

“Woman as Wife, Mother and Home-maker”: Equal Rights International and Australian feminists’ interwar advocacy for mothers’ economic rights¹

James Keating

hemikeating@gmail.com

This is an Accepted Manuscript version of the following article, published in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*:

[“Woman as Wife, Mother and Home-maker”: Equal Rights International and Australian Feminists’ Interwar Advocacy for Mothers’ Economic Rights,](#) *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 47, no. 4 (2022): 957–85.

It is deposited under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

¹ I am grateful to Katie Grant, Kate Laing, Zora Simic, the Australia-Pacific writing group, *Signs*’s reviewers and managing editor, Miranda Outman, and especially Angela Woollacott, for their generous responses to this essay. This project was assisted by the Australian Historical Association/Copyright Agency ECR mentorship scheme and the State Library of New South Wales’ David Scott Mitchell Memorial Fellowship.

“Woman as Wife, Mother and Home-maker”: Equal Rights International and Australian Feminists’ Interwar Advocacy for Mothers’ Economic Rights

On 20 October 1937, the luminaries of British feminism descended on London’s fashionable St. James’s Square to bid farewell to the Australian journalist Linda Littlejohn. Renowned in Sydney as an eloquent broadcaster, she had lived between Britain and Switzerland since 1935, chairing the transnational campaign network Equal Rights International (ERI). Unlike her forebears in the fin-de-siècle diaspora of enfranchised Australasian women eager to exemplify the virtues of their political citizenship in the metropole—Littlejohn, who was chic, multilingual, and, given her radio training, spoke with a received English accent, felt at ease in both London society and the corridors of the Palais Wilson, the Geneva hotel that served as the League of Nations’ headquarters. Beyond complimenting her “vivid personality,” guests at the party—hosted by the British Commonwealth League—singled out Littlejohn’s attention to domestic labor, exemplified by her efforts to popularize a universal system of “incomes for wives,” as the highlight of her career. Pointedly ignoring independent MP Eleanor Rathbone’s long fight for family allowances in Britain, Monica Whately of the equalitarian Six Point Group praised the Australian’s “research into the disabilities of women in the home, whose problem up to the present had not received any attention.” Littlejohn, she continued, was “one of those beacon lights which inspired women to play th[eir] part ... in saving civilization from complete disruption” (*Dawn* 1937).² Whatley might have adopted a millenarian register, but her regard for Littlejohn was not exaggerated. The Australian’s imprimatur can be seen in the “New Deal for Wives,” the manifesto of the British Married Women’s Association (1938–88), whose

² The omission of Rathbone’s ideas must be read against the Six Point Group’s ironclad opposition to gender specific labor legislation and the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC)’s support for protecting women workers under Rathbone’s leadership. So deep were the divisions between equalitarians and protectionists that in 1927 the Six Point Group claimed that Rathbone’s NUSEC was “no longer a feminist body” (in Delap 2020, 111–12).

Anglo-Australian founder, Juanita Frances, credited their friendship for “br[inging] me in to the feminist world” (*Daily Telegraph* (1938,6)).³

Despite such accolades, Emma Linda Palmer Littlejohn (1883–1949)—a habitu   of Sydney’s social pages who transformed herself into “one of Australia’s leading feminists” by way of her radio programmes and column in the phenomenally popular *Women’s Weekly*—is seldom associated with the politics of motherhood (*West Australian* 1931). This is unexpected because, as Marilyn Lake has articulated, Littlejohn contributed to the development of a distinctive, if not exclusively Australian, brand of feminism that rejected the binary between equality and difference and, instead, sought the extension of women’s rights as mothers and workers in the interwar era (1999a, 171–74; 2001). As such, her story sits uneasily within a canon preoccupied with the ERI’s doctrinaire legal equality feminism, encapsulated by its founder, Helen Archdale’s, quest for an international equal rights treaty (Miller 1994; Offen 2000, 353–54; Zimmermann 2012). Yet, as this article demonstrates, attending to Littlejohn’s struggle in Geneva and London to illuminate and then remunerate the labor performed by “woman as wife, mother, and home-maker” broadens our understanding of the ERI as an organization devoted to securing formal legal equality and reveals a lost aspect of Australian feminists’ international influence (ERI 1938). More surprising than her erasure from the ERI’s thin historiography is the elision of Littlejohn and Sydney’s United Associations of Women (UA) from the re-evaluation of ‘feminism’s forgotten fight’ (Swinth 2018): the wages for housework campaigns that fractured Women’s Liberation movements in the 1970s and continue to resonate with those reckoning with the consequences of society’s “devaluation of reproductive labor” (Austin, Capper, and Deutsch 2020). However, beyond allusions to Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s classic, *Women and Economics* ([1898] 1998), scholars have shown little interest in the early history of women’s efforts to count domestic labor in the industrialised north, let alone those made in faraway Sydney.⁴ Nevertheless, as Littlejohn’s

³ Women’s Library, London School of Economics, London (WL), 8 SUF/B/022, Brian Harrison interview with Juanita Frances, November 14, 1974.

⁴ See, e.g., Swinth (2018), Toupin (2018), Stevenson (2019, 95–107), and Lewis (2020, 252–58). An important older example is Hayden (1982).

labors make clear, the question of how to account for domestic work has troubled women's movements across the world, and the political spectrum, for at least a century. Its recurrence across time and space lends weight to Nancy Hewitt's (2012) suggestion that rather than oceanic waves and troughs, the metaphor of radio waves—"competing, simultaneous broadcasts, some loud and clear, others [faint and] disrupted by static"—might better help us hear the connections, ruptures, and miscommunications between feminisms past and present (Delap 2020, 331–32).

Following Susan Zimmermann's call for histories of interwar debates over women's rights that surpass the "juxtaposition of gender equality versus women's difference" (2019, 203), this article extends Lake's analysis of a strand of Australian feminism that insisted on the visibility, dignity, and entitlements of "homeworkers" alongside demanding pay equity for their waged counterparts into the international arena (Lake 1999a). The campaign to undermine the sexual contract at the heart of marriage, and to redefine the institution as a legal partnership in which women were guaranteed their bodily and economic integrity, animated feminists across Australia and New Zealand during the suffrage campaigns which, by the turn of the century, made them the world's "most fully enfranchised" women (Wright 2014, 13; see also Lake 1999b). Beginning with these proposals' circulation in a Tasman world, I trace their contested development in Australia, following working and middle-class activists' competing visions of freedom within marriage. The UA's solution, *Incomes for Wives* (1934), formed part of an assault on the family wage system that made Australia the envy of workingmen the world over and, as such, was never universally popular. However, reflecting the UA's domestic success and the international connections of its well-heeled leaders, Littlejohn and Jessie Street, it soon gained purchase in Europe. Shifting from Sydney to Switzerland, I document Linda Littlejohn's tenure as ERI chair and her unlikely pursuit of the policy through an organization that is still considered the most partisan advocate of equality in interwar Geneva. As one of the few histories to stitch together the ERI's archive—which, reflecting the nationalities of its first two chairs, is divided between London and Canberra—this article offers vital perspective from beyond the interwar women's movement's North Atlantic center, one that explains the group's

evolution from an equalitarian lobby at the League of Nations to an organization that sought, with some success, to globalize the UA's pursuit of mothers' economic rights.⁵

Incomes for wives: An Australasian idea

The project of illuminating domestic labor and then imbuing it with the status of “real” work was integral to white feminists' goal of ensuring the Commonwealth of Australia, a federation of the continent's six self-governing British colonies, would be created “in the interests of women as well as men” (AWCTU 1897, 34). A decade earlier, as women across Australasia fought for the vote, radical voices warned that enfranchisement would not end their subordination. In 1890, the Sydney newspaper *Dawn* published a provocative article by English journalist Maude Meredith lamenting the “humiliation” inherent in the condition of “the average wife.” To mitigate against “wifely beggary,” she envisaged “a law that shall give ... [her] a certain amount of money—proportional to her husband's wages, to be paid to her regularly” (Meredith 1890, 7).

