

Current Issues

Her Rights at Work: The Political Persecution of Australia's First Female Prime Minister

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Editor's Comment: In 2012 there was an unprecedented escalation of attack on Australia's first woman Prime Minister. Inside Parliament this consisted of baiting and character smearing; outside, in rallies, radio talk-back and print and social media, it included incitements to violence and sexually explicit cartooning that was graphic and degrading. In Parliament on 9 October, the Prime Minister confronted this behaviour, naming it misogyny. Soon after, the Macquarie Dictionary announced that it had widened the definition of the term beyond '[pathologica] hatred of women', to reflect common usage since the 1980s, to refer to 'entrenched prejudice against women'. Just previously, on 31 August, in the 2012 Human Rights and Social Justice Lecture at the University of Newcastle, Australian author, historian and political scientist Dr Summers had documented the material in circulation and analysed it against standards of rights and justice. Dr Summers has published this documentation and analysis in 'vanilla' and 'R-rated' versions, and has been invited to speak on it in other forums, including at the University of New South Wales on 7 October 2012. What follows is a heavily edited-down version of her article. Its purpose is to draw out one theme of Dr Summers' analysis — that of parliament as an exemplary workplace. In the context of notions of 'rights at work' and 'fair work', the following condensed extract from Dr Summers' speech explores recent standards of Parliamentary debate and 'national conversation', in the light of workplace rights to freedom from discrimination, harassment and bullying. She argues for a campaign in which individuals refuse to receive sexist comments by saying, 'It stops with me'.

Introduction

On 24 June 2010 Julia Eileen Gillard became Australia's first female prime minister. She had served as deputy prime minister to Kevin Rudd in the Labor government that was elected on 24 November 2007. As deputy prime minister she had enjoyed great popularity and although the means by which Gillard assumed the top job was controversial — and became more so over the course of time — initially her elevation was greeted with widespread enthusiasm. There was a palpable sense of history in the media coverage, with most outlets treat-

ing Gillard's ascension as an important event, to be taken seriously. The public seemed pretty pleased as well. Her popularity rating was high. Many women and girls, especially, were thrilled at this milestone having been reached. A few weeks into the job, Gillard called an election, seeking to legitimise her position through the validation of a popular vote. The election, held on 21 August 2010, failed to deliver her an outright majority. However she was able to form a government by negotiating agreements with the Greens and three Independents.

In order to secure a deal with the Greens, Gillard had to agree to introduce a price on carbon and thereby break a commitment she had made during the campaign that there would be 'no carbon tax under a government that I lead'. Other prime ministers have changed policies or gone back on promises. Paul Keating did not proceed with the L-A-W tax cuts. John Howard introduced a GST. Both were accused of backflips and of breaking promises. Neither was ever called a 'liar'. The term 'Juliar' seems to have been coined by broadcaster Alan Jones and quickly adopted by opponents of Gillard. It featured prominently on banners at a rally protesting the carbon tax that took place in Canberra in March 2011.

The so-called Convoy of No Confidence rally in Canberra was the first time that many of us were exposed to the virulence of the attacks that were beginning to be made against Gillard. It was the first time we saw her referred to as 'Bob Brown's bitch' (Brown was Greens leader at the time) and it was the first time we saw the slogan, 'Ditch the Witch'. Little did we know that this was just the beginning. Over the past two years opposition leader Tony Abbott has relentlessly used Gillard's backflip on the carbon tax to depict her as unreliable, as untrustworthy and as a liar. The notion that the prime minister is a 'liar' has now been firmly planted in the public mind.

Journalists have commented on Tony Abbott's practice of heckling Julia Gillard across the dispatch box whenever she is speaking in Parliament (see, for instance Kitney 2012). Normally he does it *sotto voce* so that only she can hear, but on August 20 the Deputy Speaker heard him referring to the prime minister as a 'liar' and demanded he withdraw (Hansard, HR, 2012). It is 'unparliamentary' to call someone a 'liar'. As you probably recall, Abbott's withdrawal was qualified, so much so that he was thrown out of Parliament for an hour, becoming the first Leader of the Opposition to be ejected from the House since the mid-1980s.

This might all be part of the normal cut and thrust of politics. Most observers of Canberra today agree that the current political environment has become especially toxic. The hung parliament, and the expectation on the part of the Opposition that it is just one lost vote on the floor of the House away from government has raised the stakes to levels not previously seen in Australian politics. As a result we are experiencing an era in politics where there is very little civility. The overall temperature of discussion and debate is torrid and people use language towards and about each other that even a few years ago would have been considered totally out of line. This, sadly, is the new norm.

