WHITE-OUT: THEATRE AS AN AGENT OF BORDER PATROL

Denise Varney

*In Australia in 2001, there was a marked escalation of debates about nation, national identity and national borders in tandem with a right-wing turn in national politics. Within the cultural context of debate about national identity, popular theatre became an unwitting ally of neo-conservative forces. Within popular theatre culture, the neo-conservative trend is naturalized as the view of the Anglo-Celtic-European mainstream or core culture that also embraces and depoliticizes feminist debates about home and family. Elizabeth Coleman's 2001 play *This Way Up* assists in the production of an inward-looking turn in the national imaginary and a renewed emphasis on home and family. The performance dramatizes aspects of what we are to understand as ordinary Australian life which might be interpreted as that which Prime Minister John Howard defends in the name of the National Interest. The cultural imaginary that shapes the production of the popular play is that of the conservative white national imaginary.*

It is late August 2001.

'A Norwegian freighter [the *Tampa*] carrying over 400, mainly Afghani, asylum seekers, has been refused entry to Australia and is still anchored 70 kilometres from Christmas Island. The Norwegian captain took the group on board when their vessel was in difficulty. A small party then insisted he sail for Australian waters threatening to take their own lives if he did not. The Federal Government's stance is unprecedented. But John Howard says the fate of the ship and its human cargo must now be decided by Norway and Indonesia, an approach backed by the Federal opposition'.¹

In a political move described by the left as 'opportunistic', Australian Prime Minister John Howard, with an impending Federal election, was getting tough on asylum-seekers and talk-back radio callers approved.² Rather than allowing refugees to enter Australian national territory and request asylum, as had been occurring during the previous twelve months, the Australian Navy was now instructed to enact a new policy preventing boats carrying 'illegal' immigrants from entering Australian waters. Instead, in an elaborate naval maneuver, the asylum-seekers were removed at sea from the *Tampa* and sailed to New

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Guinea and Nauru where they were detained in hastily assembled detention centres, pending due processing of proper application to enter Australia as refugees. The so-called 'Pacific Solution' was an ingenious, and to many, a malicious and calculated strategy that prevented asylum-seekers from setting foot on Australian national territory and with the additional electoral benefit of a government appearing strong and decisive.

The Federal government had already won bipartisan support for the compulsory detention of earlier waves of 'illegal immigrants', including children, in barbed-wire enclosed barracks located in some of the most remote regions of the country. This included the Woomera Detention Centre located in the central Australian desert, the site of what Jennifer Rutherford has called 'the foundational fantasy of *terra nullius*', the land that no man owns or occupies, the mythical no-man's land of the white settler nation.³ At the subsequent election in October 2001, and against opinion polls conducted earlier in the year, the neo-conservative Howard government won a third term in office. Many believed the election was won on the back of the reactionary fear generated by the opportunist right-wing party machine about Middle Eastern asylum-seekers, border patrol and terrorism. Bill Leak's newspaper cartoon satirically captures this view by contrasting the old discourse of a relaxed and comfortable lucky country with the new discourse of fear (Fig. 1). Opinion polls showed a big boost in support for the government following its decision to turn the asylum-seekers away.⁴ The Howard government emphatically denied that these events influenced the outcome of the election.

The leading statement of John Howard's campaign launch – 'We will decide who comes into this country and the circumstances in which they come' – was repeated in newspaper and pamphlet advertisements up until the eve of the election.⁵ To the left, it was at once an aggressive assertion of national sovereignty, a warning about an external threat and an appeal to inclusive national unity. Public intellectuals such as Guy Rundle began to hear echoes of the White Australia immigration policy of the newly federated nation of 1901, that until the 1970s effectively excluded non-European immigrants. In conjunction with practices that rapidly decimated the indigenous Aboriginal population, the White Australia policy engineered a monocultural nation populated by the descendants of mainly British and Irish settlers.

