

**FROM THE MARRIAGE BAR
TO THE HYPATIA SCHOLARSHIP: WOMEN WORKING
IN MATHEMATICS IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES**

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The first woman lecturer in the Australian mathematical sciences was appointed in 1921, almost 70 years after the first Australian university was established in 1852. Since then the proportion of women among mathematical sciences students and academic staff has gradually increased, though it has not reached 50% even at the bachelor's completion level. Why so low, and why so slow? What can we do now to create a more inclusive and equitable higher education sector that allows everyone to contribute more fully? What does the past tell us about what works? I'll outline some of the history of women working in the mathematical sciences in Australian universities, with a focus on the national Women in Mathematics Special Interest Group (WIMSIG, founded in 2012) of the Australian Mathematical Society. Drawing on that history, I'll offer insights into our evolving understanding of why women and others have been underrepresented, and the initiatives we've used to address inequity. In addition to describing the Australian historical, societal and legal contexts, I'll consider broader explanatory factors that have acted to inhibit participation of women and other underrepresented groups worldwide. Juicy topics such as the marriage bar and its impact, the female minimum wage, and the Jennifer and John correspondence study will be addressed.