But what is *not* normal is the way in which the prime minister is attacked, vilified or demeaned in ways that are specifically related to her sex (or, if you like, her gender). Calling her a 'liar' might not be gender-specific, although as I have

pointed out, it was not a term used against back-flipping male prime ministers. There are many examples, however, where the prime minister is attacked, vilified or demeaned in ways that do specifically relate to her sex. Some of the examples are benign, in the sense that they are examples of a double-standard, of a woman being treated less seriously than a man of similar status would be. The most obvious and most frequent example is the way in which the prime minister is almost always referred to as 'Julia'. I offer as an example, the banner headline in *The Australian* just over a week ago during the reporting of a legal matter: 'What Julie told her firm'. Have you ever seen a headline 'What John Told ...' or 'What Paul Told ...'? No you haven't, for the simple reason that previous prime ministers were accorded the basic respect of being referred to by their last names.

There is a similar lack of respect in the way the federal Opposition constantly just uses the female pronoun to refer to the prime minister. Tony Abbott is a serial offender — constantly referring just to 'she' or 'her' in his press appearances — and he is not the only one. This is politics, you might say. Everyone is fair game. Perhaps. But should our politicians be the ones to lower the threshold of what is acceptable commentary about each other? Sadly too many of them are — in ways that affect all women MPs as well as the prime minister.

I was told this week by a federal MP that there is what she called 'misogynists' corner' on the Coalition benches. This is a bunch of members, all of them male, who, she said, 'positively bray' whenever a female frontbencher from the government goes to the dispatch box to give an answer. And it is not just the men. Opposition front bencher Sophie Mirabella has been known to call out, 'Here comes the weather girl' when the attractive Kate Ellis, Minister for Employment Participation and Early Childhood and Childcare, goes to answer a question (Summers 2012). Should our politicians be setting higher standards? I think they should, for the simple fact that it is now possible to posit that this conduct is having a negative influence on the national conversation. I know countless instances of people who routinely use terms like 'lying bitch' when speaking about the prime minister, and the threshold is being progressively lowered, so much so that it is now pretty much in the gutter, if not the sewer.

In my remarks today I want to focus on depictions and comments about Julia Gillard that are utterly and undeniably sexist. What I want to establish is the extent to which the prime minister is being treated unfairly as a woman and because she's a woman. I want to identify ways in which Julia Gillard, Australia's first female prime minister, is being persecuted both because she is a woman *and* in ways that would be impossible to apply to a man.

Offensive, obscene material vilifying the Prime Minister is distributed via a number of different means. Email, YouTube and Facebook are being used to vilify, to degrade, to create an atmosphere of disrespect and to undermine the authority of the office of the prime minister and the present incumbent, Julia Gillard. In Australia, there are now more than 11 million Facebook users. So the potential is there to reach very significant numbers of people using this social networking tool. And of course a lot of companies are devoting a lot of resources at present into figuring out just how to exploit the commercial potential of this. But I was

looking for sites that dealt with Julia Gillard and here [is one] of the things that I found. A Facebook page called *Julia Gillard — Worst PM in Australian history* was established in July 2011 and describes itself in the following terms:

This page is a community of people who like to take their anger and frustration out on this useless oxygen thief, Julia Gillard — Our motto is ‘Friends don’t let friends like Julia Gillard.’ (Facebook 2012)

This is a very busy and much visited site and it contains a great deal of material of a highly suggestive and sexual nature.

Facebook has given us new ways to intimidate, bully, harass and defame on a remarkable and previously unimaginable scale. For example, there was a series of extremely crude Facebook pages (since taken down) that have taken over the persona of Alf Stewart, a character in the soapie *Home and Away* and used him to promote some pretty disgusting notions. You will not be surprised to hear that most of these denigrate women, including the Prime Minister, and some of them actually glorify rape. One particularly vile sexual reference to Julia Gillard was ‘liked’ 43,253 times by the time it had been taken down. Perhaps just as alarming was the fact that it had been ‘shared’ by 2,099 people. If each of those people who shared it with their friends had 100 Facebook friends, this image has potentially been distributed to over 200,000 people. It must be very hard being Julia Gillard and knowing this stuff is out there [Ed. — this section of the speech has been edited heavily].