The popular support for the Howard government's refusal to allow the 400 asylum seekers on the *Tampa* to enter Australia, and the subsequent 'Pacific Solution', raised the question of a shift in the national cultural imaginary towards a new self-interest and insularity. Did the aggressive defence of sovereign territory, the presence of detention centres and the simultaneous promotion of Australia's interests point to a return to race-based exclusionary immigration policy underpinned by a reassertion of a British-in-origin national identity?

If, as cultural theorist Suvendrini Perera, observed that 'the *M.V. Tampa* sailed into our national consciousness',⁶ then we might say it 'unloaded' onto local subjectivities with varying degrees of intensity and inflection. As my work is the theatre, particularly women's theatre, I drew the performances I saw in the second half of 2001 into a new hermeneutic circle in which I was troubled by what I had come to see. Perera asked rhetorical questions about the 'public representations and images [that] facilitate our imagination of another, circumscribed Australia. . . [and] what moral and cultural

maps chart the territory this side of the line we have drawn on the water?’⁷ In the theatre, ambiguities and right-wing tendencies began to stand out more acutely than before.

This introduction helps explain my approach to a new theatrical work, *This Way Up* (2001), by popular playwright Elizabeth Coleman, a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) Playwrights Studio.⁸ It appeared as a curiously reactionary play. Coleman’s other plays include the hip *It’s My Party (and I’ll die if I want to)* (La Mama, Melbourne Comedy Festival, 1993 and off-Broadway, New York, 1999), *Sometimes I Wish I Was Jana Wendt* (1988) and the locally successful *Secret Bridesmaid’s Business* (Playbox Theatre, Melbourne 1999), recently screened as a television comedy-drama. In between writing plays that feature the hopes and dreams of young female characters, Coleman is a writer on a number of popular television dramas.

This Way Up matched neither the critical nor the box office success of the earlier *Secret Bridesmaid’s Business* and was programmed for November 2001; no one imagining it would be viewed in a post-*Tampa* and post-11 September Australia. My attention to the production is in a sense out of proportion to its influence. But it was optimistically programmed as a ‘World Première’ following on the successes of the playwright’s earlier works. Its programming by Playbox Theatre Company, one of two publicly funded theatre companies in Melbourne with a large subscription audience and an active education programme marketed to secondary school students, adds weight to its signifying function. The company is notable for its policy of 100 per cent Australian content, most of which is new and supported in development. The company claims its productions make a significant contribution to Australian theatre facilitating thereby an encounter with Homi K. Bhabha’s notion of ‘the nation *as it is written*’.⁹ *This Way Up* as ‘public representation’ seemed to provide verbal and visual images that mapped the cultural imaginary which, by its premiere, already had been mobilized by conservative forces.

In the play’s narrative, Melanie, played by red-haired, Anglo-Celt actor Mandy McElhinney, is leaving her boyfriend of five years, Nick (played by English migrant Stewart Morritt) because as far as she is concerned his work as a foreign journalist means he is never home. She has had enough and, wanting to start a family, hopes to find a more dependable partner and a more ordinary way of life. The play begins with Melanie packing her things in a carton with ‘This Way Up’ printed on the side. Nick, who arrives home from Nigeria to find boxes in his living room, tries to persuade her to stay while Melanie’s sister Kris (Marian Haddrick), who is helping with the packing, tries to interest their friend Damien (Luke Elliot), whose car will do the moving, in romance (Fig. 2).

The action takes place in a suburban living room represented in the production by a naturalistic box set framed by the interior walls of the room, painted a warm, salmon, flesh-pink colour. It is as if the playing area itself is enclosed within white skin. The doors and window frames are white so that the pink and white nostalgically recall a little English girl’s bedroom. A large comfortable couch for staying ‘in’ and watching TV takes centre stage, separating the upstage area with its window to the outside world from the downstage interior of the house, whose light spreads across the stage into the auditorium conjoining audience and actors in a shared dramatic world. Objects provide evidence of the plenitude of home with the *didiscalia* suggesting that ‘nik-naks and personalized touches’ could be included to give the set its ‘sense of warmth and heart’.¹⁰ The chosen objects connote an ethnically and religiously neutralized

modern style. The upstage bay window offers a glimpse of the street outside, reflecting a mirror image of the house in which the action takes place. Between the house and its mirror image is just the suggestion of a white picket fence. The set connotes the interior of the white nation, flesh-pink, spacious, and feminine. It is clean, neat, dust-free and ordered. Nothing is broken. Everything conforms to a homogenous modern style.