Meredith's plan gained little traction, yet her conviction that economic dependence precluded personal and political freedom was shared by many Australasian suffragists. A few years later, in a riposte to a public lecture on “The Economic Position of Women,” Sydney's Mary Sanger Evans argued that as long as women remained “dependent financially,” they could neither “be fearless” nor “self-respecting or conscientious.” Instead, any “exercise of judgement” was tempered by the threat that their male relatives could summarily “cut off supplies” (Evans 1893, 10; Goldlust 2021). Evans echoed the debate held in Christchurch, where the Canterbury Women's Institute (CWI) began discussing economic dependence amid New Zealand women's final push for the vote. Six years before Charlotte Perkins Gilman's indictment of the inequalities embedded in the marriage contract, often hailed as the first serious attempt by a woman to explain the economic value of domestic work, the institute's

⁵ The bifurcation of the ERI's archive at the moment that Linda Littlejohn replaced Helen Archdale as chair is so complete that historians who have not visited the National Library of Australia in Canberra, where the papers from Littlejohn's tenure ended up, have concluded that the organization disappeared in 1934. See Gottlieb (2015, 24).

members offered a similar prognosis (Davis 2010, 211). Whereas the American sought to abolish “the sexuo-economic relation” and the concomitant state of “servant-motherhood” through women’s participation in public life (Gilman [1898] 1998), the CWI edged toward another solution: formal recognition of the value of household labor.⁶

Addressing the institute’s economics department, Kate Sheppard—New Zealand’s preeminent suffragist—enumerated the obstacles faced by “women who dare[d] to step outside of the ordinary ruts to earn an income” (1892, 6). Inspired not by Gilman but the radical New England preacher Thomas Wentworth Higginson, whose tracts enjoyed wide circulation in Australasia, Sheppard “gather[ed] a mass of information” about all aspects of women’s work before turning her mind to remedies (1892, 6; [1899] 1989, 12–15). Within a few years, the CWI, reflecting the composition of its membership, narrowed its focus to middle-class women, those least able, they believed, to find respectable work or weaponize disgrace against miserly husbands. In 1895, institute member Ada Wells argued that the “Englishman’s castle” needed to be breached to rectify the “anomalous position” that married women occupied as “workers unworthy of hire” (1895, 3–4). Soon after, as white women drew close to winning the New South Wales and Commonwealth suffrage on terms that tacitly or explicitly excluded their Indigenous counterparts, Sydney suffragist Rose Scott also turned her mind to economic rights. In 1901 she argued that “woman did her fair share of work in regulating the household, and therefore ... was entitled to a just wage.”⁷ Three years later, her Women’s Political and Educational League “affirmed the principle of the economic independence of married women” (*Australian Star* 1904). Evans, Sheppard, and Scott concurred: only with economic independence guaranteed within marriage and equal pay outside it could women be assured a form of citizenship that protected their bodily integrity (Lake 1996b).

From the platform afforded by the National Council of Women, an umbrella group for the colony’s women’s organizations, in 1896 the CWI’s leaders articulated their solution:

⁶ Australasian feminists admired Gilman, but *Women and Economics* was seldom cited in their push for economic independence. See Docker (1991, 9–10) and Allen (1994, 127).

⁷ State Library of New South Wales, Sydney (SLNSW), MLMSS3739, National Council of Women (NCW) of New South Wales Minutes 1895–1905, 110–11.

wages for housewives. Over the next three years council members debated “women’s claims for economic equality” and circulated an act “to abolish coverture, and to equalise the economic relations of man and wife” (*Lyttelton Times* 1896, 6).⁸ Yet alongside its leaders’ pacifist opposition to the South African War (1899–1902), the council’s insistence that the state regulate “the sacred function of motherhood” alienated many women’s organizations, let alone an apoplectic press, which fuelled a backlash against women exercising their newfound political power (*Star* 1896). With its membership in decline, the council ceased meeting in 1903, and the campaign for the payment of married women’s work dissipated (Nicholls 1996). Although the notion periodically resurfaced in New Zealand, it was further charged in Australia by a pair of rulings in the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, a uniquely Antipodean institution whose iterations formed the basis of Australasia’s internationally admired “wage earner’s welfare states” (Castles 1985, 102–9). In 1907, the court’s Harvester judgement established the basic wage as one sufficient to sustain “a labourer’s home of about five persons”: man, wife, and children.⁹ Five years later, its author, Henry Bournes Higgins, clarified that as women had no “legal obligation to maintain” dependants, in industries where they did not compete with male workers, they were not entitled to the family wage.¹⁰ Although arbitration afforded women workers industrial protections they would otherwise have lacked, for the next thirty-eight years their basic salary would remain half that of their male counterparts (Frances 2001).

The first step in addressing the gendered precarity enshrined in Higgins’ decisions came in the form of a federal maternity allowance instituted by Andrew Fisher’s Labor government in 1912. Extended to mothers regardless of their marital status, the policy was among the most radical of Australia’s “socialistic experiments” (Lake 2012, 56). And yet, like transpacific settler progressivism writ large, the legislation entrenched existing racial hierarchies. Although

⁸ Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, MS-Group-0225, 91-176-22/8, NCW of New Zealand Register of Resolutions 1896–1990.

⁹ The Harvester judgment was so called after the Sunshine Harvester Works—a large agricultural machinery factory—which was selected as a test case in the court’s arbitration of a wage dispute in the sector. See Lack and Fahey (2008).

¹⁰ Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, *Ex parte H.V. McKay* (2 CAR 1), 1907; *The Rural Workers Union and the South Australian United Labourers’ Union v. The Employers* (6 CAR 61), 1912.

some feminists denounced the policy's restriction to white mothers, the exclusion situated it within the endeavor to forge "White Australia," a nation of healthy settler citizens, at the same time as state and federal governments racialized access to such benefits and framed Indigenous families as dysgenic to justify the practice of child removal (Haebich 2000, 131–207; Swain, Grimshaw, and Warne 2009; Lake 2019, 175–79). Fixed at £5 per "viable" birth, twice the weekly family wage, white women of all classes embraced the allowance. In 1914–15, almost every registered new mother (140,000 women), claimed the federal government's largesse (Lake 2012, 55; ABS 2019). Such rapid uptake indicates that the value of women's labor had become a subject of perennial discussion in feminist circles. Although activists like Evans and Wells imagined women's agricultural collectives as the truest form of independence—a utopian solution that was contemporaneously discussed by groups like the German Bund für Mutterschutz (Society for the Protection of Motherhood)—both believed "a wife's home duties [were] as fairly entitled to command monetary recompense as the husband's duties in field or office, and that doing those faithfully she is no pensioner on the husband's bounty, but a self-supporting woman" (Wells 1895, 3–4; see also Allen 1991, 180–81; Goldlust 2021).

Encouraged by the maternity allowance, Labor-aligned women sought to remedy their disadvantage in the market by seeking a child pension while simultaneously demanding pay equality. Their efforts constituted part of a bargain that Lake has described, whereby white women used the rhetoric of rights as they sought the unabrogated benefits of citizenship—defined as the right to individuality and inviolability—in return for their "maternal service" to the nation (1992, 1996a). In the realm of marriage, feminists' insistence that the institution was not a romantic partnership, but a legal one in which the state needed to guarantee women's economic rights, reflected a revolution in patterns of work. Since the late nineteenth century, the proportion of the workforce employed in domestic service had plummeted. Although servants' wages rose from the 1860s, women fled household drudgery for the relative freedom of shop and factory work (Kingston 1975, 29–73; Ryan and Conlon [1975] 1989, 30–49). In cities, the shift was dramatic. Between 1881 and 1911, the number of female servants in Sydney and Melbourne halved, a rate that less industrialised Adelaide almost matched (Jones 1986, 62–65, 184; Higman 2002, 26–32). This exodus was restricted to single women. In 1911, 10

percent of women in formal employment were married, a figure that would not rise significantly until the Second World War (Forsyth 2019).

Fewer servants meant that urban households increasingly relied on familial labor. This much seemed clear to the peripatetic Californian reformer Jessie Ackermann. Drawing an implicit comparison with the United States, where native-born white servants were replaced first by European migrants and later by African American women, after a year in Australia she observed: “This is a situation which cannot be overcome by possession of money. It revolves around the real lack of domestic help. The entire supervision of the home ... devolves upon the mother” (Ackermann 1913, 86; May 2012, 285–86). As in the United States, one response to these shortages came in the colonies’ “apprenticeship” schemes, which since the 1880s had forced thousands of Aboriginal girls to live with settler families, rendering the home a site of state discipline and governance for mistresses and servants alike. Yet, in both countries Indigenous women constituted a fraction of the domestic workforce (Jacobs 2009; Haskins 2019). For most women, who lacked “help,” housewifery had become a demanding occupation, whose labor, Australia’s 1920 Royal Commission on the Basic Wage conceded, was essential for the well-being of middle- and working-class families and, as a corollary, the state itself (Reiger 1985, 56–82). As the commission’s chair, Albert Piddington, argued in a tract adopted by reformers across Australasia, any “living wage” needed to reward “the mother who rears children for ... the State”. Like all workers, she deserved “the only wage she ever asks ... enough to enable her as society’s trustee for nurture and education to discharge the duties of her trust” (1921, 29–30; Nolan 2000, 157).

A conservative version of Piddington’s scheme came close to fruition in 1921, when Edith Cowan, Australia’s first female parliamentarian, tabled amendments to Western Australia’s Industrial Arbitration Act. Under her proposal, wives would be classified as “household workers,” which entitled them to union representation and to have their duties and wages determined by the state’s Court of Arbitration. By then, fissures had opened between feminists who rejected the constraints of the party system and women in the labor movement. While Cowan’s Nationalist party colleagues resisted her attempt to upend “home life,” the

Labor Party resented the threat to working men's wages.¹¹ Lizzie Wallace, president of the Labor Women's Central Organising Committee, articulated the resentment working-class women felt at wealthy women's intercession in the debate when she derided Cowan's vision of marriage as an employment contract (*West Australian* 1921). In a rare exception to the parochialism that characterised the Australian press, Cowan's efforts invigorated letterists on the distant east coast, who contested the nature of women's domestic duties, debating whether these required anything greater than "emotional payment" (Traikovski 2003). As Alessandra Gissi (2018) has observed of the contest over housewives' wages in twentieth-century Italy, campaigns to make domestic labor legible appealed across the political spectrum. In the 1920s, Australian advocates of the housewife's wage ranged from socialists Nellie Rickie and Muriel Heagney who saw it as a community obligation—part of a suite of state transfers that would remedy inequities in the wage system—to those who hoped for happier and more productive homes (Lake 1999a, 98–102; Traikovski 2003).