Politicians’ Rights at Work and Community Norms

But does she have any redress? What are the prime minister’s rights at work? I think it is reasonable to ask whether the prime minister is being treated in ways that are actually unlawful or even illegal under federal legislation designed to protect the rights of workers. But because politicians (and therefore prime ministers) do not generally speaking enjoy these rights, I want for the sake of my argument to look at the situation in a somewhat different way. Imagine that Julia Gillard is the CEO of a very large company, Australia Pty Ltd, and imagine that all of you here today are the company’s shareholders. And let’s agree that the people seated in the front row here today constitute the company’s board of directors.

I will now take you through your responsibilities and obligations as shareholders and directors to the CEO you have employed to run your company. There are laws passed by the Commonwealth Parliament that set the standard for conduct in the workplace as accepted by the general Australian community. They reflect the norms and expected behavior within the vast majority of workplaces.

Discrimination — Less Favourable Treatment

One such law is the federal *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*. Section 5 of this Act defines direct sex discrimination as ‘less favourable treatment’ of a woman compared with a man in the same circumstances. Section 14 of the Act covers the place of employment as the area where such discrimination has occurred. I think we can easily conclude that any discrimination against Gillard on the grounds

of her sex has occurred in the course of her 'employment' as CEO of Australia. What needs to be established is whether she has been subjected to any form of less favourable treatment relating to her employment because of her gender.

I believe that we can clearly make the case that she *has* been treated less favourably because of her sex. Let me give three examples where she has, in the course of her employment, been subject to comments that are both offensive per se and which relate specifically only to women. In other words, these same things could not and would not have been said of a man. First, let's recall the comments of Liberal Senator Bill Heffernan in 2007 who said, speaking of Julia Gillard, that 'anyone who chooses to deliberately remain barren ... they've got no idea what life's about' (Fox news.com.au). We do not describe men who do not have children as 'barren'; its usage relates only to women and thus these remarks are a clear example of sex discrimination in employment.

My second example comes from former Leader of the Labor Party, Mark Latham, who said only last year: 'Choice in Gillard's case is very, very specific. Particularly because she's on the public record saying she made a deliberate choice not to have children to further her parliamentary career'. 'I think having children is the great loving experience of any lifetime. And by definition you haven't got as much love in your life if you make that particular choice', he told ABC radio. 'One would have thought to experience the greatest loving experience in life — having children — you wouldn't particularly make that choice' (Kelly 2011). I do not think that men are called upon to make choices about paternity in order to pursue careers. This is, again, a sex-specific situation and an example of a person being disadvantaged in her employment because of her sex. Can we think of any instances where a man has been asked about such choices? Both the original question to Gillard and the use put to it by a so-called commentator constitute less favourable treatment.

My third example is from the Leader of the Opposition, Tony Abbott, who in February 2011 demanded that Gillard 'make an honest woman of herself' by taking the carbon tax to an election. The expression of course implies dishonesty and 'make an honest woman of' refers only to women, so is inherently sexist, but more pertinently, its normal use is in relation to single women. 'To make an honest woman' of someone usually entails a man marrying a woman who is pregnant. The use of this term in relation to Gillard was a non-too-subtle reminder to voters of the CEO's single status. There could perhaps even be a case here on the grounds of marital status under the *Sex Discrimination Act*.

There are many more examples I could cite, such as the comment made in July by a Kevin Rudd backer about the time it was taking to bring Gillard down: 'We need her to bleed out', as this person charmingly put it (cited by van Onselen 2012); or the recent description by David Farley, CEO of the Australian Agricultural Company, of Julia Gillard as 'an unproductive old cow' (cited by Mack 2012) — you would not call a man 'a cow'. But I think I have made my case. No male CEO of Australia has ever been subjected to the same treatment.

The Federal Magistrates Court has found that an Aboriginal man who was subjected to constant derogatory comments about his race had been discriminated against on the grounds of race (*Trapman v Sydney Water Corporation &*

Ors [2011]). I suggest that were such a case to be brought forward based on what Julia Gillard has had to endure, that there would be a finding of sex discrimination. This then creates obligations for you, the board of directors, to rectify the situation and remove the discrimination or be held liable for the damage done to her — both her reputation and her emotional wellbeing.

