

**'OURSELVES ALONE'?:
THE WORK OF SINGLE WOMEN IN SOUTH
AUSTRALIA, 1911–1961: THE INSTITUTIONS WHICH
THEY SHAPED AND WHICH SHAPED THEM**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the work of *life-long* single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. Its argument is that, to achieve their work objectives, these women had to both contest and collude with the dominant ideologies, and institutional controls which disadvantaged them. The thesis asserts that this examination of a group of life-long single women undermines the stereotype of lonely, useless spinsters.

Three themes were investigated in this study. The first was the challenge of accommodating the heterogeneity of single women's work, the number of institutions which shaped their occupational choices, and where and how they worked. The second was revealing the extent to which life-long single women both subverted and supported the ideologies of the period 1911 to 1961 to achieve their work objectives. The third theme was to show the power of institutions to incorporate within their structures, organisational cultures and work practices the dominant ideologies. Because the women were linked by their unmarried state, not their occupations, the study integrates the labour force statistics and institutional histories with the personal life and work histories of a group of life-long single women.

Apposite developments in Feminist History, Labour History and Organisational Theory, as well as the particular characteristics of South Australia have informed this analysis. Feminist History highlighted the importance of identifying the extent to which women both contested and colluded with the dominant ideologies. Labour History publications revealed the limited research on voluntary work and work done for religious reasons or to execute social responsibilities. Organisational Theory, in particular the field of Organisational Culture, fostered the investigation of single women's understanding of and negotiation with the dominant institutional cultures of the period.

This research demonstrates that the life-long single women studied here needed to and did test the boundaries of women's work in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. The small achievements of these single women provided for the next generation an example of the strengths and weaknesses of negotiation and conciliation to improve women's access to and success in the paid workforce.

DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

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INTRODUCTION: ‘SPINSTERS INDISPENSABLE’¹ OR ‘SURPLUS WOMEN’?²

On 23 June 1913, Miss Kate Cornell spoke to the Victorian Women’s Political Association on the topic ‘Spinsters Indispensable’, ‘a quaint presentation of the masculine idea of the unmarried woman.’³ This provoked the editor of the *Argus* to assert that ‘spinsters are, without doubt indispensable, but only to convert into wives.’⁴ But it was a member of Kate Cornell’s audience who stressed the State’s need for and use of single women in the paid labour force:

Miss Pinckney suggested that the Director of Education might be asked what he would do without the unmarried State school teachers. These spinsters were essential to the service of the State.⁵

Thesis Topic and Aims

In her statement Miss Pinckney named, in specific terms, the two topics which this thesis examines in a wider context: the work of South Australian single women in a time when long-term permanent employees were presumed to be men, and the complex relationships between women and the relevant institutions. After an analysis of the South Australian female labour statistics and identification of the number of institutions which have shaped women’s work, three organisations are examined in detail. These are the South Australian Education Department, the Catholic religious order, the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, and the South Australian Industrial Court. The influence of these institutions on the single women is emphasised in the thesis title: “‘Ourselves alone’?”:⁶ The work of single women in South Australia, 1911–1961: The institutions which shaped them and which

¹ *The Woman Voter*, no. 55, 1913, p. 1.

² Quoted in Bacchi, C., ‘The “woman question” in South Australia’, in *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, ed. E. Richards, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, pp. 403–32, p. 406.

³ *The Woman Voter*, no. 55, 1913, p. 1.

⁴ Quoted in Holmes, K., ‘“Spinsters indispensable”: Feminists, single women and the critique of marriage, 1890–1920’, *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 29, no. 110, 1998, pp. 68–90, p. 75.

⁵ *The Woman Voter*, no. 55, 1913, p. 2.

⁶ English translation of ‘Sinn Fein’, an Irish political party.

they shaped'. The thesis investigates whether or not, in their work, the single women studied ever were or could be alone, apart from institutions.

This research is a partial redress of the lack which Rosemary Auchmuty identified in 1975:

But the makers of modern research, apparently unable to conceive of woman detached from the conventional family situation, have not seen fit to provide us with a book about working spinsters or single women in the workforce.⁷

It is notable that in 1998 Katie Holmes⁸ still cited Beverley Kingston's 1975 book, *My Wife, My Daughter, and Poor Mary Ann*,⁹ as the major study of the work of Australian single women. There Beverley Kingston had highlighted the invisibility of single women:

Unmarried women have been excluded on two grounds from real participation in the workings of society: on the grounds that they are women, and on the grounds that they are unmarried.¹⁰

One of the aims of this thesis is to evaluate whether or not society knew about, let alone valued, the work of life-long single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961.

Coincidentally in 1913, the American missionary Jessie Ackermann published her book *Australia From a Woman's Point of View*. This indefatigable organizer for the Women's Christian Temperance Union had visited Australia four times between 1889 and 1912. Her blunt assessment of Australian women in the workforce was that:

Australia may be, and probably is, the working man's paradise, but it is far from a celestial condition for working and business girls.¹¹

⁷ Auchmuty, R., 'Spinsters and trade unions in Victorian Britain', in *Women at Work*, eds A. Curthoys et al., Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, Canberra, 1975, pp. 109–22, p. 110.

⁸ Holmes, "'Spinsters indispensable': Feminists, single women and the critique of marriage, 1890–1920", p. 72.

⁹ Kingston, B., *My Wife, My Daughter, and Poor Mary Ann: Women and Work in Australia*, Nelson, Melbourne, 1975.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹¹ Ackermann, J., *Australia From a Woman's Point of View*, Cassell Australia, Sydney, 1981 (1913), p. 205.

The different standpoints revealed in the statements of Miss Kate Cornell, Miss Pinckney, the editor of the *Argus* and Jessie Ackermann highlight contradictory social attitudes to the work of life-long single women, the subject of this research. An ‘humorist of no mean order,’¹² Miss Kate Cornell knew that the ironic title of her talk, ‘Spinsters Indispensable’, would probably inspire a choleric response, and the editor of the *Argus* obliged. Implicit in his assertion was the assumption that the single state is a stage in a woman’s life-cycle. Judith Bennett and Amy Froide have highlighted the importance of identifying the implicit assumptions underlying the term ‘single woman’. They distinguished between ‘life-cycle singlewomen [sic]’, who later married, and ‘lifelong singlewomen [sic]’ who never married.¹³ It was the life-long single women whom the *Adelaide Observer* described as ‘surplus women’ in the 1880s and whose paid, unpaid and voluntary work is the subject of this thesis.¹⁴

The comments of Jessie Ackermann and Miss Pinckney relate directly to this research. Jessie Ackermann posited ‘working and business girls’ against ‘working men’, thereby emphasising the youth and single status of most women in the Australian labour force.¹⁵ This was also the dominant situation in South Australia between 1911 and 1961.¹⁶ While Miss Pinckney concentrated upon single women in the labour force, she used the negative term ‘spinsters’, which usually refers to women beyond marriageable age.¹⁷ Despite the dominance of single women in the Australian female labour force between 1911 and 1961,¹⁸ the research on their work is very limited. There are major studies on women in

¹² *The Woman Voter*, no. 55, 1913, p. 2.

¹³ Bennett, J. M. & Froide, A. M. (eds), *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250–1800*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1999, p. 2.

¹⁴ Quoted in Bacchi, ‘The “woman question” in South Australia’, p. 406.

¹⁵ Hunter, T., ‘The employment of women in Australia’, *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1961, pp. 94–104.

¹⁶ The female labour forces statistics are examined in Chapter 2.

¹⁷ The research literature on spinsters is reviewed in Chapter 1.

¹⁸ Australia. Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1911–1965*.

the professions,¹⁹ the institutional restrictions against women working in particular occupations,²⁰ the barriers to married women remaining in the labour market²¹ and the unacknowledged work of women as wives and mothers in the home.²² In this field, the South Australian single women in Alison Mackinnon's book, *Love and Freedom: Professional Women and the Reshaping of Personal Life*,²³ and Penelope Gregory's paper, 'Constructing the glass ceiling: Economics, gender and supply in the South Australian office, 1900–1935',²⁴ are two of few South Australian studies.

The emphasis of the above studies is on a particular occupation or profession, and, therefore, references to the youth and unmarried state of the majority of women employees are few and far between. Furthermore, these references are usually in the context of refuting the Marxist theory of the reserve army of labour – thus, for example, Melanie Nolan's analysis:

While the Victorian Clerk's Union agitated to exclude married women, it sought to protect single business girls who would leave employment to marry. The majority of clerks in the depression, then, were single women, under 25 and there were few calls for them to give up their jobs to men. Above all, employers were keen to keep female labour in the depression because it was, as it had been for some time, cheap.²⁵

¹⁹ e.g. Thornton, M., *Dissonance and Distrust: Women in the Legal Profession*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1996; Theobald, M. & Dwyer, D., 'An episode in feminist politics: The *Married Women (Lecturers and Teachers) Act, 1932–47*', *Labour History*, no. 76, May 1999, pp. 59–77; Theobald, M., 'Women teachers' quest for salary justice in Victoria's registered schools, 1915–1946', *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 1983, pp. 1–43.

²⁰ e.g. Deacon, D., 'The employment of women in the Commonwealth public service: The creation and reproduction of a dual labour market', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 41, no. 3, 1982, pp. 232–50; Deacon, D., 'Equal opportunity and Australian bureaucracy 1880–1930', *Australian Quarterly*, vol. 57, no. 1/2, 1985, pp. 32–46; Mumford, K., *Women Working: Economics and Reality*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1989.

²¹ e.g. Ryan, E. & Conlon, A., *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work 1788–1974*, Thomas Nelson (Aust.), Melbourne, 1975.

²² e.g. Matthews, J. J., 'Deconstructing the masculine universe: The case of women's work', in *All Her Labours*, vol. 1, ed. Publications Collective of the *Third Women and Labour Conference*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1984, pp. 11–23.

²³ Mackinnon, A., *Love and Freedom: Professional Women and the Reshaping of Personal Life*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997.

²⁴ Gregory, P., 'Constructing the glass ceiling: Economics, gender and supply in the South Australian office, 1900–1935', *The Flinders Journal of History and Politics*, vol. 18, 1996, pp. 103–15.

²⁵ Nolan, M., 'Making clerks and re-shaping the white-collar workforce in the twentieth century', *Labour History*, no. 63, Nov. 1992, pp. 65–82, p. 80.

This gap is all the more significant when it is linked with the literature on the gendered division of the Australian labour market whereby the majority of women were concentrated in a limited number of occupations. This literature suggests that except for the years of World War II, there were few significant changes in the gendered division of paid labour between 1911 and 1961.²⁶

Judith Bennett and Amy Froide have described research into single women before 1800 as *nascent*,²⁷ an adjective equally applicable to research into Australian single women of all periods. Authoritative biographies of the most notable single women have been written, for example, on Catherine Helen Spence;²⁸ Rose Scott;²⁹ Mother Mary MacKillop;³⁰ and Vida Goldstein.³¹ This ‘great woman’ historical approach provides a limited understanding of the work of the majority of single women. A few South Australian single women, such as Mary P. Harris³² and May Douglas,³³ have written and self-published slender autobiographies. But most life-long single women warrant only passing references in family and institutional histories. Thus Kath Marner and Heather McIntyre reminisced about an older boarder at Adelaide’s St Mary’s Hostel in the 1940s and early 1950s:

Miss Pilkington, originally from Georgetown, was an older woman who did not go out to work. Miss Pilkington spent most of the day and evening crocheting in the lounge ... she could look out the front and see whoever came. She would know all your boyfriends and

²⁶ Hunter, ‘The employment of women in Australia’; Hunter, T., ‘Some factors which determine the distribution of the female work force’, *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1962, pp. 108–19; Richmond, K., ‘The workforce participation of married women in Australia’, in *Social Change in Australia: Readings in Sociology*, ed. D. E. Edgar, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1974, pp. 267–309.

²⁷ Bennett & Froide (eds), *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250–1800*, p. 4.

²⁸ Magarey, S., *Unbridling the Tongues of Women: A Biography of Catherine Helen Spence*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1985.

²⁹ Allen, J., *Rose Scott: Vision and Revision in Feminism*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1994.

³⁰ Gardiner, P., *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop: The Authorised Biography*, E.J. Dwyer, Alexandria, NSW, 1994.

³¹ Bomford, J., *That Dangerous and Persuasive Woman: Vida Goldstein*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1993.

³² Harris, M. P., *In One Splendour Spun: Autobiography of a Quaker Artist*, Mary Packer Harris, Adelaide, 1971.

³³ Douglas, M. S., *A Happy Life 1904–*, M. Douglas, Adelaide, 1988.

when they came and what they looked like. That was her interest ... she was really interested in us as people.³⁴

On the canvas of Australian women's history which has been filled in apace since the late 1960s,³⁵ adult single women are still shadowy figures barely discernible behind their married sisters. In the patchwork quilt which is the history of women's work in Australia, this research provides another piece for inclusion. Whilst the relationship between this study and the literature is spelt out in Chapter 1, a brief statement of the three propositions for undertaking this study is appropriate here. Firstly, life-long Australian single women and their work are relatively unexamined, providing a 'field for many tillings'.³⁶ Secondly, there is an eastern seaboard dominance of Australian feminist history writing³⁷ which needs to be balanced with research done in other States. Thirdly, the period 1911 to 1961 is, as Joy Damousi has noted, an era 'largely unexamined and unexplained'.³⁸ In this period, the Australian Censuses were the only official sources of information on women in the paid workforce.³⁹ Therefore, the Australian Censuses of 1911, 1921, 1933, 1947, 1954 and 1961 provide the institutional bookends and intervening snapshot pictures of the work of single women over fifty years. In her pioneering study of the period and the work of feminists, Marilyn Lake thus explained the few references to single women:

³⁴ O'Neil, B., *Learning For Life: St Mary's Hostel (1916–1972) and the Catholic Women's League Child Care Centre (1975–1999)*, Catholic Women's League of S.A. Inc., Adelaide, 1999, pp. 17, 25.

³⁵ For an overview, see the bibliographies in Magarey, S. & Ryan, L., *A Bibliography of Australian Women's History*, A.H.A. Bibliographies in Women's History, no. 6, ed. P. Grimshaw, Australian Historical Association, Melbourne, 1990; Matthews, J. J., 'Doing theory or using theory: Australian feminist/women's history in the 1990s', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 27, no. 106, 1996, pp. 49–58; Caine, B. et al. (eds), *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998.

³⁶ Radford, W. C., *A Field For Many Tillings: Research in Education in Australia Today*, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic., 1964.

³⁷ Davidson, D., 'A citizen of Australia and of the world: A reappraisal of Bessie Mabel Rischbieth', in *Women and Citizenship: Suffrage Centenary*, eds P. Crawford & J. Skene, Studies in Western Australian History 19, Centre for Western Australian History, University of Western Australia, Perth, 1999, pp. 99–113.

³⁸ Damousi, J., 'Marching to different drums: Women's mobilisations, 1914–1939', in *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation*, eds K. Saunders & R. Evans, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Sydney, 1992, pp. 350–97, p. 363.

³⁹ The 1911 Census was the first which the Commonwealth Department of the Bureau of Census and Statistics conducted after its establishment in 1905. *Year Book, Australia*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 1988, p. 46.

In their critique of sexual relations between men and women, Australian feminists focussed, in particular, on the vulnerable condition of the wife. Their political agenda was less concerned than that of English feminists with the plight of the single woman; the different demographic situation in Australia, with men outnumbering women, meant that that the vast majority of Australian women – including feminists – married at some point in their lives.⁴⁰

Themes

As befits a study which emphasises the negotiations of single women with institutions, the thesis examines their work within institutional frameworks. But interwoven throughout the organisational analyses and personal stories are three major themes described briefly below and drawn out in the Conclusion. The first is the challenges of accommodating within a research study both the heterogeneity of single women's work and the institutions which shaped their occupational choices, and where and how they worked. The second is the extent to which life-long single women both contested and colluded with the ideologies of the period 1911 to 1961 to achieve their work objectives. The third theme investigates the power of institutions to incorporate within their structures, organisational cultures and work practices the dominant ideologies.

The single women studied for this thesis are a group linked by only one criterion, their unmarried status. There were artists and accountants, doctors and dentists, nurses and social workers, educators and musicians, factory workers and dressmakers. Individually, they were employers, employees, self-employed or of independent means, and among them there were significant differences of class, income and religion. The heterogeneous work of this small group offers the space to examine both the nature and purpose of work, both for the women themselves and the South Australian society of their time. The thesis investigates further Drusilla Modjeska's asides:

If this was a generation to benefit from a breach in the masculine order, it was not a generation of women in opposition to men ... [But] the culture was not kind to the spinster.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Lake, M., *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, p. 35.

⁴¹ Modjeska, D., *Stravinsky's Lunch*, Picador, Sydney, 1999, pp. 190, 186.

The thesis asserts that the work of life-long single women in the period under study demonstrates the falseness of the stereotype of lonely, useless spinsters, ‘surplus women’.

Between 1911 and 1961 the domestic ideology, which prescribed for adult women the role of wives and mothers, was one which life-long single women had to contest since they were not fulfilling these roles. However, this thesis also seeks to identify the other ideologies which both freed and constrained single women in the achievement of their work objectives. ‘The good of the community’,⁴² which President Jethro Brown invoked as his guiding principle in the first Equal Pay case in the South Australian Industrial Court in 1918, points to ‘the complex intermingling of ideologies’,⁴³ with which working single women had to contend. The discussion on ‘women’s work’ examines the erroneous psychological beliefs about the work which women could and should do, and the legislation which constrained women but not men in certain occupations.⁴⁴ This study also explores the extent to which world events and changing social attitudes affected single women in the labour force. For example, the study examines whether or not Australia’s need for female labour during World War II broadened the ambitions and opportunities for single women in the paid labour force.

The investigation into the power and role of institutions on the work of single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961 emphasises in particular the number of organisational theories which affected their work. For example, research in organisational structure and culture⁴⁵ and industrial relations⁴⁶ have highlighted their interrelationships with the domestic ideology on the role of adult women as wives and mothers. The detailed examination of these ideologies is done in Chapter 1. This is a further extension of that which Jill Matthews studied in *Good and Mad Women*.⁴⁷ She examined the Education

⁴² *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 40.

⁴³ Bennett, L., ‘The construction of skill: Craft unions, women workers and the Conciliation and Arbitration Court’, *Law in Context*, vol. 2, 1984, pp. 118–32, p. 125.

⁴⁴ Hunter, ‘Some factors which determine the distribution of the female work force’, p. 108.

⁴⁵ e.g. Mills, A. J., ‘Studying the gendering of organizational culture over time: Concerns, issues and strategies’, *Gender, Work and Organization*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2002, pp. 286–307.

⁴⁶ e.g. Pocock, B. (ed.), *Strife: Sex and Politics in Labour Unions*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1997.

⁴⁷ Matthews, J. J., *Good and Mad Women: The Historical Construction of Femininity in Twentieth-century Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1984.

Department, the Arbitration System and the Immigration Department to demonstrate the 'ways in which three institutions shaped the gender-order and enforced it.'⁴⁸

Thesis Organisation

The above Introduction offers the reader an outline of the thesis topic, its aims and objectives. The detailed examination of the relevant issues and their relationship with the research literature is done in Chapter 1. The number of possible interpretations of critical terms, for example, 'single women' and 'work', has meant that the definitions adopted by significant institutions have influenced the structure of this thesis. In this regard, the use of language has been as important as the primary sources, the research literature and the methodology. Therefore, the relevant literature review has been incorporated within the discussion of critical terms and methodology.

