

Go Back To Where You Came From

Episode One

Teacher Notes

- The program begins with newsreel footage of The Christmas Island boat tragedy, and other news reports in a montage showing the danger and hardship of travelling by boat to Australia as an asylum seeker.
- The premise of the show is introduced by the voice over narration (Colin Friels) who explains that this is a social experiment being undertaken by six ordinary Australian volunteers, and will last 25 days as they experience the reverse journey of a refugee travelling to Australia.
- In the preview of what is to come in the upcoming episodes, the experiences are framed in heightened emotions of anger, fear, danger and apprehension.

- The “social experiment” itself begins at an unused defence fortress in Sydney, where the participants discover what they are in for. Dr David Corlett explains that this is a “... social experiment that has never been done before.”

- The participants are introduced, and state their feelings:
 - Raye: anxious and unsure.
 - Adam: unsure, “a little scary.”
 - Raquel: scared.
 - Roderick: Imagining the worst to prepare himself.
 - Gleny: “Bring it on, can’t wait to start.”
 - Darren: Curious, and anxious.
- Participants are stripped of their mobile phones, wallets and passports, providing them with a sense of immediate isolation. Gleny jokes that its is “... harsher than death row.”
- The participant introductions are cut into the first episode at various points. The first to be introduced is Raye.

- **RAYE:** From the Adelaide Hills, lives in what she described as Utopia until the detention centre set up next door. “I could have gone over there with a gun and shot the lot of them.” ... “They don’t have a right.” She is established as the motherly figure, and representative of older rural Australians.

- Participants are split into groups: (Raye, Raquel and Roderick) and (Adam, Darren and Gleny)

- Raye, Raquel and Roderick go to Albury to stay with the Masoudi family from Barundi in Africa.
- Adam, Darren and Gleny go to Liverpool in Sydney to stay with Iraqi refugees.

- The voice over tells the audience that The Iraqi refugees are among 3 million displaced Iraqi's since the beginning of the War on Terror in 2003.
- There is a definite language barrier as Darren tries to talk to the Iraqi men, and his tone is not overly friendly, he seems to immediately be on the attack.
- **DARREN:** From Adelaide, he is a former soldier in the Australian Army. Darren lives with his Thai wife and their two children. He believes that it was only a matter of time before the Christmas Island tragedy happened, and that Australia "Needs to send a tougher signal out ... People who come here by boat without any documentation should be immediately expatriated. Darren is representative of middle aged, middle class, tax paying Australians.
- Wasni and the other Iraqi refugees explain to Darren that the reason for them having no documentation is that people smugglers took them all, and the alternative was that they would have been killed. Wasni also explains the indiscriminate nature of the bomb attacks and deaths in Iraq.
- At the end of their time at the pool, Darren states: "Let's make the most of it." While Adam states that he is "... not satisfied with what he has seen so far.
- **RAQUEL:** A self-confessed, and self-justified racist, unemployed and uneducated from Western Sydney, she states that the Sudanese and "Africans" have taken over her suburb. She justifies her comments by repeating that she is "Australian" and that she just doesn't "like black people. She says: "I guess I am a bit racist ... I just don't like Africans." And "If it was up to me, I would send them back to their country." Raquel represents the lower class Australian. She is also representational of the racist and "bogan" elements of the Australian population.
- In Albury, Raquel states, "I feel a little out of place." When she is taken to the Masoudi house. The camera focuses on Raquel constantly, monitoring her reactions to the experience.
- It is revealed that the Masoudi's came to Australia by plane under a U.N. re-settlement visa agreement. The voice over narrator informs the audience that "just 1% of the world's refugees are resettled by official means by the U.N."
- While Roderick and Raye ask the family lots of questions, Raquel admits to pretending to be nice.
- Raye is incredulous of Maisara's experiences in the camps, and this leads to her first realisation "I had no idea it was so bad. It's not easy for me to hear that." As she makes a personal connection over child loss with Maisara, and demonstrates a willingness to learn more.
- Raquel attempts to be empathetic and states again that she is very nervous.
- Back in Sydney , Darren questions the cultural and religious beliefs of the Iraqi men, particularly in regards to women and their rights. This leads to a brief debate between Gleny and Darren, where Gleny states: "We are allowed to have opinions, it's a free country."