Sexual Harassment

I think we can also make the case that the CEO has been subject to sexual harassment in her employment as set out by sections 28A and 28B of the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*. It is well accepted under the Act that the sending of sexually explicit material via email or text to a person constitutes sexual harassment. For example, see the definition of 'sexual harassment' published by the Australian Human Rights Commission (2012). The definition also covers accessing sexually explicit Internet sites. Interestingly, a recent test case under the *Sex Discrimination Act* as to whether exposing a worker to pornography at work constituted sex discrimination (as opposed to sexual harassment) was settled out of court (Durkin 2012). The creating of sexually explicit Internet sites or contributing to ones on Facebook that I have described would easily fall within the definition of sexual harassment.

Cartoonist Larry Pickering has suddenly become very famous — if not infamous — after being identified by the CEO in her press conference on Thursday 23 August as someone who publishes 'a vile and sexist website'. Gillard said: 'for many, many months now I have been the subject of a very sexist smear campaign from people for whom I have no respect'. What she did not say is that for many months now Pickering has bombarded not just her but every member of federal parliament and every senator on almost a daily basis with emails containing hate-filled commentary about Gillard. Often these commentaries have been accompanied by cartoons, many of which depict Gillard naked and wearing a huge strap-on dildo. Pickering was infamous back in the days when he was cartoonist for *The Australian* for producing annual calendars in which all the (then all male) politicians had extremely long penises that were used to supposedly entertaining effect. It seems that Pickering cannot envisage a prime minister without a penis — so he had to give Gillard a strap-on. When Facebook (where he publishes some of his material), forced him to stop drawing her this way, he started depicting her with a dildo thrown over her shoulder (Quinn 2012).

I have seen many examples of these emails — shown to me by MPs — and I know (1) that they go to every member and senator and (2) they contain vile and disgusting images of our political leaders, most often Julia Gillard and, until his resignation from Parliament, Bob Brown. Yet no Member of Parliament has denounced them, not in public at least. I find this almost beyond comprehension. Nor, before Gillard mentioned them at her press conference, had they been written about by anyone in the parliamentary press gallery. Surely it is newsworthy that Australia's first female prime minister is under such constant illustrated attack. Surely it is noteworthy that the portrayals of her are obscene and indisputably sexist.

Surely it would merit a report somewhere in the media by one of the journalists who churn out stories daily from Canberra. Instead we have had what one might almost call a conspiracy of silence. Is it because the images are so vile that there was an implicit agreement between parliamentarians and the press to simply pretend they did not exist? Or were they just dismissed as the crazed work of a cranky old hack? I sense that many journalists in the press gallery are now somewhat embarrassed about their failure to report on and thereby smoke out these endless vicious attacks on the prime minister.

Bullying

We could also make the case that the CEO of Australia Pty Ltd has been bullied. Comcare, the Commonwealth workplace health and safety agency defines bullying as:

Repeated behaviour that could reasonably be considered to be humiliating, intimidating, threatening or demeaning to a person, or group of persons, and which therefore creates a risk to health and safety. (Comcare, n.d.)

There can be little doubt that these sexually explicit images of Julia Gillard by her abusive detractors are acts of bullying in the sense that they are solely designed to demean and diminish her, humiliate and intimidate her. There is currently a Parliamentary inquiry examining bullying in the workplace (Parliament of Australia 2012). It will be interesting to see whether its findings would support this conclusion.

Adverse Action

Turning to the industrial relations law, would the CEO have any resort under the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*? Section 340 prohibits an employer from taking 'adverse action' against an employee, which includes discriminating against an employee, while Section 351 prohibits an employer from taking adverse action against an employee because of the employee's sex or marital status. An employer can be liable for the actions of their employees and for the way co-workers treat each other.

Increasingly, industrial tribunals and commissions are having to grapple with this new phenomenon, and are being called upon to determine whether conduct on Facebook can warrant dismissal. Already there are many examples where Fair Work Australia has been cited when employees have been dismissed for acts of sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct on social media sites such as Facebook against co-workers. This definition includes supervisors and bosses as well as more junior employees.¹

While the tests may be different from those under sex discrimination law, there is little doubt that the type of commentary and images to which Julia Gillard is routinely and repeatedly subjected to would come within the type of conduct prohibited in all other workplaces. An employer would be liable to their employee and may have to pay a civil penalty (a fine) under section 539. (Indeed,

there could even be the possibility of prison. In July a Bendigo magistrate gave a suspended prison sentence to the creator of a Facebook page in which the creators rated named people's sexual performance.)