The picket fence, the standard trope of middle-class western suburbia, recalls an image by Melbourne *Age* cartoonist, John Spooner, published shortly before the première (Fig. 3). In the cartoon, the Prime Minister is a short-sighted bespectacled garden gnome dwarfed by a barbed-wire fortified white picket fence and defending his home with a garden rake. The cartoon's existence in a major newspaper conjures a new counterfactual background for the production, one that could not have been foreseen by the designers but one that pointed nevertheless to the fluidity of politics and theatrical reception. In the production of *This Way Up*, the white picket fence is an innocent metonym for placid suburbia, but in the public sphere the link between home, homelands and conservative politics had already taken root.

As this description suggests, my analysis focuses on the playtext in performance, that is, its actualization by the creative team and its reception by myself as critical spectator, but with reference to the written text as a mode of remembering. My focus is therefore on the discourse of the *mise en scène* in the way that Patrice Pavis has set out as a 'commentary on the text or the stage rewriting it offers the text'.¹¹ The sign-systems of the performance will be attributed less to the individual intentions of the writer and director and more to the cultural context in which the narrative and its narration are situated.

My reception of the production arises from its apparent complicity, conscious or unconscious, with conservative elements within Australian culture. Themes of home and belonging in the play resonate with the Howard government's stance on questions of national interest, national identity and national borders. While aspects of ordinary daily life appear to be innocent representations in this comedy about relationships, the representational apparatus itself – the naturalist form, the choice of character, the casting, the dialogue, the body-types – is skewed towards one ethnicity, one class, one culture and one theatrical tradition. This surface appearance asserts that ordinary Australians are typically white and their stories constitute a unified national drama. In this the performance follows a long line of Australian theatrical productions from Ray Lawler's *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (Melbourne University Repertory Theatre, 1955) to Joanna Murray Smith's *Rapture* (Playbox Theatre, Melbourne, November 2002) that exclusively feature Anglo-Celtic characters as enactors of the Australian way of life.

Within the narrative of *This Way Up*, as I will show, ordinary life is middle class and pointedly lived by white heterosexual couples whose presumption of ordinariness naturalizes their status as the basic unit of culture and nation. Within the ensemble cast of four, two couples form and split. The closed dramaturgical features of the production – a two-act structure, naturalistic dialogue, static set, attempts at farce – support the conservative politics. The transparent telling of the narrative gives it an easy accessibility and an egalitarian aspect free of the complexity of modernism and the layering of postmodernism, affirming old Australian values along with the nineteenth-century naturalism it reproduces.

My first point is that *This Way Up* is a site for the dissemination of the neo-conservative stream within Australian culture and politics, inflected primarily through the dominant Anglo-Celtic-European mainstream or core culture. This neo-conservatism will also be seen to embrace feminist politics. It is marked by an inward-looking turn in the national imaginary and a renewed emphasis on home and family safely enclosed within the borders of national territory. The production dramatizes aspects of what we are to understand are ordinary Australian life that politically might be interpreted as that which Howard defends in the name of the national interest.

My second point is that the cultural imaginary that shapes the production is akin to Ghassan Hage's concept of the white national imaginary.¹² This imaginary is of the nation as a space structured around a White culture whose members, or those who aspire to be members, imagine themselves as central to the nation. These members perform as the enactors and guardians of Australian law and presume the natural right of an opinion about what the nation ought to be. Imagining what the nation ought to be translates, according to Hage, into a 'White National Will', whether mono or multicultural in its view, that constitutes the 'White Nation Fantasy' – the fantasy of a nation governed by white people.¹³ This view accords with Jon Stratton's critique of multiculturalism for its inadvertent bifurcation of national culture into a 'core culture' with 'peripheral add-ons', where the core culture was Anglo-Celtic and a plurality of ethnic non-British cultures were the separate add-ons.¹⁴ The logic of that binary was that ethnic cultures were tolerated because they allowed 'the traditional Anglo-Celtic culture' to remain unchanged.