- **GLENY:** Gleny is introduced as a country singer from Newcastle, who is presented as a far left, “hippy” type. She believes that refugees will enhance our society “I think that we have the capacity to take more refugees.”, “I would love to have a refugee come and stay with me, I think detention centres are inhumane.”
- At the pool, Wasni displays his intense fear of the water, and explains his PTSD from the war and the boat journey. Adam and Gleny talk to him about the boat journey and other passengers. Wasni states: “I think it would be a crime to bring the children on the boat.”
- **ADAM:** Adam was born and bred in the Sutherland Shire of Sydney (Cronulla). He is a lifeguard and was working on the day of the 2005 Cronulla Race Riots. While he admits that as Australians we made a spectacle of ourselves on that occasion, he still refers to refugees as criminals and laments that money is being spent on them, rather than our needs.
- In Albury, Roderick goes to university with Bahati, where he is having to start again as all of his qualifications are not recognised in Australia. Bahati explains that in Barundi he was the Vice President of a political party, and describes how 320 people were killed in his party alone.
- **RODERICK:** Roderick is from Brisbane, and a self-confessed “centre-right, government hater.” He says that his biggest fear is being painted on the show as a “giant lefty”. He is the Federal Vice President of The Young Liberals and believes that “We should treat the cause.”
- Bahati explains to Roderick that he can never return to Africa “I’ve got a bad souvenir.”
- Back in Sydney, Adam, Gleny and Darren visit Villawood Detention Centre, where cameras are not allowed inside. When the participants exit a few hours later, Darren states that he will need some time to process the experience, “I will need some time to process.”. Gleny calmly details her experience and talks about the refugee that she spoke to and the hopelessness in his eyes. Adam has a very emotional response “A bit of a reality check for me”. The setting during these parts of filming is coincidentally very dark and stormy.
- In Albury, Maisara discusses her experiences in Africa, and details the use of rape as a weapon in the camps and villages. She says that she never felt peace, and that “Only in Australia, when I come, I never hear the guns.”
- Raquel reaches out to Maisara in an act of empathy, and it is the start of Raquel’s emotional discovery. She says, “You’re a lovely lady, you didn’t deserve what you went through.”
- This revelation is soon contrasted, as when they leave the Masoudi house, Raquel states that “I’m not going to have African friends ... it’s not the way it is.”
- Raye’s beliefs as they leave the Masoudi house are: “These are the real refugees, not the ones who come on a boat.”
- As Gleny leaves the Iraqi refugees she states: “We all have the same desires to have a good life.”

- The participants are taken on a plane to an unknown destination, which turns out to be Darwin. The voice over narration tells the audience that this was the site of the first load of refugees who arrived by boat in the 1970's from Vietnam.
- The participants have their luggage removed from them and are shown the next mode of transport. Raquel states "That looks like a boat that will sink."
- The narrator advises that 25000 asylum seekers have arrived in Australia by boat since 1976, and that represents only 2% of Australia's refugee intake in that time.
- The participants experience physical discovery as they see their living conditions on the boat, including food rations and an inability to move away from one another.
- The boat journey highlights Raquel's unwillingness to discover the experience of a refugee.
- There is emotional discovery on board the boat, as tempers flare, and there is a heightened sense of anger and frustration at being stuck together on the boat.
- Darren says: "I'm out of my comfort zone ... Anything can happen at any time."
- Raye describes the experience to camera by saying, "Emotions all well up inside you, and it's like a bomb waiting to go off."
- The participants experience first-hand physical discovery of the dangers of travelling by boat to Australia in a simulated experience of fire and sinking on the boat. This prompts both the participants and the audience to consider the idea of appearance versus reality.
- Dr Corlett asks Darren if he would consider putting his own children on a boat like that – and he answers a very definite "no". Gleny points out to him that there is often no choice.
- Darren complains to Dr Corlett that he is being emotionally involved without consent due to them being forced to watch it through the media. He is extremely irritated and undergoing an emotional discovery. He states: "You should feel bad, you should feel empathy... (manipulated by) those who are putting it in my face..."
- When Dr Corlett reveals that it was a simulated experience leads to heightened emotions and emotional discovery.
- The participants are kept in the dark about where they are going, "All will be revealed." We are given statistical information about where they are going that is prefaced by voice over narration that "Indonesia has approximately 3000 refugees awaiting processing; Malaysia has 100000 refugees." The next part of the experiment will take the participants to Malaysia.