Chapter 2 investigates the South Australian female labour statistics from the Australian Censuses held in 1911, 1921, 1933, 1947, 1954 and 1961. The detailed examination has three aims. The first is to consider whether single women were as disadvantaged as married women by the institutional control of labour force statistics. The second is disaggregation of the statistics by the occupational status categories of employee, employer, self-employed and unemployed, to test Thelma Hunter's 1961 judgement that the significant changes post-World War II were in 'the age composition of the [female] workforce and its marital status.'⁴⁹ This also enables a comparison of the trends in male and female employee numbers and ratios in the total labour force statistics. The personal stories of some single women who were in the paid labour force illustrate the differences between single women, especially in their responses to the dominant ideologies. The third aim is a short analysis of single women in the industry statistics to highlight the gendered division of labour in South Australia between 1911 and 1961.

Chapter 3 examines the working lives of some single women for their correspondence with the research literature. For these women, the identified factors affecting occupational

⁴⁸ Matthews, J. M., 'Good and mad women: A study of the gender order in South Australia 1920–1970', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 1978.

⁴⁹ Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia', p. 96.

choice were all present and the women recognised the extent to which personal qualities, family, education and work institutions had structured their individual choices. Highlighted is the fact that the determination of single women to achieve their work objectives crossed class, religious and economic boundaries. The examination of the working lives of nurses and teachers reveals the similarities and differences in the institutional controls and opportunities for women in these two feminine occupations.

Chapter 4 studies the work of single women who were influential in the South Australian Education Department between 1911 and 1961. This is done according to Vivien Hart's research agenda of 'management style, role of policy networks outside the bureaucracy and the advantages and disadvantages of new and gendered policies and institutions and the relationship between innovation, separatism and marginalization.'⁵⁰ With due acknowledgment that these women stretched rather than broke through the institutional boundaries limiting women in the paid labour force, the investigation argues that they were 'active crusaders, not passive servants of the state.'⁵¹

Chapter 5 is an investigation of the Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph; an organisation established and run by single women for the elementary education of poor Catholic children. The examination highlights the strength of the organisational structure and culture of the Sisters of St Joseph which enabled the nuns to achieve their mission under difficult conditions. This chapter also considers the purpose of work since the Sisters of St Joseph worked for religious reasons, not for an income or to further their careers.

Chapter 6 examines the most significant equal pay cases in the South Australian Industrial Court between 1911 and 1961. It has sought to show where, in its judgements, the South Australian Industrial Court 'unprivileged'⁵² and then denied the value of women's work. The analysis focuses on the dominant role of the Court in the achievement of, or failure to achieve, single women's paid work objectives and the willingness of unionised women employees to go to the Court and use a range of strategies to achieve their objectives.

⁵⁰ Hart, V., 'Feminism and bureaucracy: The minimum wage experiment in the District of Columbia', *Journal of American Studies*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1992, pp. 1–22, p. 18.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵² Heagney, M., *Arbitration at the Cross Roads*, National Press Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 1954, p. 103.

The Conclusion relates the evidence from Chapters 2 to 6 to the themes underlying this research. First, the investigation will show the value of studying the work of single women. Life-long single women are a little-studied minority group whose work is marked by its heterogeneity. But these characteristics have offered the opportunity to investigate the relationship between paid and unpaid work and the links between the specific employment related and the general definition of 'work'. By concentrating upon the influences of organisations upon the work of single women, I will be able to point to the relationship between organisational culture and the dominant ideologies of the period. I will argue in this thesis that single women tested the institutional controls over the gendered division of labour in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. As individuals, they took advantage of the wider work opportunities available to women but their achievements brought few gains for the majority of women. The power of institutions, the third theme in this research, remained an effective Maginot Line to control women's work in South Australia during this period. However, the life-long single women studied did not conform to the spinster stereotype alluded to in 'surplus women'.

1 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

1.1 Introduction

The introduction to this thesis described in general terms the topic, aims, objectives and rationale for the investigation into the work of single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. The purpose of this chapter is to locate the research within the literature, identify the significant issues considered in the thesis, explain the methodology and discuss sources. To highlight the role of language and definition of terms in a study of the work of single women, the literature review begins with an analysis of the role of official language and the institutional definitions of critical terms, such as ‘single women’.

1.2 Language

One of the themes in this thesis is the power of institutions to have their definitions of terms, for example, ‘single women’, ‘work’ and ‘women’s work’, become the standard. The Australian Census ‘Questionnaire and Instructions’ provide one of the clearest examples of the institutional control of language to ensure responses which the institution wants. The inherent complexity and ambiguity of the 1961 Census questions and instructions were most evident for a woman who wished to work but was currently not in the workforce. She could register herself as ‘Unemployed (U)’ or ‘Engaged in unpaid home duties (HD)’. However, HD was entered under Question 11, ‘Persons not engaged in an industry, business, profession, trade or service’ and U was entered under Question 12 ‘Unemployment’.¹ Thus the woman had to first decide which question best represented her situation. Between 1911 and 1961, the householder completing the Census form probably rarely considered that a woman at home could be unemployed or an unpaid helper rather than the dependant implicit in ‘home duties’. Furthermore, the reality of the employer ban on the permanent appointment of married women probably influenced most of that group to record themselves as engaged in home duties. Linguists and

¹ *Australian Census*, 1961, vol. 8, p. 244.

poststructuralists have focused on the power of language.² This is an issue which Katherine Holden raised in her thesis, ‘The shadow of marriage: Single women in England, 1919–1939’:

The invisibility of these women in interwar society is suggested by a lack of language, an absence of terms which transcend the stereotypes and explain or value their relationships and work.³

The feminists of the late twentieth century who named and worked for the legislation against sexual harassment in the workplace proved beyond doubt the importance of language. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge that some single women in this research often used the language of the domestic ideology despite its irrelevance in their personal lives. For example, in 1938, Adelaide Miethke, the South Australian Education Department’s first Inspector for Girls’ Central Schools between 1924 and 1941, spoke to the Housewives Association on the topic, ‘Preparing girls for their ultimate career.’ A life-long single woman, whose ‘two sisters acted as secretaries and “dressers”’⁴ for her, Adelaide Miethke not only categorised a woman as ‘a distinct – and inferior – category of worker in the masculine economy’,⁵ she also stressed the woman’s future role:

Upon leaving school, in the years before marriage there is little difficulty in finding congenial work for these well-trained girls ... [with] a broad cultural education which will enable them to take their place as the helpers and companions of men.⁶

² In 1972, Yon Maley noted the relationship between language and the environment; ‘language being an instrument that can be used creatively to improve our thinking and fashion our environment.’ Maley, Y., ‘Usage: Variety in our English’, in *Good Australian English and Good New Zealand English*, ed. G. W. Turner, Reed Education, Sydney, 1972, pp. 65–82, p. 76. Susan Halford and Pauline Leonard highlighted the contribution of feminist poststructuralism to the role of language: ‘The poststructuralist focus on language means that power and language are understood as integrally connected.’ Halford, S. & Leonard, P., *Gender, Power and Organisations: An Introduction*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2001, p. 33.

³ Holden, K., ‘The shadow of marriage: Single women in England, 1919–1939’, PhD thesis, University of Essex, 1996, p. ii.

⁴ Ashton, J., *Out of the Silence*, Investigator Press, Adelaide, 1971, p. 7.

⁵ Matthews, *Good and Mad Women: The Historical Construction of Femininity in Twentieth-century Australia*, p. 48.

⁶ Miethke, A., ‘Preparing girls for their ultimate career’, *The Housewife*, vol. 9, no. 9, Sept. 1938, p. 30.

1.3 Terminology

In the following examination of the various interpretations of ‘feminists’, ‘bureaucrat’, ‘single women’, ‘work’, ‘institutions’ and ‘the gendered division of labour’, apposite developments in Feminist History, Labour History and Organisational Theory have been incorporated. The relevant characteristics of South Australian history are also acknowledged where appropriate.

In this thesis I am using the terms ‘feminists’ and ‘feminism’ with due acknowledgment that their meanings have changed over time.⁷ Marilyn Lake has identified ‘five phases of Australian feminism’ and the time period of this research falls within the second and third of her phases: ‘the era of the woman citizen during the first three decades’ of the twentieth century and ‘equality with men from the 1940s to the 1960s’.⁸ The extent to which some single women in South Australia held on longer to the ‘woman citizen’ concept of feminism is revealed in Ruth Gibson’s 1950 ‘Presidential address to the National Council of Women’:

Women have the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. We must keep ourselves informed on matters of importance. It is by women themselves that progress can be achieved.⁹

I have used the term ‘bureaucrat’ in relation to single women working in administrative positions of the South Australian Education Department, in the tradition of Vivien Hart’s study. She justified her use of the terms ‘feminism’ and ‘bureaucracy’ in her research on the achievements of Clara Mortenson-Beyer who was the first and only Secretary of the District of Columbia Minimum Wage Board between 1918 and 1923.¹⁰ The Education Department women studied in this research would not have identified themselves with the now more familiar Australian term ‘femocrat’. This is a term first coined in the 1970s to describe women bureaucrats developing government policies ‘responsive to women’s

⁷ Caine et al. (eds), *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, pp. 419–20.

⁸ Lake, M., ‘A history of feminism in Australia’, in *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, eds B. Caine et al., Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 132–42.

⁹ Quoted in Pitt, B., *The History of the National Council of Women in South Australia: 1902–1980*, National Council of Women of S.A., Adelaide, 1986, p. 70.

¹⁰ Hart, ‘Feminism and bureaucracy: The minimum wage experiment in the District of Columbia’.

needs.’¹¹ The women holding senior positions in the South Australian Education Department would probably have seen themselves as educational administrators. However, as Hester Eisenstein stressed in her study, ‘the femocrats drew on a strong historical tradition’.¹²

1.3.1 Single Women

The definition of a single woman reveals in microcosm the methodological and theoretical issues considered in this study. It highlights both the underlying ideological assumptions about women’s primary role in society, and the complex interrelationships between single women, families and other organisations, the social, religious, political and employer institutions. Alison Prentice and Marjorie Theobald have stressed the ‘formidable methodological and theoretical problems’ facing historical researchers in this field:

To write their history is to confront a central theoretical problem in understanding women in the past: how to evoke the oppressive structures that maintained a patriarchal order while at the same time affirming that women were not the passive victims of that oppression.¹³

The power of language is most clearly seen in the various descriptions of a single woman: ‘a never married woman’, ‘an unmarried woman’, ‘a spinster’, and ‘a life-long or life-cycle single woman’. The definition of a single woman as a ‘never married woman’ is the one which the Australian Bureau of Statistics used for census collection throughout the period of this research and still used in the 2001 Census.¹⁴ This institutional definition defines a single woman by her negative marital status. Throughout its history, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has used familial definitions for all women and men. While this can be explained as the demographers’ necessary concern for population growth, its effect on the

¹¹ Watson, S., ‘Femocrats’, in *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, eds B. Caine et al., Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 420–1, p. 420.

¹² Eisenstein, H., *Inside Agitators: Australian Femocrats and the State*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1996, p. xx.

¹³ Prentice, A. & Theobald, M., *Women Who Taught*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1991, p. 9.

¹⁴ In the 2001 Census, the Australian Bureau of Statistics explained to householders that the marital status question referred to registered marriages and that people in a de facto relationship who have never been legally married should mark the ‘Never married’ box. In contrast, the New Zealand Census allows people to indicate if they are in same-sex relationships.

accuracy of labour force statistics is examined in detail in Chapter 2. Furthermore, this institutional definition of single women as never married is one which privileges the family, as Michelle Barrett and Mary McIntosh noted in 1982:

What happens outside families is much affected by the existence of the family as a privileged institution. Every other aspect of social life is planned on the assumption that people live in families.¹⁵

The present day shorthand definition of a single woman as an unmarried woman points to the growing use of more neutral language inclusive of a larger group of women.¹⁶ Today, the category ‘unmarried women’ includes women who are in de facto relationships, both heterosexual and homosexual, and those who have been married and are now widowed, divorced or separated and are living alone and/or with children. This shorthand description defines single women by their current marital status. However, the question which then arises is whether or not this approach blurs the definition of single women to the extent that the category ‘single women’ is no longer useful as an analytical tool, or it further highlights the dominance of marriage. The importance of marital status is also clear in the *Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary* definition of the stereotypical term, ‘spinster’:

Spinster. Unmarried woman; (elderly) woman thought unlikely to marry¹⁷

This definition hints at the relationship between age and marital status in the description of single women. But, as this thesis seeks to demonstrate, age is also a significant factor in an investigation of the power of work institutions over women in the paid labour force.

In contrast to the above definitions, Judith Bennett and Amy Froide’s description of single women as either life-cycle or life-long highlights the stages in women’s lives rather than emphasising the importance of marital status in the classification of women.¹⁸ This

¹⁵ Barrett, M. & McIntosh, M., *The Anti-social Family*, Verso Editions, London, 1982, p. 77.

¹⁶ Millar, J., ‘Cross-national research on women in the European community: The case of solo women’, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1992, pp. 77–84.

¹⁷ Turner, G. W. (ed.), *The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1987, p. 1087.

¹⁸ Bennett & Froide (eds), *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250–1800*, p. 2.

distinction is important because life-long single women are excluded from the traditional ‘female life cycle model of marriage, motherhood, grandmotherhood and widowhood.’¹⁹ To overcome the methodological problems associated with the life-cycle understanding of single women, Katherine Allen used the life course perspective for her research.²⁰ This more biological analysis according to childhood, young adulthood, middle years and old age, also ‘incorporates the notions of time, place and context [and is] a focus on the process itself.’²¹

While the life course perspective may elide the economic, class and religious differences between women, its emphasis on context does offer a more nuanced analysis to examine the work of particular single women. For example, in the late 1930s, Kathleen Kyffin Thomas and May Douglas were middle-aged single women of independent means who had spent many years in voluntary work. Kathleen Kyffin Thomas (1891–1973) had been a voluntary and paid worker with the Australian Red Cross since its establishment in Adelaide in 1915. May Douglas (1904–1999) joined the Girl Guides in 1923, rising to District Commissioner 1926–1933 and State Commissioner 1952–1958. After the outbreak of World War II, May Douglas was invited to register for the Australian Women’s Army Service²² where she was ‘the first South Australian woman to achieve the rank of lieutenant-colonel.’²³ Between 1939 and 1945, Kathleen Kyffin Thomas was the Divisional Commandant of the Red Cross Emergency Services Committee and established Red Cross branches throughout South Australia.²⁴ In the life course perspective, May Douglas and Kathleen Kyffin Thomas moved from voluntary to paid work because of World War II. Millicent Poole and Janice Langan-Fox reviewed the increasing use and relevance of the life course perspective and the related life-span approach as research

¹⁹ Allen, K. R. & Pickett, R. S., ‘Forgotten streams in the family life course: Utilization of qualitative retrospective interviews in the analysis of lifelong single women’s family careers’, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, vol. 49, Aug. 1987, pp. 517–26, p. 517.

²⁰ Allen, K. R., *Single Women/Family Ties: Life Histories of Older Women*, Sage Publications, London, 1989.

²¹ Allen & Pickett, ‘Forgotten streams in the family life course: Utilization of qualitative retrospective interviews in the analysis of lifelong single women’s family careers’, p. 518.

²² Douglas, *A Happy Life 1904–*, p. 33.

²³ Kelton, G., ‘Guiding light for girls’, *The Advertiser*, 15 May 1999, p. 66.

²⁴ Page, M. (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, Wakefield Press, Netley, SA, 1986, p. 118.

methodologies and argued that it is necessary to consider both the personal and social context of women's work:

Women's orientations, achievements and successes are, in reality, constructed in a particular social, cultural and geographical context, often shaped and driven by powerful underlying economic forces and changes.²⁵

The strength of institutional language is most clearly seen in the definition of 'single women' employed in this text. I am using the institutional definition of the Australian Commonwealth Statistician that 'a single woman is a never married woman.' This is necessary for a number of reasons. Because this research concentrates on the relations between single women and institutions in the period 1911 to 1961, it is essential to use a definition of single women which both employers and employees would have accepted at that time. Furthermore, this research needs the labour force data from the Australian Censuses of 1911, 1921, 1933, 1947, 1947 and 1961 to provide the necessary demographic context in which to ground the work of particular single women. An additional strength of the Census data is that its labour force statistics subdivide women, not only by their marital status, but also by their occupational status. To subdivide the group, single women, by occupational status of employers, self-employed, employees and unemployed respectively, offers more research opportunities. The traditional divisions of women by marital status, class, religion or ethnicity blurs the fact that working class as well as middle and upper class women could be employers and self-employed as well as employees.²⁶

If this use of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' definition seems to be yet one more example of institutional dominance in the analysis of women's history, the personal primary sources also provide the opportunity to look at single women's own perceptions of their identity within this broad categorisation. Circumscribing single women by marital status highlights the dominance of familial and domestic ideology throughout this period, but it also provides the space to examine how single women saw themselves and the centrality of work in their lives. It offers room for single women to be examined as the

²⁵ Poole, M. E. & Langan-Fox, J., *Australian Women and Careers: Psychological and Contextual Influences Over the Life Course*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997, p. 5.

²⁶ Anker, R., *Gender and Jobs: Sex Segregation of Occupations in the World*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 1998, p. 416. Richard Anker has stressed the research importance of looking beneath the total figures in labour force statistics 'to measure and understand the sex segregation of occupations.'

subject rather than the object of research. For example, Mary P. Harris (1891–1978) claimed a very different identity for herself in the subtitle of her autobiography, *In One Splendour Spun: Autobiography of a Quaker Artist*.²⁷

1.3.2 Work

Work is a problematic term whose ‘masculine bias’ needs further ‘deconstructing’.²⁸ In the ironic view of Shane Maloney, ‘the concept of work is still pending definition.’²⁹ When unmediated by adjectives such as *unpaid, private, voluntary or housework*, the popular assumption is that ‘work’ is paid work. Deborah Simonton has stressed that in the nineteenth century ‘work came to represent productive market-orientated activity, often disassociated from the home.’³⁰ This narrow interpretation limits unnecessarily both the institutional influences on the work of single women and the nature and purpose of their work. The centrality of work in the lives of the single women studied is probably taken to its extreme in Adelaide Miethke’s reported remark: ‘I fear work has become almost a disease with me!’³¹ But if the example of Adelaide Miethke is typical, for single women ‘work’ always meant both paid and unpaid work.

Ellinor Walker (1893–1990) was one single woman who both acknowledged the different interpretations of work and still integrated them:

My life has always flowed along in three distinct streams, most of the time concurrently. And those streams have been, first of all, my professional life, which was the teaching of little children; and secondly the great amount of voluntary work that I’ve always done with a number of organisations coming under the general heading of ‘social political

²⁷ Harris, *In One Splendour Spun: Autobiography of a Quaker Artist*.

²⁸ Matthews, ‘Deconstructing the masculine universe: The case of women’s work’, p. 11.

²⁹ Maloney, S., *The Brush Off*, Text Publishing, Melbourne, 1996, p. 186.

³⁰ Simonton, D., *A History of European Women’s Work: 1700 to the Present*, Routledge, London, 1998, p. 2.

³¹ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Gibson, R., Adelaide Miethke [radio script], *Personalities Remembered* (Radio program), no. 26, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Adelaide, broadcast 29 Nov. 1970.

associations'; and then my recreational interest which has ever been literature and drama, with some personal writing.³²

Ellinor Walker ran her own kindergarten, Greenways School, for twenty-four years. As she herself acknowledged, the League of Women Voters was her 'dearest voluntary interest'.³³ Ellinor Walker integrated her paid and voluntary work when she was one of the driving forces behind the League's successful lobbying to parliament for the *Guardianship of Infants Act 1940*, which 'gave mothers equal parental rights with fathers.'³⁴ In 1936, Ellinor Walker integrated her voluntary and recreational interests when she co-authored with Heather Gell the Women's Centenary Council pageant, 'Heritage'.