The question of remunerating married women for their labor reached a national audience during the Royal Commission on Child Endowment. Influenced by a coalition of frugal employers hoping the state would introduce wage supplements and by feminists who sought to reallocate the family wage, in 1925 conservative Prime Minister Stanley Bruce declared that a child endowment policy was "vital" to Australia's future (*Australian Worker* 1926). Between 1927 and 1928, five commissioners traversed the country, examining academics, employers, trade unionists, and feminists (RCCE 1929a; Lake 1992, 17–18). Among the witnesses were Linda Littlejohn and Jessie Street, by then the leading lights of Sydney's feminist movement. In short order, the pair would revolutionise the city's Feminist Club, transforming it from a *recherché* salon into the United Associations of Women (1929–ca.1970), an umbrella organization which united middle-class feminists with working women's associations (Griffith 1988). Within a few years, they would count themselves among the foremost Australian advocates of wages for wives. Nevertheless, unlike several witnesses before the commission, including Heagney, the conservative Queensland politician Irene

¹¹ Western Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, November 16, 1921, 1730–31

Longman, and the consumerist Housewives' Association of New South Wales (HANSW), neither Littlejohn nor Street proposed a system of payments to "wi[ves] for services rendered to the State" (RCCE 1929b, 6–8, 130–31, 1136; Smart 2010). Indeed, under cross-examination Littlejohn articulated a gradualist solution: the reduction of the "bachelor's" wage, with the family wage reserved for "a man and wife" (RCCE 1929b, 876). Her proposal was echoed by the commission's dissenting report, written by National Council of Women president Mildred Muscio and future Labor Prime Minister John Curtin. The pair advocated child endowment as "a means of justice for ... families," but spurned any idea that would erode the 'organic' social unit—"man, wife, and children"—by creating "contracts ... with wives and children in their individual right, apart from the husband and father" (RCCE 1929a, 103, 112–14). The suggestion, raised by HANSW president Mary Gemmell Perry, that any payment be extended to all children, regardless of ethnicity, was ignored (RCCE 1929b, 132–33).

Buoyed up by the United Associations' rise to prominence, in the 1930s Littlejohn and Street returned to the question of domestic work with renewed vigor. In the intervening years, the association's belief in the efficacy of publicizing feminist ideas in mass media had transformed the pair into household names (Baker 2017, 296–98). Belying Street's reputation as a mediocre "theoretician," the General Social Insurance Scheme she launched in 1932 was a sophisticated policy proposal (Radi 1990, 12). Six years earlier in neighboring New Zealand, a campaign by trade unions and women's organizations had culminated in the passage of a world-leading family allowance scheme, provided to married Māori and Pākehā (white settler) mothers alike (Nolan 2000, 148–60). However, reflecting the diminution of trans-Tasman ties between activist organizations in the decades after Australian Federation, the scheme played little part in Street's thought (Keating 2020, 7). Instead, Street canvassed experts "about developments in ... social insurance" during her 1930 tour of Europe and North America. In Geneva, she addressed Open Door International for the Economic Emancipation of the Woman Worker (ODI) on the "iniquity of the Australian basic wage" and scoured the League of Nations' library, comparing "schemes for Social Insurance in operation among the Member Nations" (Street 1966, 103–6). In Sydney, she drafted her welfare program, designed to extend Australia's "socialistic legislation." The plan amalgamated existing old-age and disability

pensions, and introduced child and marriage endowments, accident compensation, and unemployment benefits (Bray 2018, 187–89).¹² As she had intimated since the Royal Commission, the scheme was a veiled assault on the Harvester judgement. Unlike Labor Party women, who had to negotiate trade unionists’ suspicions about bourgeois feminism and working-men’s prickliness over their wages, Street’s nonalignment freed her from any obligation to triangulate (RCCE 1929b, 908). Thus, the extension of state aid to “women with small children,” whom she deemed “the most helpless class in the community,” would be funded by abandoning the “fiction” that single men required a family wage.¹³ If implemented, the idea—which borrowed from Cowan’s articulation of a system based on what she termed “Swedish law” during and after the 1928 commission hearings—would reverse the gendered inequalities enshrined in Higgins’ rulings (*West Australian* 1928; RCCE 1929a, 433–34).

Notwithstanding Street’s labors, her social insurance scheme was dismissed by a parliamentary select committee who, as she later reflected, were incapable of recognizing the work of a “visionary” (Street 1966, 112). Their efforts at grand reform thwarted, the UA instead carved Street’s proposal into a series of pamphlets designed to educate the public about “feminist matters.” Among these was the 1934 manifesto *Incomes for Wives*. Soon after, the UA amended its constitution to include the aim of “secur[ing] economic independence for married women.”¹⁴ Announcing the policy, Street argued that the “woman in the home has had little done for her” since the Married Women’s Property Acts of the previous century. To make them “a partner in the home rather than a chattel,” she continued, wives required payment for their labor (*Recorder* 1936, 4). Opposing suggestions that women needed only to ask their husbands for money, the UA repudiated “individual tactics” in favor of structural reform. “If wages for wives were a matter of legislation,” Street clarified, “every husband would hand over cheerfully the wife’s fair share” (*Woman* 1935, 10). Accordingly, she sought the extension of the state’s family maintenance provision to allow women to seek a court-ordered allowance if

¹² National Archives of Australia, Canberra (NAA), A1, 1934/216, Jessie Street, General Social Insurance Scheme (GSIS), 1934.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ SLNSW, MLMSS2160, ADD-ON1317, UA, Annual Report, 1934, 3.

their husbands refused to provide one (*Recorder* 1936).¹⁵ As a rule, Street and Littlejohn prioritized freedom, in the form of economic independence, above equality as the “foundation of human liberty.” Just as the UA sought the freedom for women, “married or single,” to earn an equal wage, they sought pathways to economic independence for “the majority of married women with children who work in their own homes” (Lake 1999a, 89).¹⁶

“I am also against ‘motherhood’ ... coming into our society”: *Incomes for Wives in Geneva*

Equal Rights International was at a crossroads in September 1934 when Linda Littlejohn was elected as its second chair. Established in 1930 by British ex-suffragettes, the ERI styled itself against “old-fashioned” organizations like the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship (IAW) and the International Council of Women (ICW).¹⁷ Whereas the post-war ICW expanded the scope of its demands to match its diversifying membership, the ERI was envisaged as a “compact” single-issue organization. Guided by its founders’ belief that the League of Nations was the best mechanism “through which justice can be done to women, completely and for all time,” the group devoted itself to lobbying for an international equal rights treaty, which would commit signatories to remove distinctions of gender from domestic legislation (Brittain 1930).¹⁸ Unlike the ICW and IAW, the ERI was not intended as a “well-officered, well-disciplined army of reformers,” nor would it define itself with showpiece conventions. Instead, the group would be a vanguard, led by a chair “armed with dictatorial powers.” Such a structure suited an international theatre that its leader, Helen Archdale—a veteran of the militant Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU)—viewed as “an ideal battle ground for a guerrilla force.” Rather than cultivate a “huge democratically

¹⁵ Until the passage of the Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act 1959, there was no uniform national standard for marriage and divorce but different regulations in each state.

¹⁶ National Library of Australia, Canberra (NLA), MS2683/3/831-4, Jessie Street, ‘The right of married women to economic independence’, September 10, 1936.

¹⁷ WL, 5ERI/1/A/06, Lily van der Schalk-Schuster to Helen Archdale, July 21, 1930.

¹⁸ WL, 5ERI/1/B/05, Equal Rights International (ERI), Minutes of Meeting, September 28, 1930; SLNSW, MLMSS9091/2/2, CY4624, Helen Archdale, ‘An interfering female’, typescript, 1948.

enlisted membership,” the ERI devoted its energies to canvassing support for the Treaty among the statesmen who thronged to Geneva.¹⁹

The belief that “feminist problems” could be resolved with “international machinery” predated the ERI (Brittain 1929, 6). British journalist Vera Brittain located the IAW’s 1926 Paris congress as the birthplace of the Equal Rights Treaty. Invigorated by her exchanges with the Six Point Group, Brittain argues (1929), Doris Stevens of the National Woman’s Party (NWP) transported the idea to the United States, where her colleague, Alice Paul, devised an agreement modelled on her Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the constitution. Yet as Katherine M. Marino (2019, 6–12, 40–42) demonstrates, a parallel treaty discourse emerged at that year’s Inter-American Congress of Women. There, Indigenous Panamanian lawyer Clara Gonzáles proposed a “stunning innovation”: a covenant that would commit signatories to grant women equal civil and political rights. These visions intersected at the Havana Pan-American conference of 1928. Then, Stevens unveiled the first international treaty devised by women on behalf of womankind. Cloaking her proposal in anti-imperialist rhetoric, Stevens—who boasted that “international feminism was born” from her intervention—secured Latin American support for the treaty (1928, 354). New associations emerged to pursue this project. The NWP advanced its agenda through the Inter-American Commission of Women and persuaded four Latin American states to sign the treaty in 1933. However, the Party’s domestic agenda came into conflict with its international vision. In 1926, its bid to join the IAW was rejected by European members who believed the group’s commitment to legal equality—exemplified by their contentious pursuit of the ERA—would jeopardize the “woman-specific” industrial protections that labor-aligned feminist had won in their respective national jurisdictions (Offen 2000, 350–55; Cobble, Gordon, and Henry 2014, 26–38; see Wikander, Kessler-Harris, and Lewis 1995). The incident not only revealed the depths of hostility between equalitarians and pragmatists, and profound disagreements about the goals of liberal feminist internationalism, but prompted the creation of new international forums. Unable to work through existing channels, those campaigning for absolute equality founded the ODI and its

¹⁹ SLNSW, MLMSS9091/2/2, CY4624, Archdale, ‘An interfering female’, 1948.

sister organization, the ERI, to shepherd the campaign for equal rights through the International Labour Organization (ILO) and League of Nations in Geneva.