Nation as Home – home as nation

There is an irreconcilable tension between the inward-looking Melanie whose emphasis is on home and family ('I don't want to live in a parallel universe like you do') and the international perspective of Nick ('So you won't let me get killed in crossfire, but you're quite happy to watch me die of boredom?')¹⁵ Nick's work as a foreign journalist takes him far away from Melanie and the weddings and birthdays she attends as one half of an incomplete couple. These cyclical events function for the grounded partner as markers of the passing of time in a fixed and regulated world. Within the cultural imaginary of the playtext, the outside 'world' has no such structure. It is othered, dangerous and lacks a regulated civil society. Pointedly Third World or war-torn – Nigeria or Kosovo – these countries are markedly foreign and emphasize the discourse of the Australian home and nation as safe. These referents evoke the analogy of home as nation through an essentialist, potentially fascist view of nation based on family and home.

But as the performance moves through its hour and a half's duration in real time, the home undergoes a deterritorialization. The stage space empties only to fill up with the circulation of inarticulate and disturbing desires. Emptied of the material objects that make the house a home, the characters move with speed but no particular purpose through the emptiness that Melanie has activated. It is as if desire pursues them around the space. As Kris with some truth tells her sister, 'You're in a state of manic denial, Melanie'.¹⁶

In Melanie's crimped imaginary is a home, not formulated in any clear way, but one that is free of the arrivals and departures that presently rupture her world. She says she loves Nick but her need for a stable

home outweighs desire. She wants to 'feel like a couple all of the time',¹⁷ but has no vision beyond that. Within the political context of the production's reception, Melanie represents an inward-looking turn within the cultural imaginary. The reductiveness of this turn is evident as desire is reduced to need, which for Melanie is to have a husband 'who'll take the garbage out on Tuesday nights', 'mow the lawn every Sunday morning' and 'be there to snuggle up to'.¹⁸ In this respect, Melanie presents us with an uncritical image of what Jon Stratton has described in *Race Daze* as 'The Australian Way of Life' represented here as a set of shared values and common cultural practices reminiscent of Prime Minister Howard's references to the 'lively traditions and values that bind us together as a people'.¹⁹ These are the values that were in August 2001 protected from mainly Muslim asylum-seekers on board the *Tampa*.

The feminine at home in the nation

The emergence of conservative feminism would also feed a unified Australian way of life. In Melanie, the conservative feminine position advances no further than the white child-woman, designated 'petite and pretty' by the playwright. The actor's pale skin is softly framed by red-curling hair to present the face of white femininity as childlike, beguiling but drained of robust health and sexual power. Her movements lack direction and purpose. Costumed by Shaun Gurton in a light frock and strappy high heels, the actor's thin body flits about the stage too anxious to evince any sense, a surface without substance. The russet-coloured costume emphasizes the pale white skin and reinforces her social and ethnic status as white. This whiting-out and infantilization of the feminine subject presents a curiously reactionary figuration: an immature and unworldly white woman naturalized as the ordinary Australian feminine subject. After thirty years of feminist rethinking of the female subject, the reactionary conservatism of the cultural imaginary at work in this production seriously compromises its only thinly veiled comedic aspects. This is not just 'end of season light-as-thistledown entertainment' as one critic noted,²⁰ but a reinstatement of the conservative values that recent events had made all too evident.