For many of the single women in this research, their unpaid community work either arose out of or was directly related to their paid work. For example, in her private practice, Dr Helen Mayo (1878–1967) concentrated upon 'midwifery and the medical problems of women and children.'³⁵ However, she is best remembered for the two institutions she co-founded to improve children's health. Dr Helen Mayo and Miss Harriet Stirling established the School for Mothers in 1909, better known as the Mothers' and Babies' Health Association and now part of the South Australian Health Commission.³⁶ In 1913 when the Adelaide Children's Hospital would not admit babies under two years for fear of cross-infection, Dr Mayo and her friends opened their own hospital which the South Australian Government took over in 1917 as Mareeba Babies Hospital.³⁷ Dr Helen Mayo was also committed to her own research and the education of women. In 1926, she was the first woman to whom the University of Adelaide awarded the Doctor of Medicine.

³² The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Walker, E., Radio interview with Ellinor Walker [sound recording] Interviewer: Janet Robertson, Now in Retirement (Radio program), 2nd series, 1972/73, no. 20, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Adelaide, broadcast 3 Dec. 1972.

³³ State Library of South Australia: Walker, E. G., OH 31/5, Interview with Ellinor Gertrude Walker [sound recording] Interviewer: Beth M. Robertson, South Australian Women's Responses to the First World War, Adelaide, recorded 1979.

³⁴ Prest, W. et al. (eds), *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 2001, p. 312.

³⁵ Horan, M. B., 'A goodly heritage: An appreciation of the life and work of the late Dr Helen Mayo', *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 1, no. 8, 1971, pp. 419–24, p. 422.

³⁶ Prest et al. (eds), *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History*, p. 363.

³⁷ Hicks, N., H. M. Mayo, Private Medicine and Public Health [unpublished], Dept of Community Medicine, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, 1986.

Therefore it is not surprising that she was the first woman to be a member of the Council of the University of Adelaide, a position which she held from 1914 until 1960. This was a first appointment for an Australian woman.³⁸

The problems associated with the definition of ‘work’ are thrown into sharp relief when paid work is compared with philanthropy and voluntary work as illustrated in the life of Margaret Davey. Margaret Davey, born in 1915, was a life-long single woman of independent means, best remembered for her active involvement and leadership in the YWCA, the National Council of Women, the Methodist Church, and the Liberal Party.³⁹ Yet, almost as an aside, Margaret Davey revealed that although she had not completed her Science degree ‘for various reasons,’⁴⁰ she tutored part-time in the Zoology Department of the University of Adelaide for twenty-one years, at the same time as when she was an active leader in the above organisations.⁴¹ Tuula Gordon has linked philanthropy with the increased opportunities for women in the paid workforce in the early twentieth century:

Spinsters, in their philanthropical work in Britain, the USA and Finland, laid the foundations of the welfare state, which eased the position of unmarried women. The developing welfare state provided public employment for women and released them from some of their tasks in the private sphere. Spinsters formed the backbone of feminism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴²

Australian labour and feminist historians have been selective in their research on women’s work. For example, *Labour History* published its first complete issue on ‘Women at Work’ in 1975,⁴³ but it was 2001 before the same journal published an issue devoted to

³⁸ Hicks, N. & Leopold, E., ‘Mayo, Helen’, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 10, eds B. Nairn & G. Serle, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1986, pp. 466–7, p. 466.

³⁹ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, p. 75.

⁴⁰ State Library of South Australia: Davey, M., OH 611/1, Interview with Margaret Davey [sound recording] Interviewer: Lizzie Russell, Davey Family Oral History Project, Migration Museum, Adelaide, recorded 28–30 Aug. & 6 Sept. 2000, p. 1.

⁴¹ It is possible to argue that, because Margaret Davey did not need an income from paid work, her part-time work in the University and her voluntary work in women’s organisations was judged to be one of the social responsibilities for a woman of independent means.

⁴² Gordon, T., *Single Women: On the Margins?*, Macmillan, London, 1994, p. 14.

⁴³ Curthoys, A. et al. (eds), *Women at Work*, Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, Canberra, 1975.

‘Volunteers and Volunteering’. Melanie Oppenheimer, the editor for this issue of *Labour History*, highlighted the definitional and organisational problems associated with this topic:

The major problem concerning the inclusion of voluntary labour as a legitimate topic of study for labour history involves how ‘work’ and ‘worker’ is defined.

It [volunteer labour] is unpaid and falls outside the domain of formal industrial relations systems and the market. There is, therefore much ‘unpacking’ and deconstruction required of volunteer work.⁴⁴

Because of the importance of voluntary work in the lives of the single women, Chapter 4 will investigate the voluntary work of the senior single women in the Education Department and its integration with their paid work. These particular examples enable a further investigation of two issues identified by Melanie Oppenheimer. In her view, researchers have ignored volunteering because ‘it is not measured within the GDP and remains outside the dominant economic framework of our society [and] it is only when major voluntary action is taken over by government that historians write about it.’⁴⁵ As well as the November 2001 issue of *Labour History*, the articles of Cora Baldock,⁴⁶ Melanie Oppenheimer,⁴⁷ Joanne Scott⁴⁸ and Joan Beaumont⁴⁹ mark the renewed interest in women’s voluntary work. In her 1998 article, Melanie Oppenheimer stressed the importance of distinguishing between ‘voluntary work’, ‘volunteers’ and ‘voluntary associations’.⁵⁰ Throughout this chapter, and because of its institutional context, I have used Cora Baldock’s definition of voluntary work: ‘activities which people willingly

⁴⁴ Oppenheimer, M., ‘“We all did voluntary work of some kind”: Voluntary work and labour history’, *Labour History*, no. 81, Nov. 2001, pp. 1–11, pp. 3, 6.

⁴⁵ Oppenheimer, M., ‘The history of volunteering in Australia’ [program transcript], *Perspective (Radio program)* [online], Radio National, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, broadcast 24 June 2004, viewed 25 June 2004, <<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/perspective/stories/s1139779.htm>>.

⁴⁶ Baldock, C., ‘Feminist discourses of unwaged work: The case of voluntarism’, *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 13, no. 27, 1998, pp. 19–34.

⁴⁷ Oppenheimer, M., ‘Voluntary work and labour history’, *Labour History*, no. 74, May 1998, pp. 1–9.

⁴⁸ Scott, J., ‘Voluntary work as work?: Some implications for labour history’, *Labour History*, no. 74, May 1998, pp. 10–20.

⁴⁹ Beaumont, J., ‘Whatever happened to patriotic women, 1914–1918’, *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 31, no. 115, 2000, pp. 273–96.

⁵⁰ Oppenheimer, ‘Voluntary work and labour history’, p. 1.

contribute without wages, and on a regular basis, for a formal organisation.’⁵¹ This is a narrower definition of voluntary work, which may also include voluntary work to informal groups and personal philanthropy, but it emphasises the institutional approach of this thesis.

Chapters 4 and 5 offer the opportunity to use the concepts of ‘social capital’ to demonstrate both the breadth of single women’s work and the role of institutions. Since the publication, in 1986 and 1988 respectively, of the articles of Pierre Bourdieu⁵² and James S. Coleman⁵³ and the world-wide lectures and publications of Robert Putnam,⁵⁴ the concept of ‘social capital’ has passed into everyday usage. Eva Cox’s⁵⁵ Boyer Lectures in 1995 did much to spread the idea of social capital in Australia. Her accessible definition points to my research methodology which seeks to evaluate the voluntary work of single women:

Social capital refers to the processes between people which establish networks, norms and social trust and facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit.⁵⁶

While Pierre Bourdieu accented the institutional basis of ‘social capital’, James S. Coleman focused on the personal commitment to ‘social capital’. Jeanette Pope has summarised the difference as follows:

The fundamental difference between the Bourdieu and Coleman definitions lies in how and why the social processes develop. For Bourdieu, social processes are constrained by underlying economic organisation, while for Coleman, they are created by the free will of individuals ... The differences in definition between these two authors are important because any measurement using the Bourdieu definition would have to include an

⁵¹ Baldock, ‘Feminist discourses of unwaged work: The case of voluntarism’, p. 19.

⁵² Bourdieu, P., ‘The forms of capital’, in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. G. Richardson, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1986, pp. 241–58.

⁵³ Coleman, J. S., ‘Social capital in the creation of human capital’, *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 94, suppl., 1988, pp. 95–120.

⁵⁴ Putnam, R. D., ‘Bowling alone: America’s declining social capital’, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 1995, pp. 65–78.

⁵⁵ Cox, E., *A Truly Civil Society*, 1995 Boyer Lectures, ABC Books, Sydney, 1995.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

understanding of the material conditions that drive the formation of social processes, whilst an analysis using the Coleman approach needs only to consider motivation at the individual (or aggregated individual) level.⁵⁷

The work of Doris Taylor M.B.E. (1901–1968) illustrates that successful single women recognised the need for an institution as well as their own personal commitment to achieve their voluntary work objectives. Although an invalid pensioner confined to a wheelchair, Doris Taylor founded Meals on Wheels Incorporated⁵⁸ in 1954. During the Great Depression, she ‘organised a soup kitchen for school children at Norwood and the experience heightened her awareness of poverty and hardship.’⁵⁹ Doris Taylor was particularly concerned for the sick and frail elderly people who were still living in their own homes. She studied the literature on Meals on Wheels services in London and South Melbourne and in 1953 detailed her proposals to a pensioners’ meeting in the Adelaide suburb of Norwood. Doris Taylor’s own account of this meeting highlights Coleman’s stress on individual action:

On 6th October 1953 in the Rechabite Hall, the Parade, Norwood, on a pouring wet day, 96 aged and invalid pensioners who had accepted my invitation to details of a plan which I thought might help to solve the problem of the aged, were the first to know of my proposed plan. After hearing this they declared that, given the opportunity, they would rather stay in their homes and have a three-course hot meal brought to them at midday five days a week than go to institutions, even though they would be well fed, well housed and lovingly cared for. They unanimously decided to give me £5 from the social fund of their club for the initial expenses. That was the beginning and it must always be remembered that Meals on Wheels sprang from the help given by the poorest, the weakest, the most vulnerable group in our community.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Pope, J., *Social Capital and Social Capital Indicators: A Reading List* [online], Public Health Information Development Unit, the University of Adelaide, 2000, viewed 30 Jan. 2001, <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/nphp/socap/index.htm>>, p. 2.

⁵⁸ Meals on Wheels is an incorporated non-profit organisation providing meals in their own homes to the elderly and invalids.

⁵⁹ Cudmore, M., *A Meal a Day... A History of Meals on Wheels in South Australia 1953–1966*, Meals on Wheels (SA) Incorporated, Adelaide, 1996, p. 3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

But Doris Taylor was equally aware that her plans needed an organisation for their successful implementation. Therefore in December 1953, a meeting of eighteen welfare organisations established the Meals on Wheels organisation and appointed a Provisional Committee to prepare a Constitution and the Articles of Incorporation. Doris Taylor was the first organiser.⁶¹ She became its paid organizer in 1958.⁶² Once Meals on Wheels became an incorporated not-for-profit organisation it was able to negotiate with public and private institutions for funds. The voluntary work of Doris Taylor is one South Australian example to support the findings of Norman Mackenzie in 1961 on the number of single women in voluntary organisations and the need for large non-profit organisations to have a paid staff.⁶³

While the ‘concept of work is still pending precise definition,’⁶⁴ this research also raises questions about the purpose of work. The institutional emphasis on paid work and income discussed above ignores the fact that a great deal of work is done for other purposes. Kerreen Reiger and Tuula Gordon have stressed career opportunities opening up for women during this period. However, the voluntary educational work of the senior women in the Education Department⁶⁵ in addition to their prescribed duties did not increase their salaries. They did it for the education of students. Similarly, the Sisters of St Joseph, motivated by religious faith, worked for a ‘modest livelihood’ to ensure that poor Catholic children would receive a Catholic education.⁶⁶ Researchers have also investigated the extent to which the concept of service, which Florence Nightingale used to raise the profile and acceptability of nursing, contributed to the low salaries of nurses.⁶⁷ Therefore, it is notable that the general studies of women’s work in Australia concentrate upon paid work

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Healey, J. (ed.), *S.A.’s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques*, Historical Society of South Australia, Adelaide, 2001, p. 133.

⁶³ MacKenzie, N., *Women in Australia*, F.W. Cheshire, Melbourne, 1962, p. 302. He found that at a 1959 meeting of the National Council of Women ‘of [the 74 women] 34 were single, 30 married and 10 were widows’ (p. 302). He also reported that the YWCA of Australia had about 150 employees.

⁶⁴ Maloney, *The Brush Off*, p. 186.

⁶⁵ See details in Chapter 4.

⁶⁶ See details in Chapter 5.

⁶⁷ See details in Chapter 3.

with few references to work and its purpose for religious women in particular.⁶⁸ Helen Ware has identified the long history and role of nuns:

The European Christian tradition is very unusual ... in having provided by way of the convent a full role for women who never married, nor had children.⁶⁹

The major research and publications on the work of Australian women in religion is found in the histories of religious girls' schools⁷⁰ and the histories of women's religious orders.⁷¹ These studies emphasise chronological developments.

1.3.3 Woman's Work and the Gendered Division of Labour

One of the aims of this research is to analyse the relationship between the gendered division of labour and negotiations of single women with institutions. The 'gendered division of labour' is a shorthand phrase which emphasises that the majority of women in the paid labour force are clustered at the lower levels in a relatively narrow range of occupations, in what is derogatorily called 'women's work'.⁷² 1911 to 1961 was the period when the dominant domestic ideology advocated that the most important roles of adult women were as wives and mothers.⁷³ This ideology both encouraged and enabled work

⁶⁸ e.g. Bevege, M. et al. (eds), *Worth Her Salt: Women at Work in Australia*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1982; Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter, and Poor Mary Ann: Women and Work in Australia*; Allen, M. et al. (eds), *Fresh Evidence, New Witnesses: Finding Women's History*, South Australian Govt Printer, Adelaide, 1989; Ryan & Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work 1788–1974*; MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*.

⁶⁹ Ware, H., 'The effects of fertility, family organization, sex structure of the labour market, and technology on the position of women', in *Women's Position and Demographic Change*, eds N. Federici et al., Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993, pp. 259–84, p. 263.

⁷⁰ e.g. Phillips, J., *Not Saints, But Girls: The First Hundred Years of St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School*, St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School Inc., Adelaide, 1994; Gale, F. (ed.), *Women and Education at St Aloysius College Adelaide 1880–2000*, St Aloysius College, Adelaide, 2000; Burley, S., 'None more anonymous?: Catholic teaching nuns, their secondary schools and students in South Australia, 1880–1925', MEd thesis, University of Adelaide, 1992.

⁷¹ e.g. MacGinley, M. R., *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*, 2nd edn, Crossing Press, Darlinghurst, NSW, 2002; McLay, A., *Women on the Move: Mercy's Triple Spiral*, Sisters of Mercy Adelaide, Adelaide, 1996.

⁷² Frances, R. et al., 'Women and wage labour in Australia and Canada, 1880–1980', *Labour History*, no. 71, Nov. 1996, pp. 54–89; Hakim, C., 'A century of change in occupational segregation 1891–1991', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, vol. 7, no. 4, 1994, pp. 435–54.

⁷³ In *Getting Equal*, Marilyn Lake has also identified this period as that of the 'woman citizen'. Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*, p. 9.

institutions to employ predominantly young single women in a narrow range of occupations. In one of the first Australian studies, Margaret Power used the 1911 to 1971 Australian Census statistics to show that there were no significant changes in the gendered division of labour during the period.⁷⁴ She used Valerie Kincade Oppenheimer's methodology to demonstrate that 'throughout the period 1911–1971, about 80% of all women worked in occupations which were disproportionately female, that is, where women formed a higher proportion of workers in those occupations than they did in the work force as a whole.'⁷⁵

Despite the wealth of research in this area, this thesis concentrates upon three little-studied areas. The first is whether or not the gendered division of labour in South Australia was further cemented in the first half of the twentieth century when the majority of female workers were young, unmarried, and spent an average of ten years in the labour force.⁷⁶ The second is an investigation of whether or not there were and are significant institutional differences for women working in different feminised professions, for example teaching and nursing.⁷⁷ The third area concentrates upon a group of single women, the Sisters of St Joseph, who worked for religious reasons in the non-profit sector of the economy.⁷⁸

The legal and industrial context for the gendered division of labour in South Australia is examined in Chapter 6 where the Equal Pay and Public School Teachers' judgements of the South Australian Industrial Court are analysed in detail. The nature of Australian industrial relations between 1911 and 1961 gave the State, in the form of industrial courts, the umpire's role to arbitrate the relationships between employers and employees. In 1919, W. Jethro Brown, first president of the South Australian Industrial Court, delivered one of the strongest public statements against life-long single women in the labour force when he ruled against equal pay for women in the Printing Trades Case:

⁷⁴ Power, M., 'The making of a woman's occupation', *Hecate*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1975, pp. 25–34, p. 26.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷⁶ The youth and unmarried status of women workers in South Australia is examined in Chapter 2.

⁷⁷ This analysis is done in Chapter 3.

⁷⁸ This examination is done in Chapter 5.

I am fully aware that there are exceptional cases of women who do not marry, but an Industrial Court has to determine its action by reference to types rather than exceptions.⁷⁹

When President Brown submitted his judgement in full to the *Yale Law Journal*, the editor published it with the comment that:

It is highly desirable that such a paper should receive a wider circulation in America than can be commanded by a magazine published in Australia ...⁸⁰

This is one example of the widespread belief throughout the Western world in this period that women were *life-cycle* workers in the paid labour force. When economic, industrial and population ideologies were added to the domestic ideology, working women became entwined, in Laura Bennett's words, 'in a complex intermingling of ideologies.'⁸¹

A little-studied aspect of the gendered division of labour in Australia is the relationship between women's work in all three sectors of the economy. The not-for-profit sector is the third arm of the economy, alongside the public and the for-profit sectors. The Catholic nuns are the best known example of single women working in this sector, but many other women also worked in denominational schools and hospitals, all part of the not-for-profit sector of the economy. In one of the first Australian publications on the not-for-profit sector, Mark Lyons has highlighted the dominance in this sector of the health, education and welfare industries.⁸² Since these are the industries with the highest proportion of women workers,⁸³ it is important to relate and to identify the role of the not-for-profit sector with Margaret Power's research. Kay Whitehead is one of the few researchers to acknowledge that a significant number of single women were employed in the not-for-

⁷⁹ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, II, p. 39.

⁸⁰ Brown, W. J., 'Judicial regulation of rates of wage for women', *Yale Law Journal*, vol. 28, 1919, pp. 236–54, p. 236.

⁸¹ Bennett, 'The construction of skill: Craft unions, women workers and the Conciliation and Arbitration Court', p. 125.

⁸² Lyons, M., *Third Sector: The Contribution of Nonprofit and Cooperative Enterprise in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2001. In a further point relevant to this research, he recorded that 'Catholic schools, for over a century, have educated over 20 per cent of Australian children' (p. 100).

⁸³ See examination in Chapter 2.

profit sector of the South Australian economy.⁸⁴ This gap stands in contrast to the work of feminist researchers⁸⁵ who have successfully demonstrated the link between women's reproductive work and the productive market economy.

The dominance of women in the not-for-profit sector of the economy also relates to another of the issues in this research – that is, whether or not the invisibility of life-long single women is partly explained by the fact that the majority worked with women and children. Marilyn Lake thus identified the situation:

Central to the creation of a maternalist welfare state was the appointment of women to a range of positions in the state as police, gaol matrons, factory inspectors, school inspectors, magistrates, Justices of the Peace,[sic] lawyers and doctors.⁸⁶

South Australia made a number of first appointments in this field, for example, the appointment of Kate Cocks (1875–1954) as the British Empire's first policewoman and Lydia Longmore (1874–1967) as Australia's first inspector of infant schools.