The ERI reached Australia via another NWP member, Ruth Vandeer Litt, in 1930. Stopping in Sydney on a round-the-world trip, she arranged an invitation to a UA meeting. Following the ERI's policy of recruiting sympathetic activists in new territories, Litt reported her "discovery" of three "splendid women" (Littlejohn, Street, and the Jewish feminist Ruby Rich). Wealthy, fashionable and, in Lett's estimation, progressive, the trio not only dominated Sydney's feminist scene, but had international organizing experience through the association's affiliation to the Australian Federation of Women Voters (AFWV).²⁰ In common with politically active women across the world, and despite the unevenness of opportunity in Geneva, they were enthusiastic about the League, whose covenant opened all positions associated with its work "equally to men and women" (Miller 1928, 685). It grew in significance for Australian feminists from 1922 when, after lobbying from women's organizations, the Commonwealth government agreed to appoint a woman as a nonvoting member of its annual delegation to Geneva (Sluga 2017, 68–74). Notably, all three women helped found Racial Hygiene Association of New South Wales (later Family Planning Australia) in 1926. The organization's concern with improving the physical and mental health of white settlers through marriage counselling, sex education, the eradication of venereal diseases, and, chillingly, the voluntary sterilization of the "feeble-minded," was characteristic of contemporary feminism across the industrialized world, though never central to Littlejohn's politics.²¹ Nevertheless, the group's primary concern with white women's welfare left an imprint on Littlejohn who, unlike her cofounders and women like the teacher turned Aboriginal rights activist Mary Montgomery Bennett, would not use international women's conferences to decry racial injustice on behalf of Aboriginal people.²²

²⁰ WL, 5ERI/2/13, Ruth Vandeer Litt to Archdale, April 28, 1930.

²¹ Though Littlejohn remained a member of the Racial Hygiene Association until 1934, when she left Sydney, she was an infrequent presence at meetings and seldom spoke on the subject in public. See SLNSW, MSS3838/1/1–7, Racial Hygiene Association of New South Wales Minute Books, May 1926–July 1933 and, for a rare exception to this, *Weekly Times* (1934). See also Klausen and Bashford (2010).

²² See Moreton-Robinson (2000, 95–103), Paisley (2000), Carey (2009), and Rees (2012).

Eager to establish “a good connection in Australia,” Archdale met Street in London that year and enlisted her as a vice-chair (*Equal Rights* 1930).²³ Littlejohn followed in Street’s footsteps, spending 1931 at a series of international meetings, including the ODI’s Stockholm conference. In Geneva, she joined the ERI council and accompanied its delegation to the Women’s Consultative Committee on Nationality, an advisory body established by the League of Nations to develop a framework for determining women’s citizenship upon marriage to foreign nationals (*Dawn* 1931).²⁴

Archdale’s ERI was defined by two struggles: the pursuit of an equal rights treaty through the League, and her internal battle to keep the group focused solely on the treaty and thus prevent it from becoming “another organisation [like the IAW and ICW] with multiple aims.” Beyond her refusal to alter the group’s vision, Archdale’s self-admitted “dictatorial” tendencies, perhaps acquired during her time with the WSPU, proved a source of tension.²⁵ Much has been written about the WSPU’s leadership, especially work challenging the “masculinist” notion that the suffragists were in thrall to Christabel and Emmeline Pankhurst. However, Archdale’s disdain for compromise and the “hampering possibilities” of democratic organization were hallmarks of the Pankhursts, with whom she was close. Certainly, they cast a shadow over the ERI. In 1932, for example, Archdale apologized for a hiatus in her international work, explaining that “we have been very much occupied this week with our Annual celebrations in memory of Mrs Pankhurst.”²⁶

From her lakeside apartment, which to some members’ chagrin, doubled as the group’s headquarters, Archdale issued reams of correspondence explaining their parlous finances and excoriating those who deviated from the official position on the Equal Rights Treaty.²⁷ As she counselled her former WSPU comrade Dorothy Evans in 1932, “we must all be loyal to the

²³ SLNSW, MLMSS2160, ADD-ON427, UA Executive and Council Minutes, 25 April 1930; WL, 5ERI/2/13, Litt to Archdale, April 28, 1930.

²⁴ WL, 5ERI/1/A/10, Linda Littlejohn to Winifred Mayo, August 28, 1931.

²⁵ SLNSW, MLMSS9091/2/2, CY4624, Archdale, ‘An interfering female’; WL, 5ERI/1/A/04, Margaret Whittemore to Archdale, April 25, 1932.

²⁶ WL, 5ERI/1/A/05, Archdale to Maguerite Volinsky, July 17, 1932; Purvis (1996). On Archdale’s connections with the Pankhursts, see Purvis (2002, 167–69, 191, 213, 225–26, 232–33).

²⁷ SLNSW, MLMSS9091/2/2, CY4624, Archdale, “An interfering female;” WL, 5ERI/1/A/05, Archdale to Whittemore, January 1 and 7, 1932; 5ERI/1/A/05, Volinsky to Mayo, May 12, 1932.

policy ... any member who does not agree with [it] must not represent the E.R.I.”²⁸ Archdale would recall her time in Switzerland fondly, but by 1934 she was so exhausted by the group’s bruising culture that she sought “a complete severance from feminism.”²⁹ In plotting her succession, she sought to quell rumors that the ERI was “not a proper ... international society,” but a British clique and, paradoxically, to keep it out of Alice Paul’s hands. Though Archdale deemed Paul a fellow “left wing feminist,” like many she suspected that the American saw the organization as an instrument she could “turn to work on any point where she feels pressure is needed” (in Rupp 1997, 148–49).³⁰ From Sydney, Littlejohn had become Archdale’s confidante, untainted by the recriminations in Geneva. In 1934 she accepted Archdale’s offer to replace Street as vice president. Beyond their friendship, the Australian understood the ERI’s methods; had connections in Britain and Europe; and, unlike many of her counterparts, spoke the League’s languages, French and English, fluently.³¹ Thus, when Littlejohn confided that she planned an “indefinite” return to Europe, Archdale seized the opportunity and ensured the Australian’s election as her replacement that September. The decision was motivated by the irrevocable breakdown of her marriage, though Littlejohn, displaying her customary reserve, did not reveal as much to the Scot.³²

Littlejohn arrived in Switzerland determined to stamp her mark on the ERI. In 1931 she balked at the organization’s ad hoc methods. Recounting her experience at the WCCN, Littlejohn complained that Evans had unilaterally endorsed the committee’s cautious recommendations on behalf of the organization. Unwilling, as she put it, to “air ‘feminist’ linen in public especially in Geneva,” Littlejohn bit her tongue. Privately, she fumed at the betrayal: “I have never met such lies & underhand methods as employed by all on the W.C.C.N.” In

²⁸ WL, 5ERI/2/13, Archdale to Dorothy Evans, August 21, 1932.

²⁹ SLNSW, MLMSS9091/2/2, CY4624, Archdale, ‘An interfering female’.

³⁰ WL, 5ERI/1/A/06, Archdale to Flora Drummond, May 11 and June 20, 1932; Archdale to Alice Paul, April 1, 1931.

³¹ SLNSW, MLMSS9091/2/2, CY4624, Archdale, ‘An interfering female’; WL, 5ERI/1/A/06, Littlejohn to Archdale, May 27, 1934.