That the production favours the conservative line is evident in the way that the feminine/home/family is constructed as reasonable and good while the masculine/away/external world is that which threatens it. Melanie connotes a mythic figure – one of those identified by Jennifer Rutherford as 'Good Australians' whose egalitarian, uncomplicated and transparent 'desires find their object in eucalypts and their satisfaction in home'.²¹ Nick seems aware of this mythic goodness admitting apologetically that, 'I need to fly by the seat of my pants. . . I guess I'm just a shameless adrenalin junkie.' He tells Melanie she is 'better' than he is, his remarkability tainted because it disavows the stability and goodness of home.²²

By way of contrast to other works by women playwrights and to further contextualize the conservative line taken by this production, two new plays produced by the same company, Playbox Theatre, offered markedly different treatments of the theme of home and belonging. Dorothy Hewett's *Nowhere* (2001) and Tammy Anderson's *I Don't Wanna Play House* (2002) suggest that those on the margins of the Anglo-Celtic mainstream, by means of race, poverty or disability, are excluded or exclude themselves from ordinary home life as defined in *This Way Up*. In *Nowhere*, the cultural dominance of Anglo-Celts in mainstream culture works by excluding its others. A damaged Vietnam veteran and an old bushman, representing the human detritus of the modern nation, meet a young Aboriginal woman escaping an abusive boyfriend. The three live in spaces rather than homes. Belonging 'nowhere', they reterritorialize

an old tin shed, a broken-down car and a camp-fire, furnishing them with found objects, 'nik naks of home'²³ including an old piano from an abandoned rural school. They are always on the alert, ready to pack up and move on to avoid the intrusion of Health, Aged Care Services and Aboriginal Welfare bodies who want to put them in 'homes'. Tammy Anderson's *I Don't Wanna Play House* (2002) is an autobiographical piece performed by the writer/performer about the sixteen houses she lived in during the first fifteen years of her life. In the narrative, her Aboriginal father is lost to alcohol and her white mother, who vacuums in a bikini, moves the family through a succession of homes filled with danger, violence, sexual abuse, poverty, and just occasionally, a sense of belonging. Anderson's unsafe homes are located far from the orderly streets of mainstream middle-class life in whose interests the nation governs.

These two works highlight *This Way Up*'s selective treatment of the theme of home and belonging at the same time as they offer alternative female subjects. Where critic Helen Thomson wrote that *This Way Up* went 'nowhere by its end',²⁴ Hewett's *Nowhere* had the courage to thematize the lack of action that characterizes a conservative and fearful nation.

White ethnics

The reactionary politics at work in the production are further evidenced in the casting. In the post-World War II period, migration from southern Europe made Italian Australia's second language. With the dismantling of the White Australia policy in the 1970s, migrants from Lebanon, Vietnam, South Asia, Africa and more recently the Middle East outnumbered new British and Irish arrivals. But in *This Way Up* the stage is populated with those whom Ghassan Hage ironically calls white ethnics who 'have been living in their ghettos for too long'.²⁵ While the text gives the characters Anglo names: Melanie, Kris, Damien and Nick, there is scope to cast more ethnically diverse actors. The theatrical sign is after all 'flexible. . . it is possible to substitute a sign belonging to one code for a sign belonging to another'²⁶ – a choice not made by the production. Accordingly, the actors fit the dominant ethnic, age and population group: the 71 per cent of the 18.9 million Australians who are Australia-born, the 79 per cent who speak English as a first language, the 71 per cent who are of British or Irish ancestry and who are the median 35 years of age of the non-indigenous population.²⁷

If Jon Stratton prefers to consider Australian culture 'as polymorphous and rhizomatic', that it takes multiple forms, is fluid in its identifications and 'develops from the ground up and is always, ultimately, out of the control of government and bureaucracy' then this mainstream stage production is rigidly fixated on the monocultural.²⁸ For despite the numerical dominance of those who claim British or Irish ancestry within the contemporary urban multi-ethnic society, the white nation fantasy acts within the production as a mode of exclusion concealing the fact that in the city of Melbourne, the play's setting, there are also some 210 other nationalities (up from 95 in 1981).²⁹

I am suggesting that the cultural imaginary at work in this production whites-out ethnic diversity. It appeals to a white nation beset by the fear that 'you can no longer recognize the street where you spent your childhood. . . That's bad mate. . .' or 'it doesn't smell like Australia anymore around here'.³⁰ This 'discourse of anglo decline'³¹ fears for the Australian way of life and is relieved when Howard refuses to

allow more non-British refugees to settle in the country. Where Stratton speaks of ‘the resistance within the traditional “Anglo-Celtic” culture to any creolized transformation’ through the synthesization of different cultures, this theatre can be understood as a site of that resistance.³²