In addition, the wider impact of single women's paid employment on wives and mothers at home needs further investigation. Many feminist researchers, for example Jill Matthews,⁸⁷ have made the formerly invisible work of women as wives and mothers well known. However, few researchers have investigated the other side of Kerreen Reiger's wry comments:

As the reform strategies became institutionalized, they produced new career opportunities many of which were suited to, and seized by, women.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Whitehead, K., 'Women's "life-work": Teachers in South Australia, 1836–1906', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 1996.

⁸⁵ e.g. Oppenheimer, "'We all did voluntary work of some kind": Voluntary work and labour history'; Matthews, 'Deconstructing the masculine universe: The case of women's work'.

⁸⁶ Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*, p. 58.

⁸⁷ Matthews, 'Deconstructing the masculine universe: The case of women's work', p. 693.

⁸⁸ Reiger, K., *The Disenchantment of the Home: Modernizing the Australian Family, 1880–1940*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1985, p. 216.

The new professional-managerial class, from doctors and administrators to psychologists and kindergarten teachers, wanted to extend the mode of operation typical of the business and professional world to home and family life as well.⁸⁹

The Mothers' and Babies' Health Association⁹⁰ and the work of district nurses are the best known South Australian examples of the direct link between single women in the workforce and their influence on mothers and wives.

1.3.4 Institutions

This research investigates the extent to which institutions were the dominant influence on the work of single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. Therefore, the relevant organisations must be identified. Employment institutions are the visible and dominant gatekeepers to women's participation in the paid labour force. So long as the majority of employers did not employ married women in the labour force, they were supporting the ideology which decreed that an adult woman's primary role was as a wife and mother. Jill Matthews has highlighted the wide-ranging employment implications of this domestic ideology:

But the single woman is nonetheless treated as a distinct – and inferior – category of worker in the masculine economy because of the expectation that she would marry ... The gender ideology proclaimed for her, but not for him, a change of status and direction of work upon marriage. Whether or not she actually ever married, whether or not she remained in the home after marriage, this presumption inhibited her from working in certain fields, from acquiring certain skills, and hence denied or lowered her prospects for a career. The expectation of this status change coloured the working experiences and opportunities of all women.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Reiger, K., 'The gender dynamics of organizations: A historical account', in *Gender Matters in Educational Administration and Policy: A Feminist Introduction*, eds J. Blackmore & J. Kenway, Cygnet Press, London, 1993, pp. 17–26, p. 23.

⁹⁰ Raftery, J., 'Saving South Australia's babies: The Mothers' and Babies' Health Association', in *Playford's South Australia: Essays on the History of South Australia, 1933–1968*, eds B. O'Neil et al., Association of Professional Historians Inc., Adelaide, 1996, pp. 275–94.

⁹¹ Matthews, *Good and Mad Women: The Historical Construction of Femininity in Twentieth-century Australia*, p. 48.

However, employers are not the only gatekeepers to women's participation in the labour force. The work of the single women studied in this thesis and the research literature⁹² emphasise that the family, education systems, the legislature and the industrial court as well as voluntary organisations have all participated in determining the work opportunities available to women. Moira Gatens has stressed the need to examine the family alongside work, political and social organisations as one of the institutions shaping individual actions:

Social and political theorists rarely fail to list the family as a core institution. However, such acknowledgement rarely extends to a critical analysis or appraisal of the family ... Treating the family as a fully *social* institution will help to make its inter-dependence on all other institutions visible.⁹³

Therefore, in Chapter 3, the families of the single women have been subjected to the same organizational analysis applied to public institutions. Parents' decisions about the education of their daughters were and are central to women's future occupations.

Even the most cursory study of the work of single women reveals the dominant role of their families in their choice of occupations and in some instances their success at work. For example, Jessamine Buxton's father 'forbad' her to take up an overseas art scholarship⁹⁴ and anyone viewing her meticulous flower paintings is left wondering how her art would have developed had she been given the opportunity to visit the great art galleries and study with teachers overseas. In her article 'Dealing with love: The ambiguous independence of the single woman in early modern England,' Pamela Sharpe highlighted the extent to which the family could still influence their unmarried daughters even when they were geographically apart.⁹⁵

⁹² e.g. Poole & Langan-Fox, *Australian Women and Careers: Psychological and Contextual Influences Over the Life Course*; Holland, J., *Work and Women: A Review of Explanations for the Maintenance and Reproduction of Sexual Divisions*, Bedford Way Papers, University of London Institute of Education, London, 1981.

⁹³ Gatens, M. & Mackinnon, A. (eds), *Gender and Institutions: Welfare, Work and Citizenship*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 3, 4.

⁹⁴ Biven, R., *Some Forgotten... ..Some Remembered: Women Artists of South Australia*, Sydneham Gallery, Adelaide, 1976.

⁹⁵ Sharpe, P., 'Dealing with love: The ambiguous independence of the single woman in early modern England', *Gender & History*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1999, pp. 209–32.

The analytical tools to study single women's relationships with institutions are found in Organisational Theory where 'there are many theories that attempt to explain and predict how organizations and the people in them will behave in varying organizational structures, cultures and circumstances.'⁹⁶ The first organisational theories concentrated upon the structure and goals of institutions, their human resources, technology and environment. Feminists⁹⁷ have criticised these theories as gender-neutral discourses which disregard the sexual division of labour, ignore the patriarchal voices of the predominantly male authors, the hierarchical structures and masculine cultures dominant in many organisations. In the words of Joan Acker:

Studies of women's economic and occupational inequality, sex segregation, and the wage gap document the extent of problems but give us no convincing explanations for their persistence or for the apparently endless reorganization of gender and permutations of male power. Similarly, the extensive literature on women and management documents difficulties and differences but provides no adequate theory of gendered power imbalance.⁹⁸

The theory and methodology of organisational culture is particularly relevant for an investigation of single women's negotiations with institutions between 1911 and 1961. In general terms, organisational culture is the shorthand phrase which describes an institution's underlying values, assumptions, beliefs and attitudes as they are expressed in the structure, technology and behaviour of its members. One of the best known and most widely used definitions of organisational culture is that of Linda Smircich:

⁹⁶ Shafritz, J. M. & Ott, S. J. (eds), *Classics of Organization Theory*, 5th edn, Marcourt College Publishers, New York, 2002, p. 3.

⁹⁷ e.g. Cockburn, C., *In the Way of Women: Men's Resistance to Sex Equality in Organizations*, IRL Press, Ithaca, New York, 1991; Calás, M. B. & Smircich, L., 'Re-writing gender in organizational theorizing: Directions from feminist perspectives', in *Rethinking Organization: New Directions in Organization Theory and Analysis*, eds M. Reed & M. Hughes, Sage Publications, London, 1992, pp. 227–53; [Tancred-] Sheriff, P. & Campbell, E. J., 'Room for women: A case study in the sociology of organizations', in *Gendering Organizational Analysis*, eds A. J. Mills & P. Tancred, Sage Publications, London, 1992, pp. 31–45; Reiger, 'The gender dynamics of organizations: A historical account'.

⁹⁸ Acker, J., 'Gendering organizational theory', in *Gendering Organizational Theory*, eds A. J. Mills & P. Tancred, Sage Publications, London, 1992, pp. 248–60.

Organizations exist as systems of meaning which are shared to varying degrees ... Much of this commonality is developed through and perpetuated by such symbolic processes as the rituals, slogans and specialized vocabularies.⁹⁹

A similar stress on values, but with a wider application, is in Belinda Probert's definition of 'gender culture':

By gender culture, I means the norms and values that underpin what come to be defined as the 'desirable' forms of gender relations in a particular society, and the accepted ideas about the division of labour between men and women.¹⁰⁰

Women's understanding of and negotiation with institutional cultures is part of a growing trend in feminist research.¹⁰¹

Therefore, this thesis examines the role of organisational culture in two different educational institutions, both dependent upon the work of single women. Chapter 4 examines the work of senior women in the male-dominated Education Department of the South Australian Government. Chapter 5 is a study of the primary school education work of the Sisters of St Joseph whose female leadership was largely hidden from public view under the patriarchal leadership of the Catholic Church. This approach is in accord with Jane Humphries' argument about the particular responsibilities of feminist historians to examine specific institutions for their role in the gendered division of labour:

A move away from general and amorphous explanations, such as capitalism and patriarchy, to implicate specific institutions in specific ways, is useful not only to convince the sceptical but also to understand the accumulation and disadvantages that women have inherited within labour markets that appear to offer equal opportunities.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Smircich, L., 'Organizations as shared meanings', in *Classics of Organization Theory*, eds J. M. Shafritz & S. J. Ott, Brooks/Cole Pub. Co., Pacific Grove, California, 1992, pp. 520–6, p. 525.

¹⁰⁰ Probert, B., 'Grateful slaves' or 'self-made women': A matter of choice or policy? [unpublished], Clare Burton Memorial Lecture 2001, University of South Australia, Adelaide, presented 20 Sept. 2001.

¹⁰¹ e.g. Mills, A. J., 'History/herstory: An introduction to the problems of studying the gendering of organizational culture over time', in *Gender, Identity and the Culture of Organizations*, eds I. Aaltio & A. J. Mills, Routledge, London, 2002, pp. 115–36; Mills, 'Studying the gendering of organizational culture over time: Concerns, issues and strategies'.

¹⁰² Humphries, J., 'Women and paid work', in *Women's History: Britain, 1850–1945*, ed. J. Purvis, UCL Press, London, 1995, pp. 85–105, p. 100.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 examine three institutions which influenced the work of a significant group of South Australian single women: that is, the South Australian Education Department, the Sisters of St Joseph within the Catholic Church and the South Australian Industrial Court, all of which had strong bureaucratic elements. Since sociologists have noted that ‘the characteristic talent of Australians ... is for bureaucracy’,¹⁰³ it is necessary to investigate whether or not bureaucratic characteristics were significant in the above institutions. The dominant features of bureaucracy: division of labour, well-defined authority hierarchy, high formalisation, impersonal nature, employment decisions based on merit, career tracks for employees and distinct separation of members’ organisational and personal lives are well known and subject to many feminist critiques.¹⁰⁴ Joan Acker has thus summarised the problem for women establishing their own organisations:

Organizational logic is anchored in and helps to reproduce the fundamental structuring of industrial societies, in which the production of things and services for which money is exchanged is clearly separated in time, place, form of organization, and conceptualization from the reproduction of human beings and daily life.¹⁰⁵

Nevertheless, “Modern” structural organization theory,¹⁰⁶ which strives to incorporate theories of organisational culture, human relations and systems into the theories of rational, bureaucratic work institutions does offer an analytical tool to further examine the work of single women. This is most clearly seen in the writings of Henry Mintzberg, one of the best known modern structural theorists. For example, around ‘every active organization’ Henry Mintzberg circled *ideology* for which he noted ‘an alternative popular term recently has been “culture”’.¹⁰⁷ His definition of ideology with its emphasis on traditions and beliefs corresponds with Linda Smircich’s definition of organisational culture discussed

¹⁰³ Davies, A. F., *Australian Democracy*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1964, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ e.g. Franzway, S. et al., *Staking a Claim: Feminism, Bureaucracy and the State*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1989; Reiger, ‘The gender dynamics of organizations: A historical account’; Witz, A. & Savage, M. (eds), *Gender and Bureaucracy*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1992; Hart, ‘Feminism and bureaucracy: The minimum wage experiment in the District of Columbia’.

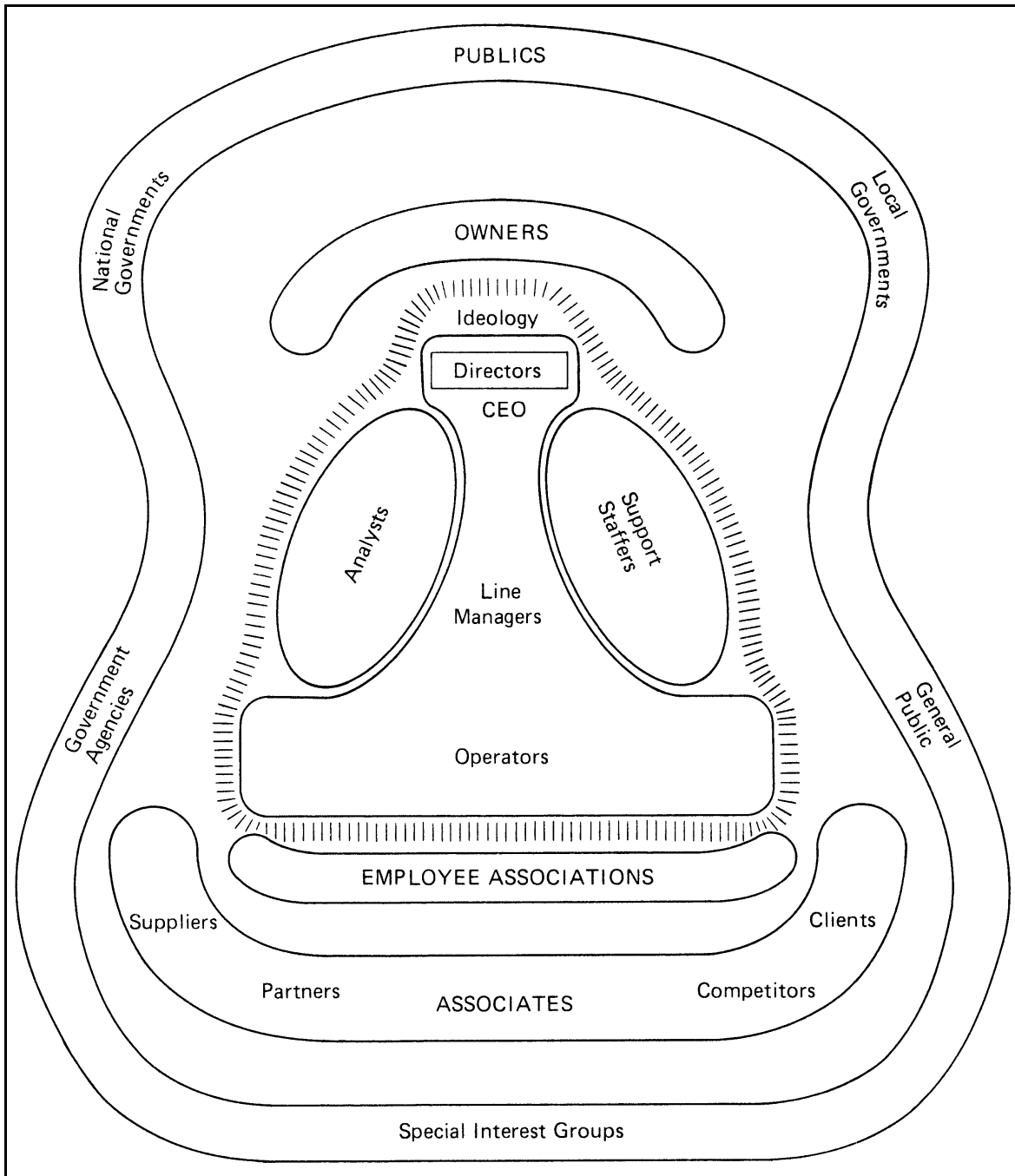
¹⁰⁵ Acker, J., ‘Feminist goals and organizing processes’, in *Feminist Organizations: Harvest of the New Women’s Movement*, eds M. M. Ferre & P. Y. Martin, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1995, pp. 137–44, p. 139.

¹⁰⁶ Shafritz & Ott (eds), *Classics of Organization Theory*, p. 197.

¹⁰⁷ Mintzberg, H., *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*, The Free Press, New York, 1989, p. 98.

above. Figure 1 illustrates Mintzberg’s representation of the five basic parts of an organisation, its ideology and the external and internal influences upon the organisation.

FIGURE 1
Internal and External Influencers of an Organization



Source: Mintzberg, H., *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*, The Free Press, New York, 1989, p. 100.

Locating single women within one of the five parts of an organisation offers me one explanation for their power or powerlessness. In Chapter 4, I have used Mintzberg's concept of a professional bureaucracy to evaluate the influence of Inspector Lydia Longmore and the Education Department's psychologist, Dr Constance Davey, on the operating core, the classroom teachers.

Some single women understood the role of special interest groups and used them to influence institutional decisions. This is revealed in Dr Helen Mayo's account of how she obtained government funding for the Mareeba Babies Hospital:

After a year or two we had learned a great deal about the problems of management and administration and the care of babies, but the financial difficulties were overwhelming. We took steps to interest the Government by inviting the wives of cabinet ministers to tea at the hospital and explaining our aims. We then approached the Government and the hospital was taken over, transferred to Woodville, and in August 1917 became Mareeba Babies Hospital.¹⁰⁸

Dr Helen Mayo appreciated the power of politicians' wives and she used it to achieve her work objectives. Starting with the institutional relationships of particular single women is in accord with Susan Hekman's proposed general and specific categories:

I argue that we should start with historically and culturally situated women and develop both specific and general categories by which we can evaluate their social reality.¹⁰⁹

Henry Mintzberg's description of the external and internal influences on an organisation underlies my examination of whether or not single women actively shaped institutions as well as being shaped by them.

¹⁰⁸ South Australian Medical Women's Society, *The Hands of a Woman*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1994, p. 45.

¹⁰⁹ Hekman, S. J., *The Future of Differences: Truth and Method in Feminist Theory*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1999, p. 55.

1.4 Review of the Literature on Single Women and Their Work

The best known and strongest historical research into working single women is Martha Vicinus' 1985 book, *Independent Women*.¹¹⁰ This study of the English women's settlement communities, boarding schools, colleges, convents and hospitals run by middle-class Protestant single women between 1850 and 1920 highlights the agency of the single women who established and ran these institutions. Apart from the closing chapter on the suffragette movement and the role of doctors in hospitals, Martha Vicinus does not examine the condition of women working in male-dominated institutions, as were most of the single women studied in this research. Martha Vicinus does, however, highlight the masculine opposition to her female controlled institutions.

To date, there are no Australian equivalents of Martha Vicinus' book. The increasing number of Australian works on the education of girls,¹¹¹ histories of girls' schools¹¹² and orders of nuns¹¹³ highlight the patriarchal bounds within which they developed, but the implications of the single status of most of the teachers is glossed over. Women in charge of schools, hospitals and orphanages had challenging administrative responsibilities and their leadership, educational and financial skills were widely recognised.¹¹⁴

A particular strength of Martha Vicinus' book, *Independent Women*, is its integration of the personal and institutional records; for example, the oral histories of nurses and the hospitals' annual reports. I have used a similar approach in this thesis to avoid a too Olympian view of the work of single women in senior positions. Therefore, the decisions of Inspectors Adelaide Miethke and Lydia Longmore are balanced with the reminiscences of students and classroom teachers. There is a wealth of relevant primary sources, institutional records, personal papers and oral history interviews, available in State and institutional archives. Most of them are unmined.

¹¹⁰ Vicinus, M., *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850–1920*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1985.

¹¹¹ e.g. Kyle, N., *Her Natural Destiny: The Education of Women in New South Wales*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 1986.

¹¹² e.g. Phillips, *Not Saints, But Girls: The First Hundred Years of St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School*.

¹¹³ e.g. McLay, *Women on the Move: Mercy's Triple Spiral*.

¹¹⁴ e.g. Gale (ed.), *Women and Education at St Aloysius College Adelaide 1880–2000*; McLay, *Women on the Move: Mercy's Triple Spiral*.

