

## **Eras Journal - Mowbray, J. Abstract**

### **Abstract of Mowbray, J. Examining the Myth of the Pioneer Woman.**

Almost thirty years after Judith Godden looked afresh at the pioneer woman it seems that history, as a discipline, has gone some way towards attending to her call to complicate its treatment of (white) women's early experiences in the Australian colonies.

The myth of the Pioneer Woman, however, remains as pervasive as ever and it remains tacked on, though now rather obliquely, to academic studies of early colonial history. This article examines who exactly the Pioneer Woman of myth is, and where and when she emerges in an Australian 'national consciousness'. In this article I focus on the way in which white women were incorporated into the story of the white Australian nation through the myth in the 1930s during the various State commemorations of white colonisation.

At a time when the recognition of the racism, exploitation, and violence that characterised early white settlers' relations with Indigenous peoples remains contentious, the myth, I conclude, continues to hold contemporary resonance because it, as an origins story, brings together race and land/country in a way that glosses over a colonial history of settler violence and Indigenous dispossession.