³² WL, 5ERI/1/A/06, Littlejohn to Archdale, May 27, 1934; New South Wales State Archives, Sydney, Divorce Case Papers, Series 13495, 742/1940, Emma Linda Palmer Littlejohn—Albert Littlejohn; NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of AGM, September 9, 1934.

future, she warned, “I shall act accordingly!”³³ Yet, the lesson Littlejohn took from Geneva was not deception. Instead, the change in mood within the ERI was attributable to personality. Unlike Archdale, Littlejohn was a born diplomat. The bonhomie that characterises her correspondence contrasts with the recriminations that litter her predecessor’s. Amid a period of dwindling membership for international women’s organizations as the world slid from depression to disaster, the success of Littlejohn’s approach is clear from the ERI’s growth outside the English-speaking world to new affiliates in France, Poland, and Austria (Sandell 2015, 81–83).³⁴

Alongside her adroit political management, Littlejohn grasped that the lack of consensus among women’s organizations, let alone states, meant that the Equal Rights Treaty remained a distant prospect. Whatever she had promised Archdale, Littlejohn arrived in Geneva with plans to expand the ERI’s agenda. Far from acting alone, she disseminated the ideas about mothers’ economic rights incubated in Australia. Street tested the waters in 1932, explaining the UA’s approach to Archdale, only to be cautioned that “special treatment” of any kind “hampers the attainment of our ultimate aim ... real equality.”³⁵ Nevertheless, they persisted. Although her four children had reached adulthood, Littlejohn’s separation perhaps reminded her of the invidious circumstances faced by women outside of her own professional class. In 1934, she sent *Incomes for Wives* to Geneva. For Archdale, who held that “equality, to be of real value, must be complete,” the tract proved alarming (1928, 52). Yet while she and her ally, the Swedish pacifist Anna Nilsson, fretted over the prospect of “‘motherhood’ ... coming into our society,” the spectre of Paul’s leadership overrode their reservations.³⁶ Nevertheless, as they suspected, the parcel foreshadowed Littlejohn’s ambition to end the ERI’s preoccupation with an equal rights treaty and, as importantly, equalitarians’ conviction in the inherent dangers of sex-based legislation. At her first meeting as chair, she established a

³³ NLA, MS2004/8/19/1269, Littlejohn to Bessie Rischbieth, August 9, 1931.

³⁴ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of Council Meeting, February 15, 1937; ERI, Minutes of AGM, September 13, 1937.

³⁵ WL, 5ERI/1/A/08, Archdale to Street, May 1, 1932.

³⁶ WL, 5ERI/1/A/08, Alice Hart to Archdale, May 24, 1934; 5ERI/1/A/06, Archdale to Anna Nilsson, July 4 and 10, 1934, August 9, 1934.

committee to rewrite the constitution, which, at her behest, extended the group's objectives to include working for all "international agreements which embody the principle of gender equality."³⁷

Littlejohn's reforms can be read as both an ambitious attempt to internationalise the UA's agenda and a pragmatic response to the League Assembly's 1935 request that governments and international organizations study the civil and political status of women (League of Nations 1935). Pressure for what would become the status of women inquiry came from the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations. Mirroring splits in women's movements across the industrialized world, the Geneva-based working party favored "social justice feminism" (Cobble, Gordon, and Henry 2014, 18–32) and worried that equalitarians' insistence on an equal rights treaty prioritized political purity above using "woman-specific" laws to ameliorate working conditions (Miller 1994, 232–35). Convinced that a gradual process was their best chance of improving women's lives, and building on the momentum generated by its Sydney conference on "the Legal Status of Husbands and Wives," the UA instructed the ERI to ask governments to develop a "system whereby women who work in their own homes should receive payment in money for their labour" (*Harmony* 1935, 26). At Littlejohn's behest, the ERI approved an identical resolution at its 1936 annual meeting.³⁸ Aware that Northern Hemisphere feminists, not least those among the ERI's membership, remained divided over policies conferring special legal status upon women, Littlejohn assuaged audiences that beyond the recognition of married women's domestic labor, she sought "no separate rights for men and for women" (St. Claire 1936, 33). Her proposal was carried unanimously; perhaps reflecting Littlejohn's persuasive powers but, more likely, that in Archdale's absence members had begun to resile from her pugnacious equalitarianism.

With the council's support, Littlejohn mobilised the ERI behind the League Assembly's call for detailed information on women's rights. In 1936, she circulated a questionnaire on the legal position "of woman as wife, mother, and home-maker" to women's organizations across

³⁷ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of AGM, September 9, 1935; ERI, Draft Constitution, 1936; ERI, Minutes of AGM, September 21, 1936.

³⁸ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of AGM, September 21, 1936.

the world. The responses would provide a picture of the homemaker, to be disseminated within the League and the ILO, which had lobbied to ensure that any convention prepared by the League would respect the Office's prerogative over labor law (Zimmermann 2019, 208–09). The subsequent exclusion of working conditions from the inquiry was galling both for those committed to absolute equality and women like Littlejohn, whose concerns fell between the home and the workplace. Commenting on the inquiry, she wondered how the two could “be divided? Surely in civil lies the right to work and in economic the right to payment for that work” (Littlejohn 1938a). Nevertheless, her investigation bespoke a faith among internationally minded feminists that they could collate data sufficient to create a global picture of gender-based disadvantage. Confronting world leaders with “objective” facts, they believed, was a necessary precursor to reform (League of Nations 1937, 47; Ludi 2019, 13–14). Justifying her focus on the home, rather than “women in the Professions and Industry ... as so many organisations are concentrating on,” Littlejohn argued from necessity.³⁹ The survey responses confirmed her suspicion that women's “economic security as wife, mother, and homemaker had received practically no legislative support whatsoever and her position is left entirely to chance.”⁴⁰ In any case, she stressed that improving the status of housewives would not jeopardize wage equality. Echoing the “new feminism” of the British social reformer Eleanor Rathbone, MP, whose work had been invoked before the 1929 Royal Commission, Littlejohn averred that victories in one area “would automatically” improve women's station in the other (Rathbone 1925; RCCE 1929b; Pedersen 2004, 110).⁴¹

Early the following year, thanking Littlejohn “for her excellent work,” the ERI announced that *Woman as Wife, Mother and Home-Maker* was selling well.⁴² Framed as a “scientific study” of survey data from women's organizations across the world, the report has been almost entirely overlooked by historians (ERI 1938, 1). Littlejohn began by describing “a category of worker invariably overlooked in legislation”: the wife (2). Hoping to forge “an

³⁹ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Honorary Secretary's Report, 1935–36.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of AGM, September 13, 1937.

⁴² NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of Council Meeting, February 15, 1937.

alliance of women throughout the world ... for the purpose of achieving through international action an honoured recognition of the work of the homemaker,” she compiled a list of tasks “required of a housewife” (3, 8). Adopting universal terms, rather than restricting her remarks to respondents from Australasia and Western Europe, she argued that all women were united by this common labor and their common inability to claim an income. Here, Littlejohn reminded readers that Norway and Sweden were exceptional. Throughout, reflecting Australian debates about family endowment, Scandinavia served as a rhetorical beacon of progress, albeit one whose policies, politics, and theorists—such as Ellen Key and Alva Myrdal—were seldom scrutinized (Offen 2000, 237–38, 331–34). Returning to her subject, the isolated, unorganized, and legally “dependant” housewives, Littlejohn argued that they constituted a class more “precarious” than their comrades “in the commercial world” (ERI 1938, 4). What followed was a list of proposals that would ensure “recognition of the money value of the work done” in the home, from the policy the UA had pursued in Australia—household redistribution from the wallet to the purse—to state allocated “wages for wives” (6–7).

The text had an immediate impact. Coordinated by the ERI’s new Committee for Maternity and Housekeeping, affiliates formed “housewives committees” to advance Littlejohn’s proposals across Europe. Eager to maintain this momentum, Jessie Street paid for the pamphlet’s translation and distribution in France and advanced plans for a German edition..⁴³ In the meantime, her argument circulated widely, enlivening New Zealand editorial columns, Australian temperance gatherings, the South African National Council of Women, and inspiring Virginia Woolf to reference Littlejohn explicitly in her admonishment of her interlocutor in *Three Guineas*: “if your wife were paid for her work, the work of bearing and bringing up children, a real wage, a money wage, so that it became an attractive profession instead of ... a precarious and dishonoured profession, your own slavery would be lightened.”⁴⁴

⁴³ Ibid.; ERI, Minutes of Council Meeting, January 6, 1938; ERI, “Insurance for Maternity and House-keeping,” ca.1939.

⁴⁴ See *Evening Post* (1937), Woolf (1938, 169, 270–71), *Port Lincoln Times* (1939), and *Kalgoorlie Miner* (1940).

Although *Woman as Wife, Mother, and Home-Maker* reached receptive readers, time was running out to use the League to enhance the status of women. When the Assembly reconsidered the subject in 1937, it appointed an expert committee to investigate “the legal status enjoyed by women in the various countries around the world” (League of Nations 1937, 46). While those committed to an equal rights treaty, like the American pacifist Lola Maverick Lloyd (1938, 10), bemoaned a League agenda “again ... void of our subject,” Littlejohn found in the creation of “the first intergovernmental agent to concern itself with the disabilities women faced” proof that her lobbying “had not been in vain” (1938a, 5). Yet even before the outbreak of war halted its progress, the study was far from comprehensive. Having fought “to promote the selection of good feminists to the Committee,” ERI members were gratified that its remit included “laws relating to the monetary reward of housewives.”⁴⁵ Had they scoured the report, they would have found the body pessimistic about translating any “objective picture” of women’s rights into international reform. “The status of women,” its panellists concurred, remained “essentially a matter of domestic jurisdiction.” As such, “it ought not to be considered ... within the field of action of the League” (League of Nations 1937, 47). When the committee reconvened in 1938, the ERI rued that its revised agenda omitted “the rights ... of a housewife to claim on her husband’s income as recompense for services performed in the home.”⁴⁶ The ILO, which had already considered family allowances but refused to adopt an “idea [that] is far from being generally accepted” and, in any case, opposed anything that might garnish workers’ wages, gave Littlejohn’s ideas even less oxygen (ILO 1931, 172–73). Upon receiving her pamphlet with a letter requesting the expansion of their definition of a worker to encompass the labor undertaken by “woman as wife, mother, and home maker,” the organization’s director, Harold Butler, simply ignored it (Zimmermann 2016, 42).