Back in the 1970s when women were for the first time getting jobs in places such as the police force, the fire brigade, BHP and other previously all-male workplaces, it was common for these women to find pornographic photographs placed inside their lockers. These were an expression of hostility on the part of some of their male co-workers who apparently resented the intrusion of these groundbreaking women into what had been all-male domains. Aren't we seeing a similar process happening now? When Julia Gillard logs onto her computer and sees images of herself naked, or holding suggestive signs, isn't she being subjected to similarly hostile acts by people who apparently resent her being in the job? I would say Yes.

I think that we can fairly conclude that the CEO of Australia Pty Ltd has been subject to conduct that is outlawed under both the Sex Discrimination Act and Fair Work Australia. You as shareholders of Australia Pty Ltd would expect the board of directors of the company to not just pay any applicable fines and damages, but to do something about changing the culture of the company that allows this kind of behaviour to flourish. The courts can make orders to stop certain conduct and order other conduct to occur — as shareholders you could demand the directors put in place some positive actions.

National Conversation

I hope that in making the case in this way I have persuaded you that the prime minister is entitled to feel aggrieved by the way she is being treated. And so are we. It says something about our country and about us that we could subject our leader to such vile abuse. It is even worse that we somehow think it is OK and even funny to demean her sexually in such crude and disgusting ways. What has happened to us? It is difficult not to conclude that we Australians are — so far at least — simply incapable of accepting a woman in charge of our country.

It is worth remembering that we were one of the last countries in our region to have a female prime minister or president. India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea and of course New Zealand — who managed two! — all had women leaders before we did. But surely Julia Gillard's continuing unpopularity is not just because she is a woman? It can't be because she was incredibly popular as Deputy Prime Minister. There are two reasons why Australians are having difficulty liking their prime minister.

For all of our history a prime minister has been a man in a suit who has been married (to a woman) and who has children. If our first female leader also happens to be our first unmarried, childless, living with a partner, not to mention atheist, prime minister then perhaps it is not surprising that the population is having some trouble getting their heads around this new reality. The fact that we have had ten female leaders at state or territory level apparently has not adequately prepared us for this. But I think there is something else at work.

And that is the deliberate sabotaging of the prime minister by political enemies, who include people within her own party, and who are using an array of weapons which include personal denigration, some of it of a sexual or gendered nature, to undermine her and erode her authority. It was not always so. I like to quote a story that did the rounds in Sydney a couple of years ago about the hard men of the NSW Right who got very nervous when they learned that then DPM Julia Gillard was planning to attend a big Labor function in the western suburbs. How would the traditional women of the west react to Gillard, the Sussex Street boys fretted: after all, she was single, had no kids and lived with a hairdresser. They made some inquiries and the feedback shocked them: these supposedly traditional women had no problems with Gillard's marital status, envied her freedom from the responsibilities of raising children and, most of all, were in awe of her for choosing a hairdresser for a partner! (Summers 2010).

In June 2010, in the week she became prime minister, Julia Gillard presided over a 14 per cent increase in her party's vote, with Labor's two-party preferred vote rising to 55 per cent to the Coalition's 45 per cent (Coorey 2010). Julia Gillard was preferred as prime minister by 55 per cent of Australians against the 34 per cent who preferred Tony Abbott (Cassidy 2010: 147). It is difficult to remember back two years ago to Julia Gillard's rock star status. She was popular — even adored — and there was no doubt she was on track to lead Labor to a stunning electoral victory. And then there were the leaks.

During the election campaign several extremely damaging leaks, put into the public domain by journalist Laurie Oakes, alleged that in Cabinet before the leadership change Gillard had opposed both the paid parental leave scheme and increases to the aged pension. Nothing could have been more calculated to wound her politically. She — the childless woman — stood accused of not caring about families with children (paid parental leave) and of being a heartless person who was against fairness for pensioners. Gillard's popularity dropped almost 20 points virtually overnight following the leak on 27 July about her supposedly not supporting the paid parental leave scheme, and — as we all know — the government's standing was damaged, its primary vote fell to 38 per cent and it was unable to gain a parliamentary majority in order to govern.² Gillard has never recovered from this.³

And she never will be able to recover while a similarly brutal and targeted campaign of vilification is still being conducted against her. In 2012, in addition to her parliamentary colleagues, it is also anyone who forwards a viral email, or 'likes' or 'shares' or adds to a sexist comment on Facebook, who re-tweets a crude comment, or engages in casual conversations where the country's leader is dismissed as a 'lying bitch'. It is time to stop. To draw a line. I think that by shining a light on what is out there, on the ways in which our country's leader is being demeaned and destabilised, and our country and its population is degrading itself, we might be able to shame the more decent among us into not going along with it any more.

