is put together. You may include captioned photographs or illustrations as required.
- Imagine you are a detective working on the Bogle-Chandler case early in 1963. Using details derived from the program concerning the evidence that was uncovered in the first day or so of the case, prepare and write an official police report stating what you believe caused the deaths, and whether or not anyone is suspected of foul play, and if so, why. (Remember that an official report of this nature should avoid the use of the first-person pronoun by the author, and should attempt to be objective, clear, factual and rational.)
- Write a set of private, personal diary entries by the person who covered the half-naked bodies of Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler at the river bank then

disappeared without reporting the discovery. Ensure you examine this person's feelings and motives. You may use information from the program for this activity, or you may wish to fictionalise the events and the person involved entirely.

- Using the on-screen comments of chief toxicologist, Vivian Mahoney, as a starting point, draft, edit and proofread a short story about a day in the life of a toxicologist (or a forensic scientist) who is working on a suspected murder case. It may be presented in any style you consider appropriate—drama, comedy, mystery, even science fiction.
- In a sense *Who Killed Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler?* is an investigation of a 'cold case'. It is a form of investigation that has relevance to other issues of importance to us. Discuss in class and take notes on how this may be compared to the investigative research work of academic historians, for whom the past is always an on-going 'cold case' of speculation, gathering of evidence, hypothesis and argument.
- As a follow-up to the previous class discussion, in small groups research and present an informative set of illustrated posters about what is now known in Australia as the 'History Wars', involving the wide divergence of opinion amongst historians who have been debating how and why Aboriginal populations in Tasmania declined during the colonial era and the early 20th century. You should examine the following:
 - o Why did the 'History Wars' begin?
 - Who are the prominent historians, and what are the main differences in their arguments and hypotheses about Tasmanian Aboriginal history?
 - What do these historians believe about each other's opinions, arguments, methods of investigation, use of evidence and conclusions? Provide a specific example of where they differ
 - Why is the debate so intense, and why should it be important to us?
- In groups, you are to work together to invent a makebelieve murder mystery story, where Detective Inspector Jacqueline Stone arrives at a specific location, such as a swimming pool, the dining room of a mansion, or a library, to investigate and to interview the four or five assembled characters who were present at the scene, and to piece together the evidence to arrest the murderer. All of the clues pointing to the culprit should be entirely in what the characters say about where they were, what they were doing at the time of the murder, their relationship to the victim, and what the detective physically finds within the murder scene. As one of the characters interviewed is guilty, part of what he or she says will be untrue.

Prepare each witness interview with D.I. Stone. Draw a large, accurate picture (or even take a photograph) of the murder scene, making sure all the physical clues are present in it. Other members of the class are then to read or listen to the interviews, examine the crime scene, and from all the available evidence, unmask the murderer, and provide reasons for their decision. This may then be compared to the inspector's findings, which must be withheld until the classroom detectives have compiled their own answers.

THE ROLE OF THE NEWS MEDIA

We are informed during the program that the newspapers of the day took an avid interest in the deaths of Dr Gilbert Bogle and Mrs Margaret Chandler, sensationalising the story and attempting to outdo each other during a ratings 'war' in reporting 'scoops' and offering unsubstantiated speculations about the case. Sometimes this results in 'trial by media', where people presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law may suffer unduly.

- In pairs, use desktop publishing software to plan and present two different newspaper versions reporting the initial deaths of Bogle and Chandler. One should be presented in sensational 'tabloid' style to thrill and titillate readers, speculating about the case and offering hints about who the culprit may be without actually naming anyone outright (to avoid the accusation of libel); the other should be presented in a more subdued, 'serious' and responsible manner, avoiding unproven claims.
- Imagine you are the centre of police investigation and media speculation in a case of suspected murder. You are chased by reporters, photographers and camera operators whenever you show yourself in public; they wait outside your door, and aim cameras at your front windows. The phone keeps ringing; journalists are asking you to comment. Write an email to a friend or relative about this, and about the effect it is having on you.
- In pairs, prepare a radio news report announcing the latest findings of the Bogle-Chandler case, as derived from the documentary. The report may include a short interview with someone either involved in the case, or a present-day politician or police commissioner. You may require at least one other class member to take part. Consider the audience you are aiming at, and project the report accordingly. For example, if your audience is predominantly young, they may never have previously heard of the case, so you may have to provide some historical detail. Record the report for playback. (You may need to rehearse and re-tape until achieving the desired effect.)
- As a class, examine contemporary newspaper and TV news and current affairs reports where the innocence or behaviour of people is held in question, leading to moralising about their character, and speculation about their activities and lives. (Examples may be allegedly drunken or hit-and-run drivers, businessmen accused of cheating poor clients, 'heartless'

