**Entry type:** Person
**Entry ID:** AWE1185

# Pilkington, Doris

(1937 - 2014)

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|---|---|
| **Born** | 19370101, Balfour Downs station, near Jigalong Western Australia |
| **Died** | 20140410 |
| **Occupation** | Nurse, Writer |

## Summary

Doris Pilkington is the author of *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*; the story on which Phillip Noyce's celebrated feature film is based.

## Details

Doris Pilkington was born on Balfour Downs station, 60 kilometres northwest of Jigalong in the Pilbara district, Western Australia. Aged four she was forcibly removed with her mother to the Moore River settlement, 115 kilometres north of Perth. Doris attended the settlement school before moving to Perth, where she began training as a nursing aide at the Royal Perth hospital. She later moved to Geraldton and, after raising her children, completed her secondary education. She returned to Perth to study journalism at Curtin University.

During a holiday at Jigalong, Pilkington discovered that her mother, Molly Kelly, was sent from Jigalong to the Moore River settlement at the age of 14, together with her two cousins aged eight and ten. The children escaped and returned to Jigalong by following the 1,000 kilometre long rabbit-proof fence – a journey which took them several months to complete. Inspired by these experiences, Doris wrote a novella, *Caprice: A Stockman's Daughter* (1991), which won the 1990 David Unaipon award. She also wrote *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996), which was later turned into Phillip Noyce's feature film, *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2001).

## Published resources

**Book**
Follow the rabbit-proof fence, Pilkington, Doris (Nugi Garimara), 1996

Caprice: a stockman's daughter, Pilkington, Doris (Nugi Garimara), 1991

**Edited Book**
The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

**Resource**
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

**Newspaper Article**
Shiner of light on stolen generation, Olsen, Christine, 2014

Fearless writer revealed the lives behind the Sorry Day stories of dispossession, 2014

**Author Details**
Leonarda Kovacic and Barbara Lemon

**Created** 20 May 2005
**Last modified** 4 September 2015