The female characters, Melanie and her sister Kris, aspire to become the statistically typical Australian, a thirty-five-year-old white married mother with 1.7 children. The point of denial in the play is that in a more localized urban setting, her ethnic dominance cannot be assumed. In fact, Coleman locates her play in a named ethnically diverse Melbourne suburb, Thornbury, a working-class suburb undergoing gentrification. The play works against this demographic in favour of the reinstatement of old Australia, literally through returning it to a pre-World War II Anglo-whiteness, but not its working-classness. I am not suggesting that Coleman is consciously whiting out ethnic diversity, but she is working within the white-nation fantasy. Melanie’s desire ‘I want a family . . . a full-time family’ is set against the realization that ‘life’s short’.³³ The urgency is about more than the ticking of a biological clock, it is shot through with the fear that home/nation is about to change. Nick’s constant travelling brings the external threat into the living room where his Walkley Award stands in for both his absence and the presence of dramatic narratives beyond the border.

The production asks its audience to identify with the aspirations of its female subjects to find stable and reliable white fathers for their children and to be perfectly at home in the nation, safe from external threat. Melanie’s assumption of a non-negotiable claim on Nick’s devoted presence is implicitly bound up with her sense that she is ‘a potential wife and mother of “the white race”’.³⁴ Her anger with Nick is for his rejection of a womb that will mother another white subject. Does Nick not appreciate the fact that there are millions of Middle Eastern immigrants circling the shores in boats? Does he not see the threat to the old British nation?

The performance of the ‘white nation as home’ analogy is given extra currency when a siege breaks out next door. The second act begins as the sun sets on the nation and the fading light gives emphasis to the flashing blue police lights outside Nick and Melanie’s bay window. Just as detention centres commit their crimes in the nation’s interior, the home is not all security and warmth. The next-door neighbour, it transpires, can be just as threatening. In this diminished national space, the border becomes the suburban fence, on the other side of which Scary Narelle is being held at gunpoint by her henpecked husband Frank who has been attacked once too often by his wife with the satay sticks over the back yard barbecue. Suddenly, next door is a trouble spot and significantly, the satay stick, representing the cuisine of neighbouring South East Asia, is involved. A policewoman enters to relate tales of the street being blocked off, of negotiators on their way, of a media cordon, gunshots and bullet-proof vests (Fig. 4).

In the comedy that follows, Nick as the progressive and worldly figure has access to the master discourse and operates in a less dependent and more discursive relation to the state. This access enables him to consult with police and negotiate with a criminal on one telephone while filing a media report on another. Indeed, media analysts were at the forefront of voices that questioned the Howard government’s official line on the *Tampa*. Meanwhile the histrionics of the home-bound white subjects appear both farcical and satiric. The child-like fear of the outside renders them dependent on the discursive power of the worldly subject. At this point, from within the logic of the play’s discourse, there emerges a critique

– strangely and suddenly at odds with the sympathy otherwise accorded Melanie – of the interiority of the Australian vision. Just as the face of white femininity reaffirms the fixity of everyday life in terms of garbage nights and lawn-mowing days, and even as she is aware of her mundane outlook, the fantasy of white nation is shown by the play’s own narrative to be unsustainable. Even the white neighbours are liable to go berserk and bring a touch of warfare to the suburbs. The process of inclusion and exclusion continues as good Australians are protected from bad ones and difference is expelled.³⁵ While Nick embodies the progressive outward-looking force within Australian culture and the seductions of the external world, Melanie’s ordinary Australian values are constructed as the inevitable realization that one is ‘not as remarkable’ as one hoped to be.³⁶ In the end, the limitation of the play’s imaginary world is that Melanie’s banal ordinary Australian values are defended – she is the flawed but well-meaning guardian of Australian law, the ordinary subject of the nation. She is positioned to counter the threat of the more ethnically and ideologically diverse femininities that are thereby understood as a pressure point on the white nation fantasy.