bureaucrats and possible suspects in cases involving a death etc.)

Select and write your own argumentative critique of one such news story, looking at the way it is presented, and the messages, both intended and unintended, it is sending the public about the persons involved. If it is a continuing news story, this may involve examining reports published or presented over a number of days. Decide in your critique whether these news reports are fair and ethical or not, in the 'court of public opinion'. (As preparation you may wish to view episodes of *Media Watch* see Film/TV references.)

POLLUTION, THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN LIVING

The program's explanation as to the likely historical and ecological cause of death of Dr Gilbert Bogle and Mrs Margaret Chandler draws attention not only to the relationship between nature and urban development, but to the necessity to put into place, monitor and enforce controls and standards that safeguard the environment, our natural resources and life itself.

- The following activity may be carried out first by researching the ways in which newspapers present news details in illustrated, captioned and labelled form, such as when explaining pictorially how a car accident occurred, or the movements of troops during a battle. From the causal reasons presented in the program, draw a set of similar diagrams illustrating how Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler are likely to have died. Begin with the construction of factories along the river bank in the 19th Century, then show each step in the process.
- Working in groups, build up a fictional dossier on the survival of a rare species of frog. This species lives in an environment of marshy land near a newly developing outer city suburb. It has been observed that yearly population numbers have been declining for the past three years, whereas previously the numbers have been steady. It is your job to present statistics, graphs, charts and other material such as written reports and photographs that may be used as evidence to demonstrate the decline in population, the reasons or hypothesis for the decline, and recommendations as to how the problem may be attacked and even solved. Look at environmental issues, climate change, water and air temperature, seasonal rainfall, various types of pollution, encroachment of human populations, construction of residences, factories, roads, alterations to river flow, sewerage issues etc. The dossier may be developed in a variety of multimedia presentations, including posters, written documentation, video and website pages.
- Draft a fiction short story for children eight to 10 years old from the viewpoint of a fish, frog, eel or water bird living in a natural environment under

threat of change by human development, such as that presented in *Who Killed Dr Bogle & Mrs Chandler?* As it is for children, you may wish to illustrate it. It could be presented in any form, such as a fairy tale, or even as a comic strip.

Write a 400-word review of a movie that looks at the reasons and/or the consequences of ecological change. Aim your review at subscribers to a newsletter or website devoted to environmental issues. An example may be *The Day After Tomorrow*. (See the website references for a list of other films.)

DOCUMENTARY AND NARRATIVE

Who Killed Dr Bogle & Mrs Chandler? is a documentary film that draws on a variety of techniques to present its story. These include a voice-over narrator, on-camera inteviews, re-enactments of scenes using professional actors delivering dialogue extracted or recalled from public and private sources, close-up shots of authentic newspaper reports of the day, accompanied throughout by soundtrack music and various camera visual effects.