We have to do this because I am alarmed that we have created a climate of misogyny that is widespread and contagious. It taints all of us, makes all women vulnerable and it is likely to act as a deterrent to young women thinking about a career in politics. Why would anyone want to step up for such treatment? I did take the advice to the extent that I have cut back on what I showed today but I am including many more examples in an R-rated Appendix to this talk which will be available on my website in coming days.

I was very impressed earlier this week when Helen Szoke, the Race Discrimination Commissioner, unveiled a strategy to end racism in this country: 'Racism: it stops with me'. Simple yet effective. I would like today for we shareholders in Australia Pty Ltd. to make a similar commitment: The persecution of our prime minister: it stops with me. So next time you get one of those emails, don't delete it — send it back to whoever sent it to you and tell them: It stops with me. When someone in your company refers to the prime minister disrespectfully, don't ignore it — tell them off: it stops with me. And if you stumble across a website or a Facebook page that contains offensive commentary or images, don't avert your eyes — make a comment calmly saying how sad this makes you feel: it stops with me.

This is something that is beyond party, beyond political affiliation, beyond voting intention and beyond whether or not you like Julia Gillard. We should all be worried about this vilification of our first female prime minister. I think the same thing would happen if she were from the Liberal Party. Indeed Julie Bishop, the deputy leader of the Opposition has told me that she is constantly attacked for being childless. So it does not matter whether you are Labor or Liberal, National Party or Green, whether you admired Julia Gillard or you despise her, whether you intend to vote for her or against her. If enough of us push back, perhaps we can stop it. And if we can, perhaps that will help restore some dignity and respect to the holder of our highest office. We would be a better place if we could.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following people who helped me in various ways in the preparation of this speech: Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick, Rodney Cavalier, Anne Cooper, Kay Dee, Georgia Fullerton, Jeff Mueller, Elizabeth Raper, Barbara Riley-Smith, Chris Ronalds SC, Janet Wilson (and several members of parliament who preferred their names not be made public).

Notes

1. See, for example, *Damian O'Keefe v Williams Muir's Pty Limited t/a Troy Williams The Good Guys* [2011] FWA 5311 and *Dover-Ray v Real Insurance Pty Ltd* (2010) 204 IR 399; [2010] FWA 8544.
2. Table first appeared in [crikey.com.au](http://media.crikey.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/arthur.jpg), available: <http://media.crikey.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/arthur.jpg> [accessed 1 October 2012].
3. 'Whatever the motivation behind the story, it left few people in the Labor Party in any doubt that the source was either Kevin Rudd or someone acting on his behalf, with or without his consent.' (Cassidy 2010: 163).

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About the Author

» **Dr Anne Summers AO** is a journalist and author who has served as Canberra bureau chief and North American editor for *The Australian Financial Review*. As editor-in-chief of *Ms.*, America's pioneering feminist magazine, with business partner Sandra Yates she led the second-only women-led management buyout in US corporate history. She is the author of the best seller *Damned Whores and God's Police*, which was first published in 1975, revised in 1994 and 2002 and is being reissued as an e-book in early 2013. Her other books are *Gamble for Power*, an account of the 1983 federal elections, *Ducks on the Pond*, her autobiography (1999), *The End of Equality. Work, Babies and Women's Choices in 21st Century Australia* (2003), *On Luck* (2008) and *The Lost Mother. A Story of Art and Love* (2009, 2010). Dr Summers led the Australian Office of the Status of Women from 1983 to 1986 and was an advisor on women's issues to Prime Minister Paul Keating. A pioneer of the Australian women's movement, she was involved in helping start Elsie, Australia's first women's refuge, and *Refractory Girl*, a women's studies journal. In 1989 Dr Summers was made an Officer in the Order of Australia for services to journalism and has been awarded honorary doctorates from Flinders University (1994) and The University of New South Wales (2000). In 2011 she was honoured, along with three other feminists, by Australia Post as an 'Australian legend' and appeared on a postage stamp. She can be contacted at Email: drannesummers@gmail.com Twitter: [@SummersAnne](https://twitter.com/SummersAnne) or Website: www.annesummers.com.au.