In conclusion, my analysis of *ThisWay Up* arises from a sense of dismay that such a reactionary theatrical work found its way onto the stage of a subsidized theatre company that otherwise promotes socially progressive writers. As a public representation, the production offered verbal and visual images that mapped the cultural imaginary that had, by its première in a post-*Tampa* and post-election Australia, already been mobilized by conservative forces. As to the conservative values that are promoted and humoured, it seems that at the end of the theatre season with Christmas and the Australian summer approaching, the production represented a white ethnic slip. Perhaps, after the cultural diversity of the season as a whole, it was time to create closure with a return to the mainstream core culture about to celebrate its white Christmas.

Notes

¹ Australian Broadcasting Corporation, *Lateline: Late Night News and Current Affairs*, broadcast 27 August 2001, TV Programme Transcript, www.abc.net.au/lateline/s353388.htm downloaded 3 June 2002.

² Guy Rundle, ‘The Opportunist: John Howard and the Triumph of Reaction’. *Quarterly Essay*, 3 (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2001), p. 2.

³ Jennifer Rutherford, *The Gauche Intruder: Freud, Lacan and the White Australian Fantasy* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2000), p. 197.

⁴ Australian Broadcasting Corporation, *7.30 Report*, broadcast 4 September 2001. Transcript, www.abc.net.au/7.30/s357998.htm

⁵ Advertisement published in *The Age*, 9 November 2001, p. 9.

⁶ Suvendrini Perera, ‘A Line in the Sea: The *Tampa*, Boat Stories and the Border’, *Cultural Studies Review*, 8, 1 (May 2002), p. 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁸ Elizabeth Coleman *This Way Up*, first produced by Playbox Theatre at The C.U.B. Malthouse, Melbourne on 21 November 2001. Directed by Catherine Hill, Design by Shaun Gurton, Lighting by Paul Jackson and Sound by David Franzke.

⁹ Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 2.

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- ¹⁰ Elizabeth Coleman, *This Way Up*, p. 1.
- ¹¹ Patrice Pavis, *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*, trans. by Loren Kruger (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 34.
- ¹² Ghassan Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society* (Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press, 1998).
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- ¹⁴ Jon Stratton, *Race Daze: Australia in Identity Crisis*, (Annandale, NSW: Pluto Press, 1998), p. 37.
- ¹⁵ Coleman, *This Way Up*, p. 13.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 96.
- ¹⁹ Jon Stratton, *Race Daze*, p. 73.
- ²⁰ Helen Thomson's review appeared in *The Age*, 23 November 2001, 'Today' section, p. 5.
- ²¹ Jennifer Rutherford, *The Gauche Intruder*, p. 153.
- ²² Coleman, *This Way Up*, p. 96.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ²⁴ Helen Thomson's review.
- ²⁵ Ghassan Hage, *White Nation*, p. 247.
- ²⁶ Anne Ubersfeld, *Reading Theatre*, trans. Frank Collins (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), p. 15.
- ²⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats downloaded 17 June 2002.
- ²⁸ Stratton, *Race Daze*, p. 36.
- ²⁹ *The Sunday Age* 23 June, 2002, p. 10.
- ³⁰ Hage, *White Nation*, pp. 39–41.
- ³¹ *Ibid.* p. 179.
- ³² Stratton, *Race Daze*, p. 35.
- ³³ Coleman, *This Way Up*, p. 20.
- ³⁴ Catriona Elder, 'Staging White Australia: Representations of Race and Sexuality in the North' in Jane Long, Jan Gothard and Helen Brash, eds., *Forging Identities: Bodies, Gender and Feminist History* (Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 1997), p. 29.
- ³⁵ Jennifer Rutherford, *The Gauche Intruder*, p. 7. Rutherford uses the phrase, the Australian good, critically to denote neighbourliness, generosity, a spirit of equality and egalitarianism as practices that the white population enacts to other whites, but not to Others.
- ³⁶ Coleman, *This Way Up*, p. 96.

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