- Discuss in class and take notes on the meaning of the term, denouement, then on how the program's overall narrative is constructed in a similar way to a murder mystery detective investigation. Discuss whether the program features a denouement.
- Discuss the following in groups, then write your own media analysis of the program, looking at specific examples where relevant:
 - The general ways in which the program is different from, and similar to, a fiction story about Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler
 - The wording and presentation of the voice-over narration
 - The mood, style and influence on the audience of the background soundtrack music
 - The purpose of special camera effects during some on-location and re-enactment scenes
 - Whether the program is presented in chronological order or not, and the reasons for this
 - The purposes, strengths and dangers of re-enactment (including the 'home movie' scenes), whether it influences our reactions to the real-life characters being portrayed, and whether the general scene-setting and presentation of the fashions and general 'look' of 1963 seem authentic and fulfil a purpose
 - The purpose and effect on the viewing audience of contemporary 'talking head' interviews inserted at particular points in the program.
- Imagine you are a documentary filmmaker who has unearthed new evidence about a 'cold case' involving an unsolved and mysterious death. You decide to track down someone who has always been suspected by the police of being involved in that death. Write a

series of personal diary extracts about your attempts to find this person, to make contact with them, to visit them and to show them your evidence. As you don't know in advance how the former suspect will react and behave, what are your feelings about the entire situation? Will you be regarded as unwelcome? What will be the outcome?

• Assume that *Who Killed Dr Bogle & Mrs Chandler?* is to be screened on television for the first time in the near future. In pairs, prepare, write a script and present a storyboard promoting the program on TV within a 30-second time-slot. Decide the best way you could advertise the program in order to attract a large viewing audience.

DVD EXTRAS FOR WHO KILLED DR BOGLE & MRS CHANDLER?

Synopses

- *The Investigation* charts filmmaker Peter Butt's discovery of new evidence that led to the film's startling conclusion. (15.5 minutes)
- *Bizarre Theories* provides new information about two extraordinary scenarios, which captured the public's imagination - the assassination theory and the cone fish theory. (6 minutes)
- What Happened To? tells the dramatic story of the chief toxicologist the night he ran out of Bogle and Chandler's tissue samples and the strange and tragic ends met by the couple who hosted the party the night before the couple died. (5.5 minutes)

The Investigation

This segment allows us a behind-the-scenes look at how the documentary filmmaker, Peter Butt, researched the deaths of Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler.

- Discuss in class and write answers to the following:
 - Define what you think are the job description and qualifications of an 'environmental historian'
 - If mangroves had not existed on the Lane Cove River at the time of European colonisation, why did they later appear on the river?
 - What mistaken assumption had film director Peter Butt always believed about the beginnings of the study of environmental science in Australia, and what changed his mind?
 - How did Butt gain 'unprecedented' access to the original police records of the Bogle-Chandler case?
 - What does Butt mean when he says the deaths of Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler were caused by 'misadventure'?
 - Explain the filmmaker's view that the deaths of Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler were 'symbolic'.
- Reversing the filmmaker's reference in the program to the 'dying river', discuss in class the possibilities

for a short story about the relationships between two or more people, such as a husband and wife, lovers, friends, enemies, or children and parents, in which the image of water, as in a lake, a river, or rainfall, may be presented as a metaphor for birth, hope, growth or rejuvenation. Draft, edit and proofread a story of about 500-800 words.

Bizarre Theories

One of the theories advanced in 1963, to explain how Dr Bogle and Mrs Margaret Chandler may have died, related to the murky Cold War politics of the era. Another was attributed to, quite simply, base human nature, the staple of melodramatic crime fiction—the 'eternal triangle'.

- Discuss in class and write answers to the following:
 - Describe British spy Peter Wright's claims about Gilbert Bogle and the reason for his death
 - Why does the filmmaker suggest that if Bogle were, in fact, murdered by MI5 spies, they killed the 'wrong man'?
 - What is the correct Latin name for the deadly cone fish?
 - In what way is the cone fish deadly, and how did the police connect this information to a suspicion that Geoffrey Chandler murdered Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler?
 - Explain why it was too far-fetched that chemicals extracted from a cone fish could kill a human being.
- In small groups, research and produce your own internet web page (or pages) about the purpose, role, activities and history during the Cold War era of the Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO). Include, if possible, information as to how new agents were, and perhaps still are, recruited to the organisation, and the kinds of training they were required to do. You may also wish to include a commentary as to whether ASIO has served a useful and important role in Australian society and politics.
- Research and write a short biography, in desktop publishing format, for a popular magazine aimed at young teenagers, about Peter Wright, British anti-espionage agent. Include details about his book, *Spycatcher*. Remember that because you are writing for a specific target audience you should adapt and edit any information you find, not merely copy it from another source.
- Taking any aspect of Wright's career as a Cold War espionage agent, work in pairs to write the script for a short, dramatised and fictionalised radio play of up to 10 minutes' running time. With other students, rehearse a play reading, re-drafting the script as necessary. You may need to provide for the use of sound effects if the script calls for them. You may also wish to record the play as a computer sound file, editing and re-recording where required, for playback on your school's intranet or on CD.