As the League was undermined by the actions of undemocratic member states and the emergence of alternative internationalisms, avenues for the advancement of the ERI’s ideas closed, and Littlejohn departed Europe. She left first for Australia, then a lecture tour of the United States. In a testament to the esteem in which she was held by the ERI, the council

⁴⁵ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Honorary Secretary’s Report, 1937–38.

⁴⁶ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of Council Meeting, May 30, 1938.

insisted she remain chair, explaining that “in these days of air mail,” her absence would not hinder their work.⁴⁷ Yet, without a permanent presence in Geneva, the ERI faltered. Amid the prevailing “state of tension [which] hung like a cloud” over Europe, the council reluctantly appointed Alice Paul to lead a Geneva Standing Committee, an ad hoc relationship that foreshadowed its fusion with her World Woman’s Party in 1941.⁴⁸

The ERI’s demise coincided with the end of Littlejohn’s career as an advocate of feminist ideas. Fittingly, her swansong came in Sydney. Two lectures at an AFWV conference in 1938 hinted at the paths her activism might follow. The first, in which she branded homeworkers Australia’s “forgotten citizens” saw Littlejohn take a more bellicose approach than she had in Europe. Impatient with Labor women’s opposition to any scheme that would garnish wages, she took the offensive. The extension of Australia’s national insurance system to cover domestic work was, she jibed, “infinitely more valuable than ... the woman in the factory.” Nevertheless, her scheme was not intended to encourage domesticity; by inclination and experience Littlejohn recoiled from ‘classing marriage as an occupation’ (1928, 2). Rather, she concluded, so long as women were expected to undertake unpaid labor in the home, “the position of all women workers [was] insecure” (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1938, 7).

Littlejohn’s barb about factory work doubtless angered her working-class critics and heightened suspicions that her politics were of and for “the boss class” (in Damousi 1994, 153). With her second speech, she alienated the middle-class feminists who had enabled her rise to prominence. Alarmed by the “disease” of fascism since visiting Rome in 1937, she worried that “unless we can arrest it, our organisations need not worry about their purpose ... they will have ceased to exist”. Alongside her provocative title—“Have Women’s Organisations Served Their Purpose?”—Littlejohn’s solution, that feminists should do their utmost to “defend democracy” by working as handmaidens to the state despite the glacial pace of the reforms they had struggled to effect, was, unsurprisingly, unpopular (Littlejohn 1938b, 5).⁴⁹ To Street,

⁴⁷ NLA, MS7493/51/330, ERI, Minutes of AGM, September 13, 1937.

⁴⁸ NLA, MS7493/51/330, Evans and Elsie Maitland to ERI, December 4, 1937; ERI, Minutes of Council Meeting, January 6, 1938; ERI, Honorary Secretary’s Report, 1938–39.

⁴⁹ NLA, MS7493/51/330, Littlejohn to Rich, April 24, 1937.

for whom wartime offered unparalleled opportunities to “redefine the nation’s needs in a way that acknowledged ... the needs of women,” forsaking the cause for national service was a misstep (Simic 2006b, 154–56).⁵⁰ That Littlejohn’s commitment to “conscription for every man and woman” led her to become the chief recruiter for the Women’s Australian National Service registered as a betrayal (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1940; Littlejohn 1941). Although the pair agreed that “home work” ought to be “recognised and remunerated” by the state—a more radical position than either had endorsed before Littlejohn left Sydney in 1934—Littlejohn resigned from the UA (Street 1940). By 1942, she was again on the move, this time to the United States, where she married a retired academic, Charles Tilden (*New York Times* 1942). Her departure, several years before her premature death from cancer in 1949, ended not only her alliance with Street but her long association with organized feminism. Twenty years later, compounding mischievous press epithets labelling Littlejohn a “former feminist,” Street omitted her friend from her autobiography, *Truth or Repose* (1966), an erasure largely responsible for Littlejohn’s liminal position in the history of Australian feminism (*Daily Telegraph* 1947).

Conclusion

Linda Littlejohn was not the only feminist swept away by the tide of wartime change. As Australians prepared for reconstruction—the post-war creation of a new social and economic order—the separatist politics she and Street favored began to seem outmoded. Instead, as Marilyn Lake (1998, 139) argues, many feminists “concluded that equality with men might be more easily achieved by joining them.” The shift is difficult to pinpoint, but it was not decisive in 1943. Then, Street chaired the Australian Women’s Conference, inviting delegates from ninety organizations to devise a feminist vision for the future. The resulting Australian Woman’s Charter, prefaced by the slogan “a war to win, a world to gain,” comprehensively articulated white women’s social, political, and economic aspirations. At the same time, reflecting Street and others’ growing sympathy for campaigns for Aboriginal rights, it

⁵⁰ SLNSW, MLMSS2160 ADD-ON1317, UA, Annual Report, 1941.

demanding that the federal government “provide the Aborigines with all the means for a secure and prosperous life” (AWCC 1943, 17; Milner 2019, 173–74). For its wide-ranging commitment to women’s aspirations and for the rapprochement Street engineered between moderate and radical women’s groups, the charter movement is considered the signal achievement of Australian feminism and a testament to the inapplicability of the oceanic “waves” model to Australian history (Lake 1999a, 90; Simic 2006b). The UA’s imprimatur can be read throughout the first Australian Women’s Charter, nowhere more clearly than in resolution thirteen, on “woman as mother and/or home-maker.” Seeking recognition of “the indispensable service rendered to the community by mothers,” delegates demanded that the Commonwealth government extend the child endowment scheme introduced in 1941 and institute a weekly mothers’ endowment too (AWCC 1943, 10). Three years later, the policy appeared in the group’s revised charter, but it was omitted from its diminished 1949 statement (AWCC 1946, 17; 1949). By then, both the pro-Soviet Street’s reputation and the movement itself were tarnished by the Cold War polarization that, for some, marked a “new age [for] Australian feminism” (Simic 2006b).

Even as her ideas lost currency, Street continued to illuminate women’s domestic labor. In 1957, responding wearily to an ABC radio broadcast in which “Mrs N.S.” of Queensland thought it “high time the major women’s organisations began a serious drive for a more equitable financial arrangement between husband and wife,” Street reminded the presenter of her protracted “struggle ... to convince women that this reform is necessary” (*A.B.C. Weekly* 1957).⁵¹ Nevertheless, for a determinist like Street, the campaign’s lack of success was not proof of its inefficacy but merely another reminder “that feminism was figured as an ongoing project” (Simic 2006a, 296). In this spirit, reflecting on the 1956 World Congress of Sociology, she proposed a new agenda. That its delegates had overlooked “the sociological basis and consequences of the human relationship which is most common in all countries throughout the world – that is the relationship of men and women in the home” infuriated Street. As she and Littlejohn had long argued, “the placing by Society of the responsibility of performing unpaid

⁵¹ SLNSW, MLMSS2160/79/27, Street to Ida Jenkins, November 29, 1957.

tasks in the home on women”—duties which were waged “when performed ... outside the home”—undermined women’s agency and denied society the benefit of their “special contribution” to cultural, intellectual, and political life.⁵² Prefiguring the concerns that animated Ann Oakley’s germinal text, *The Sociology of Housework* (1974) and the women’s liberation movement, Street suggested that the next Congress consider “the justification for, and the social effects of, the limitations placed on the development ... of woman by the tasks and responsibilities expected of her by society.”⁵³

The UA’s demand, incomes for wives, represented a culmination of two generations of feminist thought on married women’s work in Australia. For those seeking useable pasts, patrician figures like Littlejohn, whose sectarianism, belief in eugenics, and—even by the standards of her UA colleagues—obliviousness to racial injustice seemed too deeply imbricated with “White Australia” to salvage (Abbott 1996, 116–18). This problem is compounded by the fact that Littlejohn, who died before the cold war sea change in feminist politics, had little concern for posterity. Unlike Street, she left neither personal papers nor an autobiography representing her actions to a younger audience and emphasizing her historical contribution. In any case, as her and Street’s split from working-class activists over how women should be paid for their labor as “wife, mother and home-maker” indicates, their proposals were not the only solutions to a problem that had confronted Australian women since they had won the vote. Nevertheless, the European reception of their campaign to force state and society to reckon with the “money value” of reproductive labor forces us to reconsider established narratives about the ERI’s ironclad equalitarianism and wages for housework as a movement born transnational in 1972. Despite the disdain that Australian women’s liberationists reserved for their bourgeois forebears, a 1976 article in Melbourne’s *Vashti* could have appeared in a UA leaflet: “we want WAGES for the WORK we do ... the work we do in the house is no different from any other kind of work” (in Arrow 2019, 138). Littlejohn’s proposals never reached fruition, reason enough for their marginalization in the historiography of feminist internationalism, a field that remains preoccupied with successful endeavors

⁵² NLA, MS2683/3/5/527-9, Street to *Novoye Vremya*, November 14, 1956.

⁵³ Ibid.