The increasing but still limited amount of research on single women as a group tends to rely heavily upon either the records of single women or interviews with them. While the authors of the historical and sociological studies referred to below are meticulous in providing the social and economic contexts of their single women's lives, there are few references to the relevant and particular organisational records which would counter-balance the personal memories and analyses. Most emphasise Barbara Levy Simon's conclusion about the 'joy and dignity that working had provided.'¹¹⁵ For example, in her book, *Liberty, a Better Husband*, Lee Chambers-Schiller used the letters and memoirs of 100 single women from the north-eastern United States to identify why they remained single, the 'cult of single blessedness'.¹¹⁶ Her purpose was to identify these single women's 'desire for autonomy, to explore the self, to expand intellectual and personal horizons, and to serve God and community through the development and application of individual talents and abilities.'¹¹⁷ Margaret Adams' *Single Blessedness*,¹¹⁸ Barbara Levy Simon's *Never Married Women*¹¹⁹ and Katherine R. Allen's *Single Women/Family Ties*¹²⁰ are also in this tradition.

Since the publication of Beverley Kingston's *My Wife, My Daughter, and Poor Mary Ann* in 1975,¹²¹ and Louise Tilly and Joan Scott's *Women, Work and Family* in 1978,¹²² textbooks and research on women and work have appeared in increasing numbers. Deborah Simonon's *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*¹²³ and Julia Kirk Blackwelder's *Now Hiring: The Feminization of Work in the United States*,

¹¹⁵ Simon, B. L., *Never Married Women*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1987, p. 112.

¹¹⁶ Chambers-Schiller, L. V., *Liberty, a Better Husband: Single Women in America: The Generations of 1780-1840*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1984, p. 10.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹¹⁸ Adams, M., *Single Blessedness: Observations on the Single Status in Married Society*, Heinemann, London, 1976.

¹¹⁹ Simon, *Never Married Women*.

¹²⁰ Allen, *Single Women/Family Ties: Life Histories of Older Women*.

¹²¹ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter, and Poor Mary Ann: Women and Work in Australia*.

¹²² Tilly, L. & Scott, J. W., *Women, Work and Family*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1978.

¹²³ Simonon, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*.

1900–1995¹²⁴ are two relatively recent examples of general textbooks for students. Two strengths of *Now Hiring* have been used in this thesis. Firstly, Julia Blackwelder used the United States Bureau of Statistics data as the context in which to chart the changing nature of American women's work. Secondly, in her examination of the role of education in women's work, she went beyond the formal system. For example, she explored the role of the Girl Scouts in making girls aware of wider employment opportunities:

During the 1920s the Girl Scouts challenged girls to strike out on a nontraditional course of activities ... Badges introduced from 1913 through 1920 included Ambulance, Businesswoman, Clerk, Dairy Maid, Electrician, Flyer, Handywoman, Homemaker, Journalist, Telegraphist and Zoologist.¹²⁵

This is a rare inclusion in a general text on women's work. The sixty years in which May Douglas was actively involved with the Girls Guides is also a reminder that many life-long single women were involved with this organisation. Just as Julia Blackwelder featured the role of informal education in women's preparation for work, so too this research focuses on the voluntary as well as the paid work of single women.

The spinster stereotype of a poor, lonely and/or silly older woman has affected single women's work as well as their standing in society. The best known literary depiction is Miss Bates in Jane Austen's novel, *Emma*, with its acute assessment of the link between income and status:

A single woman with a narrow income must be a ridiculous, disagreeable old maid, the proper sport of boys and girls, but a single woman of fortune is always respectable and may be as sensible and pleasant as anyone else.¹²⁶

This judgement highlights the economic base for a single woman's role in Western society. For most middle-class single women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, their income was unearned, derived from annuities or inherited property. In contrast, the

¹²⁴ Blackwelder, J. K., *Now Hiring: The Feminization of Work in the United States, 1900–1995*, A & M University Press, College Station, Texas, 1997.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹²⁶ Austen, J., *Emma*, Pan Books, London, 1968 (1815), p. 80.

majority of South Australian single women between 1911 and 1961 had to work for their income.

In a wide-ranging analysis, Cecile Dauphin argued that single women became objects of pity and/or derision in the nineteenth century:

The literary figure of the spinster and the popularization of the stereotype were the work of the nineteenth century.¹²⁷

The core of her argument was that ‘Europe in the “age of statistics” discovered, and deplored, the fact that its population contained an excess of females.’¹²⁸ From the middle of the nineteenth century, in Britain, France and Australia, the collection of census statistics became more comprehensive and accurate. The government statisticians’ analyses of census statistics were widely circulated in the newspapers.¹²⁹ Therefore, the British, French and Australian colonial governments and their people learnt that there was a significant and apparently increasing group of single women, the majority of whom would never have children and who needed paid work to support themselves. In the popular European literature of the time, these women were presented as both problems and victims. Thus W. R. Gregg wrote in *National Review* in 1862:

... of the enormous and increasing number of single women in the nation, ... a number which, positively and relatively, is indicative of an unwholesome social state, and is both productive and prognostic of much wretchedness and wrong.¹³⁰

The problems arising from the spinster stereotype and women in the labour force is highlighted in the research of Evelyn Kerslake and Janine Liladhar.¹³¹ In the library career

¹²⁷ Dauphin, C., ‘Single women’, in *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 4, eds G. Fraisse & M. Perrot, Harvard University Press, London, 1993, pp. 427–42, p. 441.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 428.

¹²⁹ Hakim, ‘A century of change in occupational segregation 1891–1991’.

¹³⁰ Gregg, W. R., ‘Why are women redundant?’, *National Review*, no. 14, Apr. 1862, p. 436.

¹³¹ Kerslake, E. & Liladhar, J., “‘Jolly good reading’ for girls: Discourses of library work and femininity in career novels’, *Women’s History Review*, vol. 8, no. 3, 1999, pp. 489–504; Liladhar, J. & Kerslake, E., ‘No more library classes for Catherine: Marital status, career progression and library employment in 1950s England’, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, vol. 22, no. 2, 1999, pp. 215–24.

novels that they studied, Kerslake and Liladher found that senior women librarians are represented as grim spinsters with professional qualifications,¹³² while library work is presented as being particularly suitable for young women who will leave paid work when they marry:

women were constructed as having the qualities needed for library work; domesticity, orderliness, willingness to serve and a propensity for caring; ... women were *predominantly* welcomed into the ‘unpromotable’ category of library assistant, or to specialist roles with limited opportunities.¹³³

Evelyn Kerslake and Janine Liladher’s domestic description of a library assistant’s work immediately calls to mind Margaret Power’s wry observation that ‘occupations employing the majority of women are often derivative of housework.’¹³⁴

However, life-long single women have fought and do fight against the spinster stereotype and its effect on their work. A well-known South Australian example is in the memoirs of Dr Helen Mayo, recalling the first meeting of the School for Mothers:

Our Chairman jeered at the idea that spinsters could teach mothers, whose mother instinct was a natural gift. Though a little surprised, we were not unduly cast down – we had seen mother instinct at work.¹³⁵

In acknowledging the way in which the spinster stereotype attempted to limit the work of single women, Dr Helen Mayo was part of a long tradition of which Rose Scott,¹³⁶ Louisa May Alcott,¹³⁷ and the social reformer Catherine Helen Spence¹³⁸ are but a few examples.

¹³² Liladhar & Kerslake, ‘No more library classes for Catherine: Marital status, career progression and library employment in 1950s England’, p. 218.

¹³³ Kerslake & Liladhar, “‘Jolly good reading’ for girls: Discourses of library work and femininity in career novels’, p. 499.

¹³⁴ Power, ‘The making of a woman’s occupation’, p. 28.

¹³⁵ Mayo, H., ‘The place of women in the medical profession’, *Review (Adelaide Medical Students’ Society)*, May 1956, pp. 15–22, p. 20.

¹³⁶ Allen, J., “‘Our deeply degraded sex’ and “‘The animal in man’”: Rose Scott, feminism and sexuality 1890–1925’, *Australian Feminist Studies*, no. 7/8, 1988, pp. 64–91, p. 81.

¹³⁷ Chambers-Schiller, *Liberty, a Better Husband: Single Women in America: The Generations of 1780–1840*, p. 1.

The subtitle of Jocelyne Scutt's work, *Singular Women: Reclaiming Spinsterhood*, highlights her purpose in editing this book of essays:

Economic independence, the right to say and do as one wants, to live an autonomous life – these are important aims for women.¹³⁹

Sociologists, in particular, have refuted the spinster stereotype. For example, Robyn Penman and Yvonne Stolk have shown through interviews and the Australian Census data the gaps between reality and the dominant social and psychological myths.¹⁴⁰

Age is an important element in the spinster stereotype and has affected the methodology used in this research. The strength of the age factor is demonstrated not only in the *Argus* editor's reactions to Kate Cornell's speech, but also in Catriona Elder's research.¹⁴¹ She examined the newspapers and popular magazines for their representations of single women and highlighted the different media attitudes towards these women at the three significant stages of their lives, i.e. 'when society generally considered them too young to marry, then at women who were of marriageable age; and finally women who were considered too old to marry.'¹⁴²

Susan Cott Watkins emphasised that demographers differ from sociologists and historians in the demarcation age for single women.¹⁴³ Demographers, tracing population growth and fertility patterns, generally concentrate upon single women around 50 years and beyond child-bearing age. Therefore, in his State by State analysis, Peter McDonald used the population statistics of women in the 45–49 age group to show the percentage of never

¹³⁸ Spence, C. H., *Catherine Helen Spence*, Portable Australian Authors, ed. H. Thomson, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Qld, 1987, p. 546.

¹³⁹ Scutt, J. (ed.), *Singular Women: Reclaiming Spinsterhood*, Artemis, Melbourne, 1995, p. 3.

¹⁴⁰ Penman, R. & Stolk, Y., *Not the Marrying Kind: Single Women in Australia*, Penguin Books, Melbourne, 1983; Stolk, Y., 'The spinster stereotype: A demographic refutation?', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 16, no. 1, 1981, pp. 187–201.

¹⁴¹ Elder, C., "'The question of the unmarried": Some meanings of being single in Australia in the 1920s and 1930s', *Australian Feminist Studies*, no. 18, 1993, pp. 151–71.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 152.

¹⁴³ Watkins, S. C., 'Spinsters', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 9, no. 4, 1984, pp. 310–25, p. 310.

married women in South Australia, 1911–1961.¹⁴⁴ In contrast to demographers, sociologists and historians tend to consider all single women over 30–35 years as spinsters, because for the majority of women this is the upper limit of age at first marriage.¹⁴⁵ For example, Yvonne Stolk used 1976 Australian Census data to demonstrate that single women over 30 years are ‘overrepresented’ in comparison with other women on the standard measures of income, occupation, educational qualifications and residential location.¹⁴⁶ Tuula Gordon chose women above 35 years of age because ‘these women are likely to have thought about singleness.’¹⁴⁷

The different age ranges which researchers have used to study single women is also an important methodological issue in this thesis. For the analysis of the South Australian Census data on single women employees in the labour force, I have concentrated on women aged 25 years and older, with due acknowledgment that many of the single women will later marry. This relatively young age corresponds with the South Australian data on the median age of marriage for women in the period 1911 to 1961 as listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Median Age of Marriage for Women in South Australia, 1911–1961

Census Year	Median Age of Marriage for Women
1911	24.4
1921	24.6
1933	NA
1947	22.5
1954	21.4
1961	21.2

Source: *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 17.

¹⁴⁴ McDonald, P. F., *Marriage in Australia: Age at First Marriage and Proportions Marrying, 1860–1971*, Australian Family Formation Project, Monograph No. 2, Australian National University, Canberra, 1975, pp. 96, 134.

¹⁴⁵ Watkins, ‘Spinsters’.

¹⁴⁶ Stolk, ‘The spinster stereotype: A demographic refutation?’, p. 197.

¹⁴⁷ Gordon, *Single Women: On the Margins?*, p. 38.

The research of Susan Cott Watkins¹⁴⁸ and J. Hajnal¹⁴⁹ justifies this approach. From the mid nineteenth century, demographers such as the New South Wales Statistician, Sir Timothy Coghlan (1855–1925), had noted the growing number of older never married women in Australia, Britain and Europe.¹⁵⁰ However, demographers had to wait until the work of J. Hajnal in 1965 to appreciate that, in comparison with African, Asian or Eastern European societies, the significant minority percentage of single women was a longstanding characteristic of Western European populations since the eighteenth century.¹⁵¹ Susan Cott Watkins has thus summarised her own and Hajnal's research:

Late female marriage (23 or over) and high proportion of spinsters (10 per cent or more) define the Western European marriage pattern, while the non-European marriage pattern is characterized by an average age at marriage of under 18 and fewer than 2 percent spinsters.¹⁵²

Given the majority of employers did not hire married women and the median age of marriage for women was below 25 years, this is a suitable demarcation age for the analysis of female employees in the South Australian Labour Force.

In their analyses, both Joan Scott¹⁵³ and Deborah Simonton¹⁵⁴ have suggested that the woman worker only became a problem with the separation of home and paid work after the Industrial Revolution. But Joan Scott emphasised the woman worker was only an anomaly because the undefined 'woman' was assumed to be a married woman:

¹⁴⁸ Watkins, 'Spinsters'.

¹⁴⁹ Hajnal, J., 'European marriage patterns in perspective', in *Population in History: Essays in Historical Demography*, eds D. V. Glass & D. E. C. Eversley, Edward Arnold Ltd, London, 1965, pp. 101–43.

¹⁵⁰ Coghlan, T. A., *The Decline in the Birth-rate of New South Wales and Other Phenomena of Child-birth: An Essay in Statistics*, Govt Printer, Sydney, 1903.

¹⁵¹ Hajnal, 'European marriage patterns in perspective', p. 101.

¹⁵² Watkins, 'Spinsters', p. 316.

¹⁵³ Scott, J. W., 'The woman worker', in *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 4, eds G. Fraisse & M. Perrot, Harvard University Press, London, 1993, pp. 399–426.

¹⁵⁴ Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*.

By not differentiating “women” according to age, marital status, race, or social position, the story of home versus work made married women stand for all women even though most working women, in the nineteenth as in previous centuries, were young and single.¹⁵⁵

In a reconsideration of this concept of the ‘working woman’, the examination of the decisions of the South Australian Industrial Court in Chapter 6 will seek to demonstrate that the Court judgements were based on the presumption that the woman worker was a young, life-cycle single woman.

Many feminist scholars¹⁵⁶ are now revealing the extent to which women were active agents in negotiating the social and institutional structures which sought to constrain them. For example, the latest research on single women emigrants demonstrates the reevaluation of this particular group, from victims to active agents. James Hammerton in *Emigrant Gentlewomen: Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration 1830–1914*,¹⁵⁷ and Charlotte Macdonald in *A Woman of Good Character: Single Women as Immigrant Settlers in Nineteenth-century New Zealand*,¹⁵⁸ present the victim analysis of single women emigrants. In contrast, Margrette Kleinig’s research, ‘Independent women: South Australia’s assisted immigrants 1872–1939’, stresses their proactive agency:

the relationship between emigrant single women and those involved in organising their migration was a complementary partnership and that, once resident in the colony, single women exercised high levels of freedom and choice in their occupational and personal lives.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Scott, ‘The woman worker’, p. 401.

¹⁵⁶ e.g. Scott, J. W., *Gender and the Politics of History*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1988; Thornton, *Dissonance and Distrust: Women in the Legal Profession*; Whitehead, ‘Women’s “life-work”’: Teachers in South Australia, 1836–1906’; Prentice & Theobald, *Women Who Taught*.

¹⁵⁷ Hammerton, J. A., *Emigrant Gentlewomen: Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration 1830–1914*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1979.

¹⁵⁸ Macdonald, C., *A Woman of Good Character: Single Women as Immigrant Settlers in Nineteenth-century New Zealand*, Allen & Unwin, Wellington, New Zealand, 1990.

¹⁵⁹ Kleinig, M., ‘Independent women: South Australia’s assisted immigrants 1872–1939’, in *Visible Women: Female Immigrants in Colonial Australia*, ed. E. Richards, Visible Emigrants, Australian National University, Canberra, 1995, pp. 112–43, p. 115.

Single women emigrants were adept at adjusting the domestic ideology to improve their conditions and prospects in another country.¹⁶⁰ Family histories support Eric Richards' argument about 'the importance of family-based emigration and a chain formation [which] was strengthened by the nomination system of immigration.'¹⁶¹

1.5 Relevance of the Time Period, 1911–1961, and the Place, South Australia

1911–1961, the time period of this investigation, falls between what feminist historians have identified as first wave feminism in the 1890s and second wave feminism in the 1970s.¹⁶² This South Australian research is a further expansion of Marilyn Lake's aims in *Getting Equal*, 'to correct popular misconceptions ... that there have been but two waves of feminism with a long lull in between' which she 'characterised as the golden age of the woman citizen.'¹⁶³ In particular, I am investigating the extent to which the concept of the 'woman citizen' united both single and married women whereas equal pay for equal work could separate married women at home from single women at work. The examination in Chapter 4 of the voluntary work of single women in community organisations such as the National Council of Women is one part of this analysis.

For single women in the paid workforce, it is also important to investigate the institutional changes which enabled women to be appointed to senior positions and whether or not these changes were influenced by the work of women acting as individuals or external interest groups. For example, between 1911 and the 1920s the South Australian Education Department made a number of these first and long-term appointments. They included Dr Gertrude Halley as Chief Medical Officer in 1913, Miss Lydia Longmore, Inspector of Infant Schools, in 1917, Miss Adelaide Miethke, Inspector of Girls' Central Schools, in

¹⁶⁰ Travers, P., "'There was nothing for me there": Irish female emigration, 1922–71', in *Irish Women and Irish Migration*, vol. 4, ed. P. O'Sullivan, The Irish World Wide, Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1995, pp. 146–67.

¹⁶¹ Richards, E., 'Irish life and progress in colonial South Australia', *Irish Historical Studies*, vol. 27, no. 107, 1991, pp. 216–36, p. 221.

¹⁶² Caine, B., *English Feminism 1780–1980*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997; Magarey, S., *Passions of the First Wave Feminists*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2001.

¹⁶³ Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*, p. 9.

1924, and Dr Constance Davey as the Educational Psychologist in 1924. Alongside the Education Department women were the independent school headmistresses who owned and operated their own schools throughout most of this time. They included Jewell Baker at Walford from 1917 to 1955¹⁶⁴ and the Misses Brown at Wilderness from 1884–1948.¹⁶⁵

These developments were important because, at the beginning of the twentieth century, and like their British and European counterparts,¹⁶⁶ Australian single women had become the ‘woman problem’ on two fronts. They were not contributing to population growth, seen to be very important in sparsely populated Australia, which feared the ‘yellow peril’,¹⁶⁷ and as lower paid workers they competed with men, the identified breadwinners for families.¹⁶⁸ South Australia was particularly aware of the ‘women problem’ which the theoretical founder of the colony, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, had sought to overcome by recommending the emigration of married couples rather than a majority of single men and few single women:

Now two of the most important peculiarities of the present plan consist in selecting for emigration none but *young* couples, well adapted to the wants of the colony; and in providing an ample fund to defray the expenses of an extensive emigration of such persons.¹⁶⁹

But the theory did not work out in practice and it was only through a series of start-and-stop immigration programmes from the mid nineteenth century until the early 1960s¹⁷⁰ that South Australia ‘did achieve a closer balance of males to females than any other

¹⁶⁴ Walford Anglican School for Girls, *Walford: A Centenary History*, Council of Governors, Adelaide, 1994.

¹⁶⁵ Scales, M., *The Wilderness: One Hundred Years of History and Legend 1884–1984*, Wilderness School Ltd, Adelaide, 1984.

¹⁶⁶ Scott, ‘The woman worker’, p. 401.

¹⁶⁷ Dabscheck, B., “‘The typical mother of the white race’, and the origins of female wage determination’, *Hecate*, vol. 12, no. 1/2, 1986, pp. 147–52.