- On poster paper, draw and label the parts of the cone fish, showing how it may be deadly and dangerous.
- Write an Agatha Christie-style 'eternal triangle' murder mystery involving death by the dreaded cone fish. The plot may also include one or two 'red herrings'.

What Happened to?

Following the deaths of Gilbert Bogle and Margaret Chandler early in 1963, the investigating chief toxicologist Vivian Mahoney spent 15 fruitless months on the case. Ken and Ruth Nash, the couple who hosted the ill-fated new year's eve party, later died in unusual, perhaps even extraordinary circumstances.

- Discuss in class and write answers to the following:
 - Explain the situation that confronted Vivian Mahoney one night in his testing laboratory, 15 months after the deaths of Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler
 - What similarities are there about the dates on which Bogle, Margaret Chandler, Ruth Nash and Ken Nash died?
- Write a set of personal, diary entries as though you were the chief toxicologist in Vivian Mahoney's position, describing your feelings about the case, the events that took place on the road on the way home and the decision to resign. Are all three interrelated in some way?
- As though you were a journalist, write and present in newspaper reporting style, a speculative, fictionalised article about the deaths of Ruth and Ken Nash. Use desktop publishing to create a headline, plus the body of the report formatted into newspaper columns.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER RESOURCES Books and articles:

Sharon Beder, Toxic Fish and Sewer Surfing: How Deceit and Collusion are Destroying Our Great Beaches, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1989

Geoffrey Chandler, *So You Think I Did It?*, Sun Books, Melbourne, 1969

Chronicle of the 20th Century, Chronicle Australia, Ringwood, Victoria, 1990

Derek Heater, The Cold War, Wayland, 1989

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Brian Innes, Bodies of Evidence: The Fascinating World of Forensic Science and How it Helped Solve More Than 100 True Crimes, Reader's Digest, with Amber Books Ltd, London, 2000

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Peter Proctor, 'Cold Case: The Mystery of Margaret Williamson' in *Teaching History*, Journal of the History Teachers' Association of NSW, Volume 39 No 3, September 2005, pp. 73-76 Film/TV:

Media Watch (ABC TV, Monday, 9:20 pm)

Websites:

Australian Institute of Criminology: <u>www.aic.gov.au/</u>

Peter Wright and the Cold War: https:// en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Wright

Bogle and Chandler websites: http://archive.is/nUtY www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A130243b.htm

Cold War:

http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/ Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/ Publications_Archive/CIB/cib0102/02CIB03 http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/digibook/824806/ the-cold-war-1945-1991

Crime Team—reality TV investigation game series: www.channel4.com/science/microsites/C/ crime_team/previous.html

Disaster and science fiction films about ecological change: www.magicdragon.com/UltimateSF/eco.html

How to write a murder mystery:https:// www.haleyproductions.com/blog/how-to-write-amurder-mystery-game/ National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS): https://www.anzpaa.org.au/forensic-science/ forensic-sciences

Science — ecology: http://environment-ecology.com/what-is-ecology/205what-is-ecology.html

Who Killed Dr Bogle & Mrs Chandler?

A Film Australia National Interest Program in association with Blackwattle Films. Produced in association with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Writer/Producer/Director: Peter Butt Producer: Kristine Wyld Executive Producer: Anna Grieve Year: 2006 Duration: 55 mins

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