(Carlier 2014). Still, by considering their efforts within a “tradition which has built on itself over and over, recovering essential elements even where these have been strangled and wiped out” (Rich 1995, 10–11) we might better understand the ambitions and circulations which shaped both the “international first wave” (Sluga 2017, 63) and ERI, appreciate the contests which fractured women’s liberation groups across the world, and historicize present campaigns, like the post-2016 feminist strike movement, wherein the withdrawal of domestic labor each International Women’s Day reminds us again of “the power of those whose paid and unpaid work sustains the world” (Aruzza, Bhattacharya, and Fraser 2019, 6–10).

References

- Abbott, Patricia Kathleen. 1996. *Letters: May 1946–February 1949*. Sydney: Bookpress.
- ABC Weekly*. 1957. “Marriage Can Be a Happy Business.” November 27, 4–5.
- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics). 2019. “3105.0.65.001 Australian historical population statistics.” Australian Bureau of Statistics.
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/historical-population/latest-release>
- Ackermann, Jessie. 1913. *Australia from a Woman’s Point of View*. London: Cassell & Company.
- Allen, Ann Taylor. 1991. *Feminism and Motherhood in Germany, 1800–1914*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Allen, Judith A. 1994. *Rose Scott: Vision and Revision in Feminism*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Archdale, Helen A. 1928. “International Developments in the Woman’s Movement.” *Current History* 29(1): 48–52.
- Arrow, Michelle. 2019. *The Seventies: The Personal, the Political, and the Making of Modern Australia*. Sydney: NewSouth.
- Arruzza, Cinzia, Tithi Bhattacharya, and Nancy Fraser. 2019. *Feminism for the 99 Percent: A Manifesto*. London: Verso.
- Austin, Arlen, Beth Capper, and Tracey Deutsch. 2020. “Wages for Housework and Social Reproduction: A Microsyllabus.” *Radical History Review: The Abusable Past*, April 27. <https://radicalhistoryreview.org/abusablepast/wages-for-housework-and-social-reproduction-a-microsyllabus/>.
- Australian Star*. 1904. “Women in Conference.” November 10, 7.
- Australian Worker*. 1926. “Slippery Mr. Bruce.” January 20, 11.

- AWCC (Australian Woman's Charter Conference). 1943. *Australian Woman's Charter, 1943*. Sydney: A. K. Murray.
- . 1946. *Australian Woman's Charter, 1946–1949*. Sydney: A. W. C. Committee.
- . 1949. "Representations Made by the Deputation from the Australian Women's Charter Committee to the Prime Minister on June 8th, 1949." National Library of Australia. <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1629432794>.
- AWCTU (Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Australasia). 1897. *Minutes of the Third Triennial Convention*. Adelaide: Shawyer & Co.
- Baker, Jeannine. 2017. "Woman to Woman: Australian Feminists' Embrace of Radio Broadcasting, 1930s–1950s." *Australian Feminist Studies* 32(93): 292–308.
- Bray, J. Rob. 2018. "The Australian Minimum Wage and the Needs of a Family." PhD dissertation, Australian National University.
- Brittain, Vera. 1929. *Geneva—The Key to Equality*. London: Six Point Group.
- . 1930. *A Memorandum Showing the Connection between the Status of Women and the Relations Between Countries together with the Formation of the Equal Rights International to Obtain the Equal Rights Treaty*. London: Equal Rights International.
- Carey, Jane. 2009. "'Women's Objective—a Perfect Race': Whiteness, Eugenics and the Articulation of Race." In *Re-orienting Whiteness: Transnational Perspectives on the Emergence of an Identity*, edited by Leigh Boucher, Jane Carey, and Katherine Ellinghaus, 183–98. New York: Palgrave.
- Carlier, Julie. 2014. "A Forgotten Instance of Women's International Organising: The Transnational Feminist Networks of the Women's Progressive Society (1890) and the International Women's Union (1893–1898)." In *Gender History in a Transnational Perspective: Biographies, Networks, Gender Orders*, edited by Oliver Janz and Daniel Schönpflug, 101–26. New York: Berghahn.
- Castles, Francis G. 1985. *The Working Class and Welfare: Reflections on the Political Development of the Welfare State in Australia and New Zealand, 1890–1980*. Wellington: Allen & Unwin.
- Cobble, Dorothy Sue, Linda Gordon, and Astrid Henry. 2014. *Feminism Unfinished: A Short, Surprising History of American Women's Movements*. New York: Liveright.
- Daily Telegraph*. 1938. "Wives Want New Deal Charter." September 12, 6.
- . 1946. "Women Object to War Weapon Tests." August 8, 7.
- . 1947. "Around the Town." August 21, 19.

- Damousi, Joy. 1994. *Women Come Rally: Socialism, Communism and Gender in Australia 1890–1955*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Davis, Cynthia J. 2010. *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: A Biography*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Dawn* [Western Australia]. 1931. “Mrs Albert Littlejohn visits headquarters.” November 18, 1.
- . 1937. “Farewell party to Mrs Littlejohn, J.P.” November 17, 3.
- Delap, Lucy. 2020. *Feminisms: A Global History*. London: Pelican.
- Docker, John. 1991. *The Nervous Nineties: Australian Cultural Life in the 1890s*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Equal Rights*. 1930. “Equal Rights International Organized.” September 27, 267.
- ERI (Equal Rights International). 1938. *Status of Woman as Wife, Mother and Home-Maker*. London: Woman’s Printing Society.
- Evans, Mary Sanger. 1893. “The Economic Position of Women.” *Daily Telegraph*, December 23, 10.
- Evening Post*. 1937. “Should Wives Have Salaries?” December 24, 21.
- Forsyth, Hannah. 2019. “Reconsidering Women’s Role in the Professionalisation of the Economy: Evidence from the Australian Census 1881–1947.” *Australian Economic History Review* 59(1): 55-79.
- Frances, Raelene. 2001. “Gender, Working Life, and Federation.” In *Working the Nation: Working Life and Federation, 1890–1914*, eds. Mark Hearn and Greg Patmore, 32–47. Sydney: Pluto Press.
- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. (1898) 1998. *Women and Economics: A Study of the Economic Relation between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Gissi, Alessandra. (2018). “The Home as a Factory: Rethinking the Debate on Housewives’ Wages in Italy, 1929–1980.” In *What is Work? Gender at the Crossroads of Home Family and Business from the Early Modern Era to the Present*, edited by Rafaella Sarti, Anna Bellavitis, and Manuela Martini, 139–60. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Goldlust, Rachel. 2021. “Real Men do Real Farming, While the New Woman Goes Home: Australian Suffragists go Back to the Land 1894–1917.” *Journal of Australian Studies*, DOI: 14443058.2021.1951810.
- Gottlieb, Julie V. 2015. *“Guilty Women,” Foreign Policy, and Appeasement in Inter-War Britain*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

- Griffith, Gail. 1988. "The Feminist Club of NSW, 1914–1970: A History of Feminist Politics in Decline." *Hecate* 14(1): 56–67.
- Haebich, Anna. 2000. *Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800–2000*. Freemantle: Freemantle Arts Centre Press.
- Harmony*. 1935. "Resolutions for the E.R.I. from the United Associations, Sydney." September 26, 26.
- Haskins, Victoria K. 2019. "Domesticating Colonizers: Domesticity, Indigenous Domestic Labor, and the Modern Settler Colonial Nation." *The American Historical Review* 124(4): 1290–1301.
- Hayden, Dolores. 1982. *The Grand Domestic Revolution: Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighbourhoods, and Cities*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hewitt, Nancy A. 2012. "Feminist Frequencies: Regenerating the Wave Metaphor." *Feminist Studies* 38(1): 658–80.
- Higman, B.W. 2002. *Domestic Service in Australia*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- ILO (International Labour Organization). 1931. *The International Labour Organization: The First Decade*. London: International Labour Office.
- Jacobs, Margaret D. 2009. *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Jones, Helen. 1986. *In Her Own Name: Women in South Australian History*. Adelaide: Wakefield Press.
- Kalgoorlie Miner*. 1940. "Wages for Wives." August 3, 4.
- Keating, James. 2020. *Distant Sisters: Australasian Women and the International Struggle for the Vote, 1880–1914*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Kingston, Beverley. 1975. *My Wife, My Daughter and Poor Mary Ann: Women and Work in Australia*. Melbourne: Thomas Nelson.
- Klausen, Susanne, and Alison Bashford. 2010. "Fertility Control: Eugenics, Neo-Malthusianism, and Feminism." In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, edited by Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine, 98–115. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lack, John, and Charles Fahey. 2008. "The Industrialist, the Trade Unionist, and the Judge: The Harvester Judgement of 1907 Revisited." *Victorian Historical Journal* 79(1): 3–18.