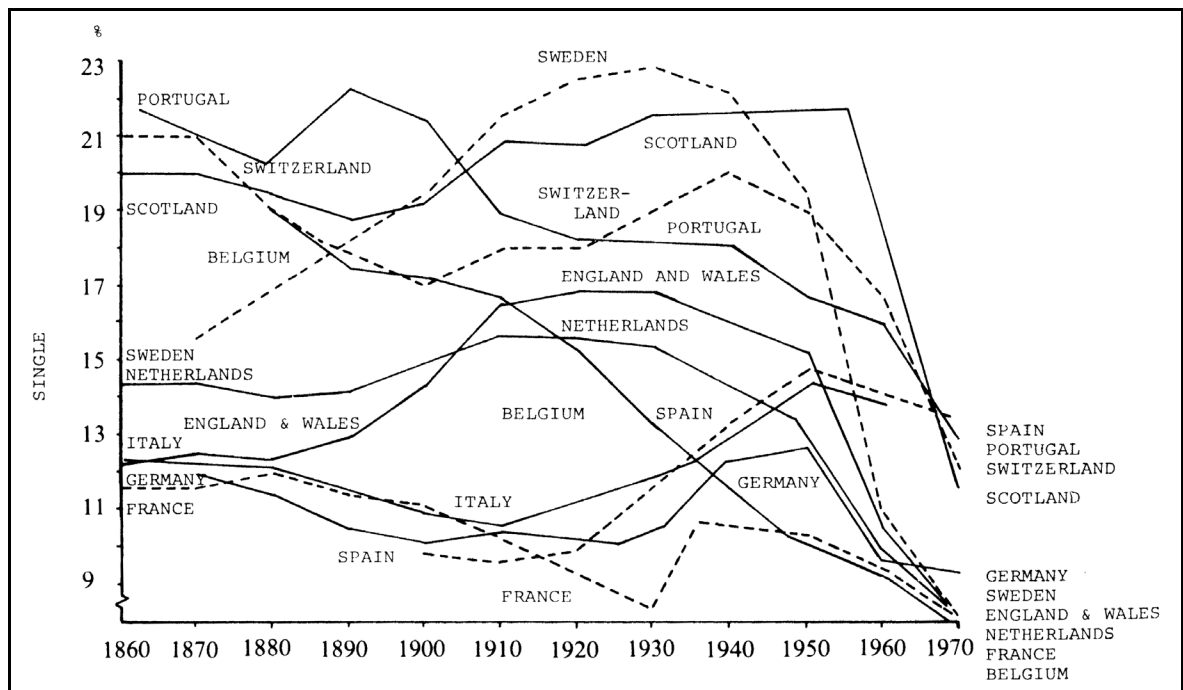
¹⁶⁸ Ryan & Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work 1788–1974*.

¹⁶⁹ Wakefield, E. G., *The Collected Works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, ed. M. F. L. Prichard, Collins, London, 1968, p. 296.

¹⁷⁰ Richards, E., ‘The peopling of South Australia, 1836–1986’, in *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, ed. E. Richards, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, pp. 115–42.

Australian colony.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, the almost equal ratio of the sexes still resulted in a significant percentage of single women in South Australia, which corresponds with the research of Susan Cott Watkins. Using the percentage of single women aged 50 in selected European countries between 1860 and 1970, she showed the percentage decline from over 20 per cent in the mid nineteenth century to below 10 per cent in 1970 (see Figure 2). In South Australia, the percentage of never married women in the 45–49 age group declined from a high of 17.3% in 1921 to 6.5% in 1961.¹⁷²

FIGURE 2
The Proportion Single Among Females at Age 50 in Selected European Countries, 1860–1970



Source: Watkins, S. C., 'Spinsters', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 9, no. 4, 1984, pp. 310–25, p. 314.

¹⁷¹ Elford, K., 'Marriage and divorce', in *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, ed. E. Richards, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, pp. 312–32, p. 312.

¹⁷² McDonald, *Marriage in Australia: Age at First Marriage and Proportions Marrying, 1860–1971*, pp. 134, 207.

The extent to which the judges in the South Australian Industrial Court did not or refused to acknowledge the number of life-long single women in the paid labour force is examined in Chapter 6.

Thelma Hunter stressed that Australian women entering the workforce in the twentieth century had yet another legacy from the nineteenth century, the ‘legal, institutional and conventional considerations which [did] not apply to men.’¹⁷³ Through a study of women’s work in the South Australian munitions factories during World War II, part of Chapter 3 will investigate the power of government institutions to override their own protective legislation. By law, by the decisions of industrial tribunals and/or employers, and by the agitation of women such as Mary Lee and Agnes Milne in South Australia,¹⁷⁴ women and youth were excluded from heavy or unhealthy work, their hours of work were restricted, and some occupations were reserved for men. The editors of *Protecting Women* have named the central issue surrounding industrial legislation that affects only women workers ‘as the difference/equality question.’¹⁷⁵ While protective legislation refers generally to occupational health and safety regulations, some feminists have argued that it further cements the sexual division of labour and restricts women’s work opportunities.¹⁷⁶

In Australia, there are fewer publications and there is less historical research on South Australia, its women, their work, and the institutions which they shaped and which shaped them, than there is on the eastern States. Dianne Davidson’s wry comment on the eastern seaboard bias of feminist historians resonates too in South Australia:

Feminist historians, like their male colleagues, tend to believe that only Melbourne and Sydney produce important personalities and organisations, and regard activities in ‘remote’ places like Perth as peripheral at best.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Hunter, ‘Some factors which determine the distribution of the female work force’, p. 108.

¹⁷⁴ Jones, H., *Nothing Seemed Impossible*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Qld, 1985.

¹⁷⁵ Wikander, U. et al. (eds), *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, the United States, and Australia, 1880–1920*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Illinois, 1995, p. 1.

¹⁷⁶ Harvie, C. et al., ‘Protective legislation and women’s labour market participation’, *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 35, no. 4, 1993, pp. 554–70.

¹⁷⁷ Davidson, ‘A citizen of Australia and of the world: A reappraisal of Bessie Mabel Rischbieth’, p. 100.

Helen Jones' book, *In Her Own Name*,¹⁷⁸ is still the one published general history alongside the book of readings, *Fresh Evidence, New Witnesses*.¹⁷⁹ There are increasing numbers of South Australian books, theses and articles on women in particular professions or occupations covering 1911 to 1961, for example Joan Durdin on nurses,¹⁸⁰ Elaine Martin on social workers,¹⁸¹ and Kay Whitehead on teachers.¹⁸²

The dominant social ideologies well as the economy of South Australia have structured women's work opportunities. Carol Bacchi¹⁸³ noted that South Australia was the first State to give women the vote and the last one to elect a woman to its State Parliament. While the New South Wales Education Department offered permanent employment to its married women teachers from 1947 onwards,¹⁸⁴ the South Australian Education Department did not do so until 1972.¹⁸⁵ The strong Temperance movement, and in particular the Women's Christian Temperance Union, meant that only female relatives of the licensee could work as barmaids in South Australian hotels between 1911 and 1961.¹⁸⁶

Economic conditions have affected women employees as much as ideologies and institutional practices.¹⁸⁷ In South Australia, droughts preceded the 1890s and 1930s

¹⁷⁸ Jones, H., *In Her Own Name: A History of Women in South Australia from 1836*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1994.

¹⁷⁹ Allen et al. (eds), *Fresh Evidence, New Witnesses: Finding Women's History*.

¹⁸⁰ Durdin, J., *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1991.

¹⁸¹ Martin, E. M. W., 'Gender, demand and domain: The social work profession in South Australia 1935–1980', PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 1990.

¹⁸² Whitehead, 'Women's "life-work": Teachers in South Australia, 1836–1906'.

¹⁸³ Bacchi, 'The "woman question" in South Australia'.

¹⁸⁴ Theobald & Dwyer, 'An episode in feminist politics: The *Married Women (Lecturers and Teachers) Act, 1932–47*'.

¹⁸⁵ Jones, *In Her Own Name: A History of Women in South Australia from 1836*, p. 373.

¹⁸⁶ Sumerling, P., *Down at the Local: A History of the Hotels of Kensington, Norwood & Kent Town*, City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters, Norwood, SA, n.d., p. 34.

¹⁸⁷ Sinclair, W. A., 'Women at work in Melbourne and Adelaide since 1871', *Economic Record*, vol. 57, 1981, pp. 344–53; Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia'; Hunter, 'Some factors which determine the distribution of the female work force'.

Depressions, further reducing work opportunities for all employees.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, until after World War II, South Australia's industrial growth was closely related to the production of consumer goods and services such as food and clothing, which were tied to agricultural production. In 1961, Thelma Hunter noted that there was a higher concentration of light industries in Victoria and New South Wales where there was a 'higher proportion of women at work than in the other [states] which are more dependent upon rural industry.'¹⁸⁹

In industrial relations, feminist historians have not attended to the role of the South Australian Industrial Court and its enabling legislation. Following in the tradition of Edna Ryan and Anne Conlon's pioneering work, *Gentle Invaders*,¹⁹⁰ Laura Bennett's articles on the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission highlight not only the discrimination against women in relation to the family wage and equal pay, but also skills classification.¹⁹¹ However, the model for both the Commonwealth *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904* and the South Australian *Industrial Arbitration Act 1912* was the South Australian Industrial Unions Bill 1890 proposed by George Cameron Kingston. This bill was never enacted in South Australia.¹⁹²

In this respect, it is little acknowledged outside the State that it was the South Australian Industrial Court which awarded the first Living/Basic Wage for Women in 1918,¹⁹³ a judgement which the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission did not

¹⁸⁸ Howell, P. A., 'Recent writing on the social and economic history of South Australia to 1936', *History Forum*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1991, pp. 55–65.

¹⁸⁹ Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia', p. 95.

¹⁹⁰ Ryan & Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work 1788–1974*.

¹⁹¹ Bennett, 'The construction of skill: Craft unions, women workers and the Conciliation and Arbitration Court'; Bennett, L., 'Legal intervention and the female workforce: The Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Court 1907–1921', *International Journal of Sociology*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1984, pp. 23–36; Bennett, L., 'Job classification and women workers: Institutional practices, technological change and the Conciliation and Arbitration System, 1907–72', *Labour History*, no. 51, Nov. 1986, pp. 11–23; Bennett, L., 'The Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Court in the late 1920s', *Labour History*, no. 57, Nov. 1989, pp. 44–60.

¹⁹² Mitchell, R., 'State systems of conciliation and arbitration: The legal origins of the Australasian model', in *Foundations of Arbitration: The Origins and Effects of State Compulsory Arbitration 1890–1914*, eds S. Macintyre & R. Mitchell, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1989, pp. 74–103.

¹⁹³ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, II.

make until 1951.¹⁹⁴ Chapter 6 examines the importance of the Living Wage for Women in 1918. South Australian women workers did not benefit from this decision. As Table 2 below shows, between 1919 and 1950, the Commonwealth Arbitration Commission awarded a minimum wage to women which was 54% of the Basic Wage for men, while the Living Wage for Women under South Australian awards never reached more than 50%. State and Commonwealth wage differences are particularly important in this research because the wages of the majority of South Australian single women were decided in the South Australian Industrial Court.

TABLE 2
State Wages and Earnings in South Australia, 1911–1966

(dollars per week)

Year	State Living Wage			Commonwealth Basic Wage		
	Male	Female	F/M Ratio	Male	Female	F/M Ratio
1911				5.10		
1916	5.40			6.15		
1921	7.95	3.50	44.02	7.95		
1926	8.55	3.95	46.20	8.55		
1931	6.30	3.15	50.00	5.81		
1936	6.60	3.30	50.00	6.90		
1941	8.70	4.35	50.00	8.40		
1946	9.85	5.50	55.84	10.20		
1951	19.50	14.60	74.87	19.50	14.60	74.87
1956	24.10	18.05	74.89	24.10	18.05	74.89
1961	28.30	21.20	74.91	28.30	21.20	74.91

Source: *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 73.

¹⁹⁴ *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, 1951.

1.6 Sources and Their Treatment

This research began as an investigation of the role of single women in work organisations. Katie Holmes' stress on the centrality of work in the lives of single women and the need for sharper analytical tools had struck a chord which I wished to investigate in the South Australian context:

This is a problem both of historians' conceptual tools, and of social expectations. The lives of single women have generally been explained by historians and contemporary observers alike in terms of their failure to marry, without adequate exploration of their experiences of single life ... The lives of such women are most easily discussed in relation to their work and their relationships.¹⁹⁵

It was their work experiences, not their personal relationships, which interested me. I appreciated Dame Roma Mitchell's firm response to Susan Mitchell's question about why she did not marry: 'Certain things in my life are private and that's that.'¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, the personal papers and interviews with life-long single women of this period reveal that they were reticent about their personal lives.¹⁹⁷

The first challenge in this research was to find both anonymous and notable life-long single women. There is a wealth of personal papers and oral history interviews available in State, public and institutional archives. But unless I first had the names of the women, I could not access these primary sources. For example, the biographical entries for Catherine Helen Spence and Muriel Heagney in *Australian Feminism: A Companion*¹⁹⁸ do not mention that they were single women. In comparison, the equivalent entries for these women in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* do identify them as single women, if only by naming their parents. An unexpected source which did identify women by their

¹⁹⁵ Holmes, K., *Spaces in Her Day: Australian Women's Diaries of the 1920s and 1930s*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1995, p. 68.

¹⁹⁶ Mitchell, S., *The Matriarchs: Twelve Australian Women Talk About Their Lives*, Penguin Books, Ringwood, Vic., 1987, p. 29.

¹⁹⁷ State Library of South Australia: Liddy, A. A., OH 1/4, Interview with Anne Angela Liddy [sound recording] Interviewer: Beth M. Robertson, 'S. A. Speaks': An Oral History of Life in South Australia before 1930, Adelaide, recorded 19 & 26 Aug. 1985; State Library of South Australia: Waterhouse, K. L., OH 31/10, Interview with Kathleen Lucy Waterhouse [sound recording] Interviewer: Beth M. Robertson, South Australian Women's Responses to the First World War, Adelaide, recorded Mar. 1979.

¹⁹⁸ Caine et al. (eds), *Australian Feminism: A Companion*.

marital status was the National Council of Women's 1986 publication, *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1938–1986*.¹⁹⁹ *Women in Australia*,²⁰⁰ *Women in South Australia*,²⁰¹ and *Guide to the Records About Women Held in Private and Society Record Groups*²⁰² are the most accessible South Australian bibliographies on women.

Once the names are known, organisational records provide a surprising amount of detail on the income, expenditure and interests of single women. For women working in the South Australian Public Service throughout the period of my research, departmental publications such as the *Education Gazette* or the *Chief Secretary's Annual Report to Parliament* name their level of appointment and rates of pay. Single women's wills available in the Probate Office can lead to the Lands Title Office for property transactions and organisations such as the Art Gallery, religious institutions etc. if the women left part of their estate for educational, cultural or philanthropic purposes. Furthermore, many women's institutions, for example the Adelaide Lyceum Club, are now developing extensive oral history collections by interviewing their members.

The Australian Census statistics on the age and conjugal condition of women in the labour force was a stark reminder that the majority of women had both spent some time at work and later married, a timely warning to include all the relevant primary sources. Although the research emphasises the achievements of life-long single women, the work experiences and achievements of single women who later married must also be identified and acknowledged. For example, Lillian de Lissa (1885–1967), the first principal of the Adelaide Kindergarten Training College between 1907 and 1917, left Adelaide in 1917 and later married and divorced in England. But such was Lillian de Lissa's personality and approach that her influence stamped College development until the late 1930s.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*.

²⁰⁰ Daniels, K. et al. (eds), *Women in Australia: An Annotated Guide to Records*, Australian Govt Publishing Service, Canberra, 1977.

²⁰¹ Sudrabs, Z., comp., *Women in South Australia*, State Library of South Australia, Adelaide, 1995.

²⁰² Chigros, C., *Guide to the Records About Women Held in Private and Society Record Groups*, C. Chigros [State Library of South Australia], Adelaide, 1990.

²⁰³ Dowd, C., 'The Adelaide Kindergarten Teachers' College, 1907–1974', *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no. 10, 1982, pp. 72–83, p. 73.

Organisational records are problematic. All formal organisations, be they work or social, are established to achieve particular purposes. Therefore, their records identify goals and objectives, chronicle achievements and detail strategic plans for the future. The emphasis is upon organisational not individual achievements. It is people who establish and maintain institutions, but because the formal records chronicle the achievements of the organisation, personal contributions and their voices are muted. The deliberate use of impersonal and superficially gender neutral language ignores the relationships between members of the organisation. Thus, organisational minutes will record the introduction of new subjects into a school curriculum or safer work practices in a hospital, but only the committee papers will identify the individuals who initiated and steered through the bureaucratic structures the acceptance and implementation of these changes. Sometimes the footnotes in published histories lead to the relevant people; for example, the submission from the Mistresses of Central Schools against raising the entry standard for nursing to the Intermediate Certificate (now Year 10) in 1932.²⁰⁴

This research concentrates upon the work of South Australian single women considered as a heterogeneous group, which is not a popular topic for academic study. Therefore more general publications have proved valuable sources for information and ideas. In 1958 the Social Science Research Council of Australia commissioned the English political scientist and assistant editor of the *New Statesman* Norman MacKenzie to inquire into ‘the role of women.’²⁰⁵ His book, *Women in Australia*, is in effect a primary source for the later time period of this research. The 1936 Women’s Centenary Council of South Australia’s publication, *A Book of South Australia: Women in the First Hundred Years* was an enigmatic primary source. Katie Spearritt has described the 1934 Victorian,²⁰⁶ the 1936 South Australian²⁰⁷ and the 1938 New South Wales²⁰⁸ women’s publications as

²⁰⁴ White, D., *A New Beginning: Nurse Training and Registration Policy 1920–1938: The Role of the Nurses Registration Board of South Australia*, Nurses Board of South Australia, Adelaide, 1993, p. 27.

²⁰⁵ MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*, p. xi.

²⁰⁶ Fraser, F. & Palmer, N. (eds), *Centenary Gift Book*, Robertson & Mullens for The Women’s Centenary Council, Melbourne, 1934.

²⁰⁷ Brown, L. et al. (eds), *A Book of South Australia: Women in the First Hundred Years*, Rigby Limited for the Women’s Centenary Council of S.A., Adelaide, 1936.

²⁰⁸ Spender, D. (ed.), *The Peaceful Army*, Penguin Books, Melbourne, 1988.

‘celebratory centennial histories.’²⁰⁹ Given my research, I was struck by the dominance of white single women as editors, authors, artists and subjects for *A Book of South Australia*, many of whom appear in this research.²¹⁰ Therefore, it was no surprise to me that *A Book of South Australia*, while a product of its times and middle-class editors, did succeed in its aim of giving later generations a 1936 view of women’s role in South Australian history and society. At first inspection, the contents of *A Book of South Australia* seem to be solidly circumscribed by the prevailing women and historical discourses. But a closer analysis reveals that *A Book of South Australia*’s contributors, both as authors and subjects, were well able to subvert as well as support the prevailing discourses.

In this research, I have deliberately eschewed interviews despite the fact that there are people alive who would have worked with or knew many of the single women referred to in the thesis. I wanted to subject both the personal and institutional records to the same analysis and reading against the grain without the researcher’s bias which can colour personal interviews and questionnaires. Like the organisational records, the personal papers and oral history interviews in archives have been collected and deposited by people whose interests were different from mine. In this analysis, I am following Kathy Ferguson. She argued that interpretation and genealogy employed together provide ‘political and epistemological opportunities.’²¹¹ Her definitions of interpretation and genealogy and their relationships are:

Interpretation does its work by employing a hermeneutics of suspicion. It carefully analyzes historical structures and processes, or individual identities, or theoretical formations, in order to see past the misleading surface to the reality beyond ... By pursuing a relentless history of particulars, and giving examples of misfits and anomalies, the genealogical project allows us to recognize the political claims of those marginalized by the prevailing categories ... Genealogy is dependent on interpretation in order to have something to deconstruct ... In feminism the genealogical and interpretative projects need

²⁰⁹ Spearritt, K., ‘New dawns: First wave feminisms 1880–1914’, in *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation*, eds K. Saunders & R. Evans, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Sydney, 1992, pp. 325–49, p. 329.

