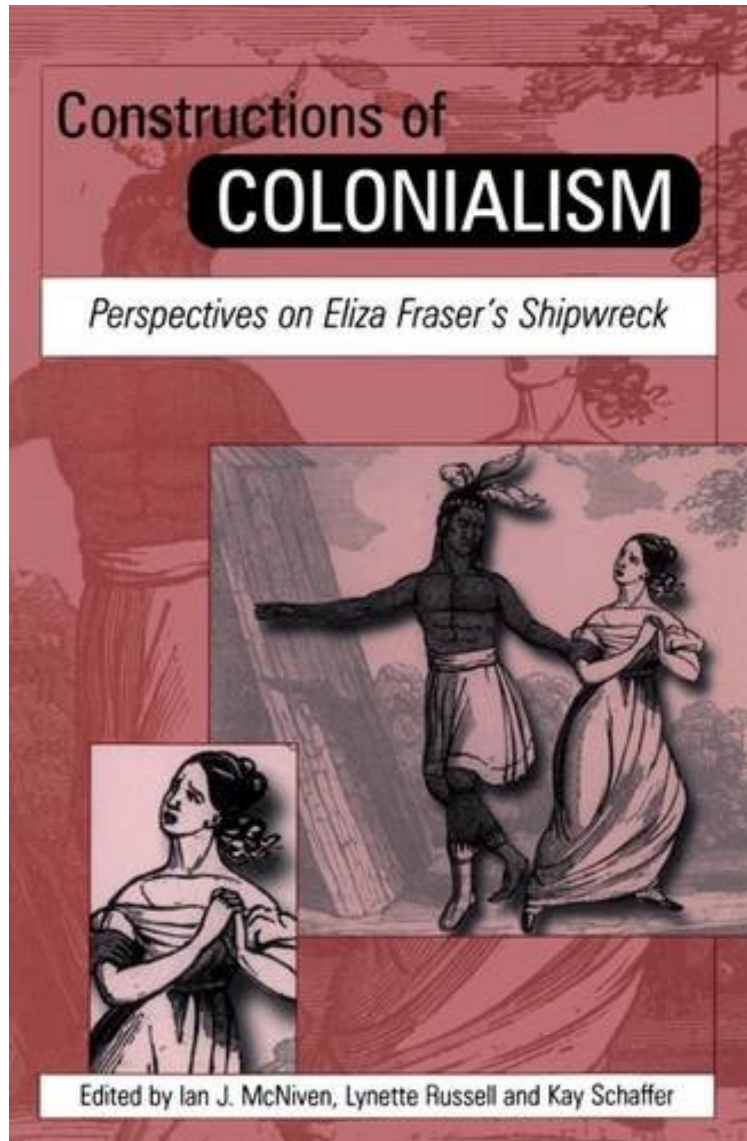


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One of the most famous shipwreck sagas of the 19th century took place on the tropical coast of north-east Australia. In 1836 the *Stirling Castle* was wrecked off the Queensland coast and many of the crew, together with the captain's wife, Eliza Fraser, were marooned on Fraser Island. Early sensationalized accounts represent Mrs Fraser as an innocent white victim of colonialism and her Aboriginal captors as barbarous savages. These "first contact" narratives of the white woman and her Aboriginal "captors" impacted significantly on England and the politics of Empire at an early stage in Australia's colonial history. The text critically examines the Eliza Fraser episode by bringing together an interdisciplinary team of authors, artists, members of the Fraser Island Aboriginal community and academics in the areas of cultural and women's studies, literature, history, anthropology, archaeology, the visual and creative arts. This book Essays include feminist analyses of the incident, investigations of textual and visual representations of Aboriginal people, and considerations of the role played by Eliza Fraser as creative inspiration for the arts. The text explores the constructions of Empire, colonialism, identity, femininity, savagery, otherness, captivity and survival.