- Lake, Marilyn. 1992. "The Independence of Women and the Brotherhood of Man: Debates in the Labour Movement over Equal Pay and Motherhood Endowment in the 1920s." *Labour History* 63: 1–24.
- . 1996a. "Feminist History as National history: Writing the Political =History of Women." *Australian Historical Studies* 27(106): 154–69.
- . 1996b. "The Inviolable Woman: Feminist Conceptions of Citizenship in Australia, 1900–1945." *Gender & History* 8(2): 197–211.
- . 1999a. *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- . 1999b. "Marriage as Bondage: The Anomaly of the Citizen Wife." *Australian Historical Studies* 29(111): 116–29.
- . 2001. "From Self-determination via Protection to Equality via Non-discrimination: Defining Women's Rights at the League of Nations and United Nations." In *Women's Rights and Human Rights: International Historical Perspectives*, edited by Patricia Grimshaw, Katie Holmes, and Marilyn Lake, 254–71. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- . 2012. "State Socialism for Australian mothers: Andrew Fisher's Radical Maternalism in its International and Local Contexts." *Labour History* 102: 55–70.
- . 2019. *Progressive New World: How Settler Colonialism and Transpacific Exchange Shaped American Reform*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- League of Nations. 1935. "Political, Civil and Economic Status of Women—Resolution Passed by 16th Assembly." In *International Documents on the Status of Women*, edited by Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, 41–42. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office.
- . 1937. "Report Submitted by First Committee [on the Status of Women] to the Assembly of the League of Nations, 1937." In *International Documents on the Status of Women*, edited by Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, 43–50. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office.
- Lewis, Helen. 2020. *Difficult Women: A History of Feminism in 11 Fights*. London: Penguin Random House.
- Littlejohn, Linda P. 1928. "Wherever She May Be." *Herself*, September 17, 2.
- . 1938a. "Equality of Status between the Sexes." *Dawn* [WA], January 19, 5.
- . 1938b. "Have Women's Organisations Served Their Purpose?" *Dawn* [WA], May 18, 5.
- . 1941. "Case for Conscription." *Sydney Morning Herald*, July 28, 3.

- Lloyd, Lola M. 1938. "Equal Rights on the International Front." *Equal Rights*, January 1, 190.
- Ludi, Regula. 2019. "Setting New Standards: International Feminism and the League of Nations' Inquiry into the Status of Women." *Journal of Women's History* 31(1): 12–36.
- Lyttelton Times*. 1896. "Economic Independence of Married Women." July 6, 6.
- Marino, Katherine M. 2019. *Feminism for the Americas: The Making of an International Human Rights Movement*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- May, Vanessa. 2012. "Working at Home: Domestic Workers in the Nineteenth and Twentieth-century United States." *History Compass* 10(3): 284–93.
- Meredith, Maude. 1890. "Family Finance." *Dawn* [NSW]. June 5, 7.
- Miller, Carol. 1994. "'Geneva – the Key to Equality': Inter-war Feminists and the League of Nations." *Women's History Review* 3(2): 219–45.
- Miller, David Hunter. 1928. *The Drafting of the Covenant, Volume Two*. New York: Knickerbocker.
- Milner, Lisa. 2019. "'An unpopular cause': The Union of Australian Women's support for Aboriginal Rights." *Labour History* 116: 167–88.
- Moreton-Robinson, Aileen. 2000. *Talkin' Up to the White Woman: Indigenous Women and Feminism*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- New York Times*. 1942. "Mrs. Littlejohn to Wed." April 6, 11.
- New Zealand Herald*. 1903. "Thoughtful Women." September 23, 1.
- Nicholls, Roberta. 1996. *The Women's Parliament: The National Council of the Women of New Zealand*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Nolan, Melanie. 2000. *Breadwinning: New Zealand Women and the State*. Christchurch: Canterbury University Press.
- Oakley, Ann. 1974. *The Sociology of Housework*. New York: Pantheon.
- Offen, Karen. 2000. *European Feminisms, 1750–1950: A Political History*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Paisley, Fiona. 2000. *Loving Protection? Australian Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Rights 1919–39*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- Pedersen, Susan. 2004. *Eleanor Rathbone and the Politics of Conscience*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

- Piddington, A.B. 1921. *The Next Step: A Family Basic Income*. Melbourne: Macmillan.
- Port Lincoln Times*. 1939. "W.C.T.U. Meeting." May 18, 6.
- Purvis, June. 1996. "A 'Pair of . . . Infernal Queens'? A Reassessment of the Dominant Representations of Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, First Wave Feminists in Edwardian Britain." *Women's History Review* 5(2): 259–80.
- . 2002. *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*. London: Routledge.
- Radi, Heather, ed. 1990a. *Jessie Street: Documents and Essays*. Sydney: Women's Redress Press.
- . 1990b. "Introducing Jessie Street." In Radi 1990a, 10-15.
- Rathbone, Eleanor. 1925. 'The Old and the New Feminism.' *Women's Leader and Common Cause*. March 13, 2–3.
- RCCE (Royal Commission on the Child Endowment or Family Allowances). 1929a. *Report of the Royal Commission on Child Endowment or Family Allowances*. Canberra: Government Printer.
- . 1929b. *Royal Commission on Child Endowment: Minutes of Evidence*. Canberra: Government Printer.
- Recorder*. 1936. "Incomes for Wives." September 17, 4.
- Rees, Anne. 2012. "'The Quality and Not Only the Quantity of Australia's People': Ruby Rich and the Racial Hygiene Association of NSW." *Australian Feminist Studies* 22(71): 71–92.
- Reiger, Kerreen M. 1985. *The Disenchantment of the Home: Modernising the Australian Family 1880–1940*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Rich, Adrienne. 1995. *On Lies, Secrets and Silence: Selected Prose 1966–1978*. New York: Norton.
- Rupp, Leila J. 1997. *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Ryan, Edna, and Anne Conlon. (1975) 1989. *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work*. Melbourne: Penguin.
- Sandell, Marie. 2015. *The Rise of Women's Transnational Activism: Identity and Sisterhood Between the World Wars*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Sheppard, Kate. 1892. "Economics." *Canterbury Times*, December 15, 6.
- . (1899) 1989. "Economic Independence of Married Women: Introduced by Tessa Malcolm." *Women's Studies Journal* 5(1): 11–21.

- Simic, Zora. 2006a. Mrs Street—now there's a subject!': Historicising Jessie Street." *Australian Feminist Studies* 20(48): 291–303.
- . 2006b. "A New Age? Australian Feminism and the 1940s." *Hecate* 32(1): 152–72.
- Sluga, Glenda. 2017. "Feminisms and Twentieth-Century Internationalisms." In *Internationalisms: A Twentieth Century History*, edited by Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin, 61–84. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smart, Judith. 2010. "The Politics of the Small Purse: The Mobilization of Housewives in Interwar Australia." *International Labor and Working-Class History* 77 (1): 48–68.
- St. Claire, Mary. 1936. "More Women Needed for Empire's Outposts!" *Australian Women's Weekly*, June 6, 33.
- Star*. 1896. "Discontented Wives." April 16, 1.
- Stevens, Doris. 1928. "International Feminism is Born." *Time and Tide*, April 13, 354.
- Stevenson, George. 2019. *The Women's Liberation Movement and the Politics of Class in Britain*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Street, Jessie M.G. 1940. *Woman as a Homemaker*. Sydney: United Associations of Women.
- . 1966. *Truth or Repose*. Sydney: Australasian Book Society.
- Swain, Shurlee, Patricia Grimshaw, and Ellen Warne. 2009. "Whiteness, Maternal Feminism and the Working Mother, 1900–1960." In *Creating White Australia*, edited by Jane Carey and Claire McLisky, 214–29. Sydney: Sydney University Press.
- Swinth, Kirsten. 2018. *Feminism's Forgotten Fight: The Unfinished Struggle for Work and Family*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Sydney Morning Herald*. 1938. "The Forgotten Citizens." February 9, 7.
- . 1940. "Personnel of the W.A.N.S." July 10, 13.
- Toupin, Louise. 2018. *Wages for Housework: A History of an International Feminist Movement 1972–77*. London: Pluto Press.
- Traikovski, Louie. 2003. "The Housewives' Wages Debate in the 1920s Australian Press." *Journal of Australian Studies* 27(78): 9–13.
- UA (United Associations of Women). 1934. *Incomes for Wives: How It Can Be Managed or the Economic Independence of Married Women*. Sydney: United Associations of Women.
- Weekly Times*. 1934. "Sterilisation." January 27, 7.

- Wells, Ada. 1895. "A Short Review of the Political, Social and Economical Position of Women." *Prohibitionist*, January 26, 3–4.
- Wikander, Ulla, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Jane Lewis, eds. 1995. *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, the United States, and Australia, 1880–1920*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- West Australian*. 1921. "Position of Women." November 19, 9.
- . 1928. "Marriage and Divorce." August 31, 21.
- . 1931. "An Ardent Feminist." January 2, 4.
- Woman*. 1935. "Should Wives Receive Wages?" January 10, 10.
- Woolf, Virginia. 1938. *Three Guineas*. New York: Harcourt, Brace.
- Wright, Clare. 2014. "'A Splendid Object Lesson': A Transnational Perspective on the Birth of the Australian Nation." *Journal of Women's History* 26(4): 12–36.
- Zimmermann, Susan. 2012. "Liaison Committees of International Women's Organizations and the Changing Landscape of Women's Internationalism, 1920s to 1945." In *Women and Social Movements, International—1840 to Present*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street.
- . 2016. "The International Labour Organization, Transnational Women's Networks, and the Question of Unpaid Work in the Interwar world." In *Women in Transnational History: Connecting the Local and the Global*, edited by Clare Midgley, Alison Twells, and Julie Carlier, 33–53. Abingdon: Routledge.
- . 2019. "Equality of Women's Economic Status? A Major Bone of Contention in the International Gender Politics Emerging During the Interwar Period." *The International History Review* 41(1): 200–227.