²¹⁰ The title and contents pages of *A Book of South Australia* are in the Appendix to Chapter 4, section AC4.7 (Figures 6–10).

²¹¹ Ferguson, K. E., ‘Interpretation and genealogy in feminism’, *Signs*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1991, pp. 322–39, p. 324.

to listen to one another: genealogy keeps interpretation honest, and interpretation gives genealogy direction.²¹²

Alongside the genealogical and interpretative methodology of Kathy Ferguson, I have used the research methods of Penny Summerfield, Peter Coleman, and Graham Dawson. They used the concept of ‘composure’ to analyse the oral and written records of their female subjects.²¹³ ‘Composure’ is a term first used by Graham Dawson and further developed by Peter Coleman and Penny Summerfield²¹⁴ to describe the ways in which individuals report their experiences whilst still retaining their self-esteem. Oral histories are now an accepted part of academic history.²¹⁵ Penny Summerfield in the opening chapter of her book, *Reconstructing Women’s Wartime Lives*,²¹⁶ comprehensively reviewed the literature on personal testimony as an historical source and achieving ‘composure’. ‘Composure’ was an important methodological tool for Chapter 3 when I was analysing the way in which individual single women reported their occupational choices whilst still acknowledging the institutional influences upon their decisions.

1.7 Conclusion

This review of the literature has striven to integrate relevant research with the dominant issues, appropriate methodology and the primary sources in the examination of the work of single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. To locate the work histories of particular single women in their demographic context, Chapter 2 examines the South Australian labour force statistics. This is done through the Australian Population Censuses of 1911, 1921, 1933, 1947, 1954 and 1961 because they were the only sources which identified most of the single women who were paid or unpaid workers.

²¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 334, 335, 337.

²¹³ Summerfield, P., *Reconstructing Women’s Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1998, Chapter 1.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Chapter 1.

²¹⁵ Davison, G. et al. (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 481–3.

²¹⁶ Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women’s Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War*.

2 THE DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT: SINGLE WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LABOUR FORCE,¹ 1911–1961

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is a detailed examination of the South Australian female labour force statistics from the relevant Australian Censuses held in 1911, 1921, 1933, 1947, 1954 and 1961. As well as providing the official picture of where single women worked in the paid labour force, the statistics provide the demographic context for issues examined in this and later chapters, for example, the employer ban on the permanent employment of married women. For this analysis, the details of the South Australian labour statistics are interwoven with the personal work experiences of particular single women. This approach offers the space to investigate the extent to which single women both contested and colluded with the dominant ideologies affecting women in the paid workforce.

The chapter has three aims. The first is to show the institutional control of labour force statistics and its effects upon the accuracy of the records about the work of single women. The second is a disaggregation of the Occupational Status data from the Australian Censuses to re-evaluate Thelma Hunter's 1961 judgement, that the significant changes post-World War II were in 'the age composition of the [female] workforce and its marital status.'² The third is a disaggregation of the Census industry statistics to establish the extent to which life-long single women were concentrated in what Margaret Power identified as 'feminine occupations'.³ Employment practices, which reflected the dominant social attitudes, generally ensured that life-cycle single women employees were tourists rather than colonists in the paid labour force between 1911 and 1961. However, as single women were moving into and dominating formerly all-male occupations such as women's hairdressing⁴ and clerical work,⁵ the issue became more complex. In particular

¹ The Australian Bureau of Statistics use of the term 'Labour Force' is given later in this chapter.

² Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia', p. 96.

³ Power, 'The making of a woman's occupation'.

⁴ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 17, p. 191.

⁵ Gregory, 'Constructing the glass ceiling: Economics, gender and supply in the South Australian office, 1900–1935'.

institutions, were single women colonised into or did they colonise the masculine organisational structures, cultures and work practices of the institutions where they worked? The general overview from the statistics is provided here and the issues are examined in relation to specific work organisations in later chapters.

2.2 The Australian Census and Labour Force Data

For researchers analysing the historical trends in the Australian labour force, the Australian Census data on occupational status, industry and occupations have been crucial. Until the publication of the quarterly (now monthly) *Labour Force Surveys* in late 1960, the Population Census was ‘the major source of data relating to employment.’⁶ The Australian Census, unlike the *South Australian Statistical Register*, was the only publication which cross-referenced members of the labour force by age and marital status – essential data for this research. Furthermore, the Census is one of the few public documents in which men as well as women are identified by marital status. But the first point to stress is, that while this research concentrates upon the work of life-long single women, the official Australian labour force data includes both life-cycle and life-long single women⁷ in its ‘Never Married Women’ statistics.

The Censuses of 1911, 1921, 1933, 1947, 1954 and 1961 were the primary institutional sources for a demographic picture of women in the South Australian workforce during this period.⁸ In their reports accompanying each Census, Commonwealth Statisticians have stressed the importance of the Census snapshot of the nation:

⁶ *Year Book, Australia*, pp. 291–2.

⁷ As examined in Chapter 1.

⁸ While the original *Census and Statistics Act* of 1905 provided for a census every ten years, the Great Depression delayed the 1931 Census until 1933 and World War II delayed the 1941 Census till 1947. The lack of Census data during World War II when a significant number of single and married women were conscripted into the Labour Force is acknowledged here and examined in Chapter 3. Since 1947, the Australian Census has been done every five years, although the Act was not amended until 1977. Hopkins, L. G., *The Australian Population Census*, Commonwealth Govt Printer, Canberra, 1983, p. 3.

These questions have sought to serve both the general interest and the particular interests of those concerned in governmental decision making, in commerce and industry and in demographic, social and economic research.⁹

It seems reasonable to assume that the Commonwealth Statistician has listed the ‘general and particular interests’ in priority order and that political and economic interests are the dominant concerns. Researchers have disagreed over whether political or economic interests dominate the census analysis done by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and its colonial predecessors. For example, Desley Deacon stressed the political reasons¹⁰ and F. L. Jones highlighted the economic factors¹¹ to explain why the New South Wales Statistician, Sir Timothy Coghlan, classified women working in family businesses as dependants in the 1881 census.

2.3 Institutional Control of Australian Labour Force Statistics

In terms of French and Raven’s analysis of the social bases of power, the Australian Bureau of Statistics is both a ‘legitimate’ and ‘expert’ organisation whose instructions to householders should be followed.¹² As an institution, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has extensive power which it has and does exercise through legislative authority, definition of terms, instructions to Census respondents, aggregation of replies and statistical analysis of the Census data. The *Census and Statistics Act* provides the Bureau’s ‘legitimate’ power and the staff of the Bureau are ‘experts’ in data collection and statistical analysis. This highlights the power of government institutions to enforce the dominant ideologies and associated practices upon individuals.

In accordance with current usage, I have used the terms ‘In the Labour Force’ and ‘Not in the Labour Force’ to analyse the official, institutional statistics on women’s participation in

⁹ *Australian Census*, 1961, vol. 8, p. 14.

¹⁰ Deacon, D., *Managing Gender: The State, the New Middle Class and Women Workers 1830–1930*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1989.

¹¹ Jones, F. L., ‘Occupational statistics revisited: The female labour force in early British and Australian censuses’, *Australian Economic History Review*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1987, pp. 56–76.

¹² French, J. R. P. & Raven, B., ‘The bases of social power’, in *Classic Readings in Organizational Behaviour*, ed. S. J. Ott, Brooks/Cole Pub. Co., Pacific Grove, California, 1989 (1959), pp. 440–53.

the paid workforce. Between 1911 and 1961 the Australian Bureau of Statistics¹³ (hereafter referred to as the ABS) compiled the Labour Force Statistics from the Occupations section of the Population Census. While the terminology has changed over the years, the Labour Force Statistics are drawn from the first of the two sections of the Occupations data. The historical connections between the two sections are as follows:

- Breadwinners (1891–1933) / In the Workforce (1947–1966) / In the Labour Force (1971–)
- Dependants (1891–1933) / Not in the Workforce (1947–1966) / Not in the Labour Force (1971–)¹⁴

It is in the allocation of women workers into one of the above sections which Australian¹⁵ and overseas¹⁶ historians have identified as causing inaccurate and inadequate Census data on women ‘In the Labour Force’. Their critiques have concentrated on the underlying social assumptions and changing methods of collection and aggregation. The ABS treatment of people of independent means and on pensions is one example of changing social assumptions and aggregation. In the 1911 and 1921 Censuses, pensioners and those of independent means were classified as ‘In the Labour Force’ while since the 1933 Census they have been allocated to ‘Not in the Labour Force’. Therefore, with her independent income, the committed Red Cross volunteer, Kathleen Kyffin Thomas,¹⁷ would have been counted as ‘In the Labour Force’ in the 1921 Census and as ‘Not in the Labour Force’ in the 1933 Census. Similarly, the invalid pensioner, Doris Taylor,¹⁸ who founded Meals on

¹³ Also known in this period as the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics but here referred to as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as being the more familiar term.

¹⁴ Hopkins, *The Australian Population Census*, p. 45.

¹⁵ e.g. Deacon, D., ‘Political arithmetic: The nineteenth century Australian census and the construction of the dependence of women’, *Signs*, vol. 11, no. 1, Autumn 1985, pp. 27–47; Deacon, *Managing Gender: The State, the New Middle Class and Women Workers 1830–1930*.

¹⁶ e.g. Waring, M., *If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics*, Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1988; Smuts, R. W., ‘The female labour force: A case study in the interpretation of historical statistics’, *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, vol. 60, 1960, pp. 71–9; Hill, B., ‘Women, work and the census: A problem for historians of women’, *History Workshop*, no. 35, Spring 1993, pp. 78–94; Higgs, E., ‘Women, occupations and work in the nineteenth century censuses’, *History Workshop*, no. 23, Spring 1987, pp. 59–80.

¹⁷ See Chapter 1.

¹⁸ See Chapter 1.

Wheels Incorporated, would have been counted as 'Not in the Labour Force' in the 1954 Census.

I consider that it is the definition of 'work' rather than the particular definition of 'women's work' which has caused the worldwide problems relating to working women in census statistics. For example, the Commonwealth Statistician's decision to transfer people on pensions and of independent means out of the labour force breaks the implicit nexus between work and income. Another important fact is that the ABS has never included a question on voluntary work in the Australian Population Census.¹⁹ This reinforces the popular assumption that 'work' is paid work and apparently in accord with the dominant economic and political objectives of Census collection. However, as the discussion in Chapter 1 highlighted, voluntary work is an important element in the not-for-profit sector, one of the three sectors of the Australian economy.

From the first Commonwealth Census in 1911, the ABS strove actively to structure respondents' replies to the Census questions. This was because, while Australians were and are legally required to complete the Census form, their answers do not necessarily comply with the expectations of the Census takers. The Commonwealth Statistician acknowledged this in an unusually frank comment in the report on the 1947 Census:

Even though obvious misstatements can be detected and allowed for in the census, the results as published must substantially reflect the information supplied by persons filling in the returns, whether or not the answers received accurately represent the facts sought to be established. The inquiry relating to occupational status, for instance, while framed to discover, *inter alia*, how many persons were at work, and how many persons were usually engaged in an industry, business, trade or service but were out of a job at the time of the Census, could not anticipate the interpretations which people place upon these descriptions of occupational status.²⁰

¹⁹ Shanahan, A., 'Statisticians counting only half the jobs', *The Australian*, 31 July 2001, p. 15. The Australian Bureau of Statistics collects some data on voluntary work through limited household surveys.

²⁰ *Australian Census*, 1947, p. 237.

In this respect, Census respondents are David Mechanic's powerful 'lower participants in complex organizations,'²¹ because they provide information on which the whole edifice of Census aggregation and analysis rests. They also justify Melanie Nolan's point that 'the state cannot take all the blame'²² for the sexual division of labour in Census data. Yet researchers have only had access to the aggregated historical statistics with the tantalising footnote 'Errors and Omissions Excepted'. Until the 2001 Census²³ the ABS destroyed the individual responses. This is one example of the power of the institution to control the replies and thereby the power of respondents.

The following examination of the work of May Mills in 1911 and 1947, Ivy Owen in 1933 and Maria Axleby in 1954 illustrate the intermingled ideologies and unknown recording of women's work during the Census taken in these years. Between leaving school in 1910 and starting teaching in 1914, May Mills contributed much to the family income derived from an expanding sheep stud:

All this development meant "busyness" for the women and girls of the family, as well as for the men and boys. Sometimes two camps would be going at one time; and often only twelve hours' "notice" was given for sufficient supplies to be ready ... Sometimes a cook was found for the shearing period, but mostly they were as scarce as gold, and so, we did it all ourselves ... Shearing in those days usually lasted about a month ... Imagine the cooking for ten or twelve men (frequently more), day in and day out for several weeks on end, with a men's dining room to service, as well as the family one ... All this was accomplished by three of us – myself (16–17 years), a neighbour's daughter of the same age, and a neighbour's son, 15 years of age, who did the running, fetching and carrying.²⁴

No doubt it was May Mills' father, W. G. J. Mills, a member of the Legislative Council of the South Australian Parliament from 1918 onwards, who completed the 1911

²¹ Mechanic, D., 'Sources of power of lower participants in complex organizations', in *Classics of Organization Theory*, eds J. M. Shafritz & S. J. Ott, Brooks/Cole Pub. Co., Pacific Grove, California, 1992, pp. 424–31.

²² Nolan, M., 'The white blouse revolution: Heroic and anti-heroic interpretations of the feminisation of work', *Journal of Australian Studies*, no. 52, 1997, pp. 54–66, p. 65.

²³ In the 2001 Census respondents were given the option of having their name-identified census information preserved on microfilm to be released in 2100.

²⁴ Mills, M., *Millbrae and Its Founding Family*, Lutheran Publishing House, Adelaide, 1973, p. 64.

Householder's Form for the Mills family. To aid his decision about the young May's occupation, he had the 1911 Census Instructions which were very definite about women:

Women. The occupations of women who are engaged in any other than domestic duties are to be distinctly recorded, but women are not to be entered as engaged in the occupations of their husbands, fathers etc., unless they habitually assist them. When only in the capacity of wife, mother, daughter, sister etc., write "Domestic duties."²⁵

Given the above instructions, the strength of the domestic ideology, and a father's responsibility/right to support wife and daughters, it is unlikely that W. G. J. Mills ever considered that his daughter was an 'unpaid helper' and a member of the labour force rather than a dependant.

Then later, whilst teaching full-time at Unley High School, May Mills also managed the family sheep stud:

In 1933, when my father died and the family affairs were such that someone had to take the lead in those and I was appointed to do that. Well, I did find it difficult, as you can imagine ... but I had a wonderful clientele of seasonal workers who came to my aid. All I had to do was to go to the phone and give them certain days and weeks and they would be there and the tasks would be done.²⁶

The unanswerable question for this analysis is whether or not May Mills described herself as a primary producer or as a school teacher on the Census form of 1947. However, the Occupation Question again structured the replies when it instructed the respondents to mark only one box and if they had more than one job to identify the one in which they worked the most hours.

If May Mills was probably classified as a dependant in the 1911 Census, she was, unlike Ivy Owen, at least counted in the Population Census. Until the 1967 amendment to the

²⁵ *Australian Census*, 1911, p. 446.

²⁶ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Mills, M., Radio interview with May Mills [sound recording] Interviewer: Lynne Arnold, Now in Retirement (Radio program), 1st series, 1969, no. 12, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Adelaide, broadcast 17 Aug. 1969.

Constitution, ‘full-blooded Aboriginals’²⁷ were not counted in the Censuses. Therefore, Aboriginal women have had to document their work, usually poorly paid, in oral history interviews.

Ivy Owen says:

I went to Bordertown Primary School till first year, then I left in the early 1930s. Just went out and did a bit of housework, wash, iron, clean floors, those sorts of things you know. That’s all there was at Bordertown ... I only got about ten shillings a week.²⁸

This ABS practice not only discriminated against Australian Aborigines, it also reduced the accuracy of the labour force statistics.

The sophisticated questions and language in the Census instructions²⁹ must have further compounded the racial discrimination in the Australian Censuses. For example, Maria Axleby, born 1941, was the daughter of an Aboriginal Mother and a Maltese father. Before her marriage Maria worked at Arnott Motterams packing biscuits.³⁰ For the Race questions in the 1954 Census, the instructions were in two sections as follows:

Race: For persons of European Race, wherever born, write “European”. For non-European state the race to which they belong for example, “Aboriginal”, “Chinese”, “Negro”, “Afghan” etc. If the person is half-caste with one parent of European race, write also “**H.C.**” for example, “**H.C. Aboriginal**”, “**H.C. Chinese**” etc. (See Instructions)

Race: In the case of a person both of whose parents are **non-European** but of different races, state the race of the person’s father (and do **not** add “**H.C.**”).³¹

²⁷ *Year Book, Australia*, p. 253.

²⁸ Mattingley, C. (ed.), *Survival in Our Own Land: ‘Aboriginal’ Experiences in ‘South Australia’ Since 1836*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1988, p. 120.

²⁹ Hill, ‘Women, work and the census: A problem for historians of women’.

³⁰ Adelaide City Council Archives: Axleby, M., OH 99, Interview with Maria Axleby, Aboriginal City Resident [sound recording] Interviewer: Karen George, City of Adelaide Oral History Project, Adelaide, interviewed 9 Nov. 1998, p. 42.

³¹ Instructions for Filling In the Householder’s Schedule. *Australian Census*, 1954, p. 17.

With a father for whom English was not his first language and these Census instructions, the unanswerable question is whether or not Maria's work was included in her father's return for the 1954 Census.

2.4 A Comparison of Women in the Australian and South Australian Labour Force, 1911–1961

With all their limitations, the Australian Censuses are still the only demographic sources for a study of the work of South Australian single women between 1911 and 1961. To compile the 'In the Labour Force' statistics, the Commonwealth Statistician added together all the 'numbers of the population in the work force in terms of occupational status (i.e. employers, self-employed persons, employees on wage or salary, helpers not on wage or salary, persons not at work)'.³² The term 'persons not at work' here refers to the unemployed, either temporarily or long-term. Women, men and children whom the Australian Bureau of Statistics considered not in the workforce and not intending to enter the workforce were counted as 'Not in Labour Force.'

The Commonwealth Statisticians³³ and researchers³⁴ have concentrated upon tracing the increasing number of women 'In the Labour Force' and that of married women in particular.³⁵ However, these studies have used the aggregated totals of women in the workforce. Thus in 1961 Thelma Hunter analysed the Australian female labour force totals from the 1901 through to 1954 Censuses. This study enabled her to highlight the very small percentage increase of women in the labour force throughout this period and that the changes post-World War II were in the 'age composition' and 'marital status' of women in the Australian labour force.³⁶ The aggregated South Australian Census data, which

³² *Australian Census*, 1961, vol. 8, p. 291.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

³⁴ e.g. Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia'; Richmond, 'The workforce participation of married women in Australia'; Eccles, S., 'The role of women in the Australian labour market: A survey of the literature', *The Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1982, pp. 315–36; Mumford, *Women Working: Economics and Reality*.

³⁵ For the Commonwealth Statistician's historical table on women in industry between 1911 and 1961 see Figure 5 in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC2.1.

³⁶ Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia', pp. 94, 96.

supports Thelma Hunter's conclusions on the youth and single status of women in the workforce, is in Table 3 below, in particular column 5.

TABLE 3
Women in the South Australian Workforce, 1911–1961

Census Year	Female Labour Force	NMW ¹ in Labour Force	Women Under 25 Years in Labour Force	NMW ¹ as % of Female Labour Force	Women Under 25 Years as % of Female Labour Force	% of Women in Total Labour Force	Women Workers as a % of Female Population
1911	33,958	28,012	17,775	83.49%	52.34%	18.2%	17.3%
1921	38,462	32,228	19,557	83.79%	50.85%	19.2%	15.9%
1933	49,129	40,972	25,250	83.4%	51.4%	20.4%	16.5%
1947	56,176	41,517	28,327	73.9%	50.42%	21.0%	16.8%
1954	68,182	37,651	27,674	55.22%	40.59%	21.1%	17.1%
1961	89,222	44,231	37,999	49.57%	42.59%	23.5%	18.0%

¹NMW = Never Married Women

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961; South Australian Year Book, 1986, p. 71.*

The percentages in columns 5 to 8 show that South Australian data followed the pattern which Thelma Hunter identified for Australia.³⁷ Until after the 1947 Census, single women under 25 years were the majority the South Australian female labour force. Women workers as a percentage of the female population increased very slowly from 15.9% to 18%. When column 7 is compared with the Australian average, there is an example of South Australia being different. Between 1911 and 1961, the Australian percentage of women in the total labour force increased from 20.1% to 25.1%,³⁸ while in South Australia the growth was from 18.2% to 23.5%.³⁹ W. A. Sinclair suggested that some single women were not in the workforce because 'they were in a position to

³⁷ See Australian historical statistics in Figure 5 in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC2.1.

³⁸ Richmond, 'The workforce participation of married women in Australia', p. 269.

³⁹ *South Australian Year Book, 1986, p. 71.*

contribute to the household economy by providing services rather than income.’⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that this was the bald explanation which Emily Batchelor, born in 1899, gave when the interviewer asked her why she had never done paid work until she was compulsorily called up to do munitions work during World War II:

When I left school, mother wanted me to go and do nursing. I said, “Well what will you do?” I said, “I’d be able to help home” and she said, “Oh, I can manage” and I said, “No, I’m going to stay home and help.” So that’s what I did.⁴¹

These aggregated figures need closer examination. The ‘In the Labour Force’ totals elide their composition; that is, a total of employers, self-employed, employees, unpaid helpers and the unemployed seeking work. For a clearer picture of where single women were in the workforce, it is necessary to establish their numbers in the various occupational categories such as employer and employee. The disaggregation, which follows, allows for clarification of the existence of ‘sex segregation of occupations’⁴² and whether or not ‘job growth has favoured typical “female” occupations (such as service occupations) rather than typical “male” occupations (such as production occupations).’⁴³

2.5 Occupational Status of Single Women in the South Australian Labour Force, 1911–1961

Table 4 following tests further Thelma Hunter’s assertion. When the numbers of single women are calculated as percentages of all women in the individual Occupational Status statistics from the South Australian Censuses 1911 to 1961,⁴⁴ Thelma Hunter’s claim that young single women dominated the female labour force prior to the end of World War II cannot be sustained. The percentages in Table 4 below reveal that the South Australian

⁴⁰ Sinclair, ‘Women at work in Melbourne and Adelaide since 1871’, p. 350.

⁴¹ State Library of South Australia: Batchelor, E. E., OH 25/3, Interview with Emily Eileen Batchelor [sound recording] Interviewer: Susan Marsden, Hindmarsh Oral History Project, Adelaide, recorded 12 Oct. 1979, p. 5.

⁴² Anker, *Gender and Jobs: Sex Segregation of Occupations in the World*, p. 416.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 403.

⁴⁴ Single women in the particular occupational categories are examined in detail below. For an overall picture of the numbers of single women in each of the occupational categories between 1911 and 1961, see Table 23 in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC2.2.

data for the single status of the female labour force before World War II relies upon single women who were either employees or unemployed and seeking work. Between 1911 and 1961 the percentage of single women employees ranged from 91.95% to 54.1% and unemployed single women from 91.41% to 67.45%. In comparison single women employers were never more than 30.5% of all female employers and self-employed single women declined from a high of 56.48% in 1911 to 12.16% in 1961.

TABLE 4
Never Married Women ‘In the Labour Force’ in South Australia,
1911–1961

Census Year	NMW ¹ as a % of Female Labour Force	NMW ¹ as % of Female Employers	NMW ¹ as % of Female Self-Employed	NMW ¹ as % of Female Employees	NMW ¹ as % of Female Unemployed
1911	83.49%	29.78%	56.48%	91.95%	91.41%
1921	83.79%	30.50%	46.8%	90.2%	89.32%
1933	83.4%	22.51%	47.92%	88.82%	91.32%
1947	73.9%	19.79%	33.39%	78.6%	78.62%
1954	55.22%	11.51%	19.97%	59.64%	69.41%
1961	49.57%	6.37%	12.17%	54.1%	67.45%

¹NMW = Never Married Women

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961.*

The following analysis seeks to clarify the extent to which institutional structures, policies and practices have influenced the movement of single women out of the employer and self-employed categories and by 1954 had reduced significantly the percentage dominance of young single women employees. Between 1911 and 1961 world events, in particular the Great Depression and World War II, and the large post-war migration to Australia also affected the women in paid employment. The impact of these events is acknowledged in the appropriate sections.

2.5.1 Employees

This examination begins with the occupational category of employees who comprise the largest sub-group within the Australian labour force statistics. In South Australia, Thelma Hunter's argument in favour of the youth and single status of the female workforce applies particularly to female employees where the percentage of single women employees declined from a high of 91.95% in 1911 to 54.1% in 1961. The percentages in Table 6 below also highlight the correlation between the youth and single status of women employees, for example 58.35% and 57.64% respectively in 1921. Table 5 below provides the number of women employees, and the relevant percentages are in Table 6.

TABLE 5
Number of Female Employees in the South Australian Labour Force, 1911–1961

Census Year	Female Labour Force	Total Female Employees	NMW¹ Employees	Female Employees Under 25 Years	NMW¹ Employees Under 25 Years
1911	33,958	25,733	23,664	16,176	NA
1921	38,461	31,312	28,244	18,272	18,051
1933	49,129	37,169	33,015	20,901	20,588
1947	56,176	49,378	38,808	27,360	25,913
1954	68,182	59,437	35,449	26,636	23,469
1961	89,222	75,447	40,828	35,410	30,866

¹NMW = Never Married Women

Source: *Australian Census*, 1911–1961.

While these are the official statistics which employers could use to argue that women were life-cycle participants in the South Australian labour force between 1911 and 1961, they gloss over established institutional practice. In addition to being the largest group within the female labour force, women employees were also the group most affected by the employer/institutional ban on the permanent employment of married women. In terms of Henry Mintzberg's analysis, this ban could be interpreted as part of an institution's

TABLE 6
Percentages of Female Employees in the South Australian Labour Force,
1911–1961

Census Year	Female Labour Force	Female Employees as % of Female Labour Force	NMW ¹ Employees as % of All Female Employees	Female Employees Under 25 Years as % of All Female Employees	NMW ¹ Employees Under 25 Years as % of All Female Employees
1911	33,958	75.77%	91.95%	62.86%	NA
1921	38,461	81.41%	90.2%	58.35%	57.64%
1933	49,129	75.65%	88.82%	56.23%	55.39%
1947	56,176	87.9%	78.6%	55.41%	52.48%
1954	68,182	87.17%	59.64%	44.81%	39.48%
1961	89,222	84.56%	54.1%	46.93%	40.91%

¹NMW = Never Married Women

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961.*

‘ideology’.⁴⁵ It is worth noting too the research literature, which attributes the decreasing percentage of young, single Australian female employees after World War II, to the younger age at which women married, increasing youth unemployment and the greater secondary and higher education opportunities opening up for women at this time.⁴⁶ In this situation, the increased participation of married women in the workforce during and after World War II⁴⁷ is but one factor among many.

In South Australia the government ban on the permanent employment of married women in the State Public Service continued until 1972, far longer than in the Commonwealth and other States.⁴⁸ The Commonwealth ban on the permanent employment of married women was lifted in 1966 while New South Wales lifted its ban on the permanent appointment of

⁴⁵ Mintzberg, *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*, p. 98.

⁴⁶ Sinclair, ‘Women at work in Melbourne and Adelaide since 1871’.

⁴⁷ Watson, I., “‘Music while you work’”: Teenage women in the Australian Labour Market, 1947 to 1992’, *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 29, no. 4, 1994, pp. 377–406.

⁴⁸ Jones, *In Her Own Name: A History of Women in South Australia from 1836*, p. 373.

married women teachers in 1958.⁴⁹ However, Australia was not unique in this discrimination against married women employees, and married women teachers in particular. Claudia Goldin has documented the marriage bars applying in the United States between 1920 and 1950,⁵⁰ while Alison Oram has written extensively on the discrimination against married women teachers in Great Britain.⁵¹ Elizabeth Heineman has researched the impact of marital status on working women in Nazi and postwar Germany.⁵²

It is equally important to acknowledge that the employer ban on married women working was dependent upon the need for and availability of female labour. In fact married women were employed but always in temporary and acting positions without the benefits of permanency such as Long Service Leave, entitlement to Government-based superannuation schemes etc. This practice also discriminated against single women who married later in life. Kay Whitehead's thesis⁵³ documents the gradual exclusion of married women from the South Australian teaching force after 1875. Although the particular Regulation did not appear until 1915,⁵⁴ between 1897 and 1972 the South Australian Education Department was particularly strict in its ban on the permanent employment of married women.⁵⁵ Thus, when Gwen Fulton, Women's Warden at Adelaide Teachers College (one of the most senior women's positions in the Education Department), married Albert Lamshed in 1957, she had to resign her position. Because of the shortage of lecturing staff in the Teachers College, she was re-appointed immediately as a temporary, unclassified assistant, with no access either to her former position or to the State Superannuation Fund of which she had

⁴⁹ Theobald & Dwyer, 'An episode in feminist politics: The *Married Women (Lecturers and Teachers) Act, 1932-47*'.

⁵⁰ Goldin, C., *Marriage Bars: Discrimination Against Married Women Workers, 1920s to 1950s*, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 1988.

⁵¹ Oram, A., *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics, 1900-39*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1996.

⁵² Heineman, E. D., *What Difference Does a Husband Make?: Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999.

⁵³ Whitehead, 'Women's "life-work": Teachers in South Australia, 1836-1906'.

⁵⁴ Whitehead, K., "'Many industrial troubles are due to the presence of female labour": The Women Teachers' Guild in South Australia, 1937-42', *Historical Studies in Education*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1996, pp. 25-41, p. 38.

⁵⁵ Jones, *In Her Own Name: A History of Women in South Australia from 1836*, p. 373.

been a member for over twenty years. Indeed her superannuation contributions were repaid without interest.⁵⁶

During the Great Depression of the 1930s and in the late 1940s/early 1950s when there was no shortage of young single women, life-cycle single women employees were particularly disadvantaged. Peter Strawhan thus recounted the generational impact of the employer ban on the employment of married women:

Like thousands of my fellow South Australians I was born at the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital, familiarly known as the 'Queen Vic'. The year 1932 was not a good one for South Australia; the so-called 'Great Depression' was at its height and my not-long married parents were among its many working class victims ... My mother had been a shop-assistant at 'Johnnies',⁵⁷ while my father was an unemployed labourer. Marriage meant the end of my mother's sales career as, in the main, only single women were employed in those straitened times ...

[In 1954] my fiancée and I married ... When we married, my wife was required to resign her job as a typist with a leading insurance company. Clearly some things had changed little since 1932.⁵⁸

The pragmatism of the employers who supported this institutional practice, is most clearly revealed in the 1955 policy of the Savings Bank of South Australia:

No female officer on the staff shall continue in the employment of the Bank after her marriage, except on the certificate of the General Manager that her employment is required in the interests of the bank.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Personal knowledge as a work colleague.

⁵⁷ John Martin Pty Ltd was a large department store in central Adelaide.

⁵⁸ Strawhan, P., 'Growing up in Playford's South Australia: A personal reminiscence', in *Playford's South Australia: Essays on the History of South Australia, 1933–1968*, eds B. O'Neil et al., Association of Professional Historians Inc., Adelaide, 1996, pp. 7–28, pp. 7, 24–5.

⁵⁹ Manning, G. H. & Manning, H., R., *Worth Fighting For: Work and Industrial Relations in the Banking Industry in South Australia*, Australian Bank Employees Union, South Australian and Northern Territory Branch, Adelaide, 1989, p. 171.

Therefore, when employers needed women, either married or single, in new or expanding occupations from which women had been barred, they went to the South Australian Industrial Court to vary awards. This divided male and female employees, as Mr Justice Pellew's judgement in the Fish, Crayfish and Poultry Case, no. 29 of 1961 clearly demonstrated:

‘Mr *Healey* [for the union] has informed the Court that in Victoria work in this branch of the industry is performed by males only and that the work is essentially males' work. It is only under this Part that the work is essentially males' work. It has been made abundantly clear to me that for example at Port Lincoln and at Mount Gambier, Port MacDonnell, Beachport and Robe in the South East of this State unless female labour were permitted the industry could not be carried on at all because sufficient male labour is not available ... There is no suggestion that men are being competed out of employment and if women are prepared to do the work I do not see any reason either to exclude them or to take steps to discourage their employment in such a branch.’⁶⁰

The above examples point to changing employment practices in South Australia in the 1950s. They were also reflected in the female labour force statistics where developments in South Australia show a later and higher growth than the Australian average. While the percentage of married women in the Australian workforce increased from a low of 9.2% in 1921 to a high of 38.3% in 1961,⁶¹ in South Australia the percentage growth was from 7.35% in 1911 to 40.64% in 1961 as detailed in Table 7 below.

Why South Australian married women entered the paid workforce in such numbers between 1947 and 1961 is not part of this research. However, Norman MacKenzie noted that during World War II the percentage increase in the number of working women was highest in South Australia.⁶² The demographer Graeme Hugo reported that in 1947, ‘South Australia attracted over 12 per cent of the net migration gain from overseas while it had

⁶⁰ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 30, pp. 76–7.

⁶¹ Richmond, ‘The workforce participation of married women in Australia’, p. 269.

⁶² MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*, p. 140. This factor is discussed in Chapter 3.

TABLE 7

**Married Women as a Percentage of the Female Workforce in Australia
and South Australia, 1911–1961**

Year	Australia	South Australia
1911	11.1%	7.35%
1921	9.2%	8.1%
1933	11%	8.75%
1947	19.8%	14.35%
1954	30.5%	33.5%
1961	38.3%	40.64%

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961*; Richmond, K., ‘The workforce participation of married women in Australia’, in *Social Change in Australia: Readings in Sociology*, ed. Donald E. Edgar, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1974, pp. 267–309, p. 269.

only 8.5 per cent of the national population.’⁶³ Furthermore, many of the married migrant women came from countries where they had already been part of the paid labour force.

While employers had the institutional power to enforce the marriage ban, it is equally important that through their institutions, many single women employees and male unionists were at least tacit supporters of the ban. For example, during World War II, the South Australian Education Department had to re-employ married women teachers to fill vacancies. In response, the Women Teachers’ Guild passed a motion that ‘the employment of married women, except in special circumstances, should not be supported,’ and told the Director of Education that ‘married women have divided interests, thus their service cannot measure up to the work of permanent staff.’⁶⁴

The employer/institutional ban on the employment of married women is the strongest explanation why young single women were the majority of female employees in South

⁶³ Hugo, G., ‘Playford’s people: Population change in South Australia’, in *Playford’s South Australia: Essays on the History of South Australia, 1933–1968*, eds B. O’Neil et al., Association of Professional Historians Inc., Adelaide, 1996, pp. 29–46, p. 35.

⁶⁴ Whitehead, ‘“Many industrial troubles are due to the presence of female labour”: The Women Teachers’ Guild in South Australia, 1937–42’, p. 38.

Australia until after World War II. But it is also necessary to investigate the experiences of the young women moving into masculine work organisations. Female clerical workers, like women doctors and lawyers, were pioneers at the beginning of this period. Organisational theorists such as Rosabeth Moss Kantor⁶⁵ and Susan Halford and Pauline Leonard⁶⁶ have identified the importance of female mentors for women seeking management positions. Role models are as important for clerical workers as they are for women managers. While women moved into clerical work in significant numbers during the period of this research,⁶⁷ the first woman clerk was often the only female in an all-male institution.

At the age of eighteen, Doris Blackman, born 1892, started her seven years of employment as a shorthand typist in the offices of the wool merchants, G.H. Michell and Sons.⁶⁸ Throughout that time she was the only woman employee. Her memories and account of that time point to both the role of paid work in the lives of life-long single women and the attitudes of male employers and employees:

I was the only girl amongst 70 men and I was really spoilt ... I enjoyed myself at the office and I missed it when I left, because at home there were no hours, I just worked there.⁶⁹

In her reminiscences, Doris Blackman accepted the traditional distinction between paid and unpaid work.

Doris Blackman had to leave Michell's to care for her widowed mother and younger siblings, but her reminiscences support Barbara Simon's⁷⁰ findings about the importance of

⁶⁵ Kanter, R. M., *Men and Women of the Corporation*, Basic Books, New York, 1977.

⁶⁶ Halford & Leonard, *Gender, Power and Organisations: An Introduction*, pp. 111–8.

⁶⁷ Gregory, 'Constructing the glass ceiling: Economics, gender and supply in the South Australian office, 1900–1935'.

⁶⁸ G.H. Michell & Sons (Aust.) Pty Ltd was and is one of Australia's wool brokers and one of the largest processors of animal hides. Prest et al. (eds), *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History*, p. 349.

⁶⁹ State Library of South Australia: Blackman, D. M., OH 25/8, Interview with Doris May Blackman [sound recording] Interviewer: Susan Marsden, Hindmarsh Oral History Project, Adelaide, recorded 15 Oct. 1979.

⁷⁰ Simon, *Never Married Women*.

paid work in the lives of single women. Doris Blackman's description of herself as being 'spoilt' in the Michell office may also be read in relation to the research on the role of secretaries in work organisations. Since the publication of Rosabeth Moss Kantor's *Men and Women of the Corporation* in 1977, the description of secretaries as 'office wives' has passed into popular usage.⁷¹ However, in her book *Secretaries Talk*, Rosemary Pringle used semiotics and discourse analysis to demonstrate that secretaries may be 'office wives', 'dolly birds' or 'career women'.⁷² In Rosemary Pringle's terms, Doris Blackman may be considered a 'dolly bird' in the Michell office. Against this is the fact that one of the Michells had married a cousin of Doris Blackman and her favoured treatment may have been because she was family.

The experiences of the first women working in government departments mirrored those of Doris Blackman. Elma Spooner worked as a typist in the Motor Vehicles Department in Adelaide from about 1920 until 1954. Her matter-of-fact account glosses over the minimal adjustments done for the first women typists:

... but most girls either went to dressmaking or millinery, because in the very early days, you see they didn't have much scope for office work either, because you see the men used to do all the office work, the typing and all that – in the Government offices they always had men typists. Well, I first went there, there was one man doing all the typing and then they gradually got the girls in ... Somebody told me apply so I did and got the job ... they asked me if I was good at figures and I said yes and I was hoping they would not give a test. But I got through, I stayed there till I had to retire ... We had to sit on old kitchen chairs and cushions and to reach our typewriters we had to put those big leather cushions, and by the time you got up there you couldn't touch the floor. Those were the days. But they have got everything down there [now] – oh glory.⁷³

Elma Spooner's literal account of her working conditions passes over the fact that the feminisation of clerical work occurred during her working life. Thelma Hunter has noted that 'by 1933, male ledger-keepers had almost entirely disappeared from Australian offices

⁷¹ Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation*.

⁷² Pringle, R., *Secretaries Talk: Sexuality, Power and Work*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1988.

⁷³ State Library of South Australia: Spooner, E. L., OH 25/38, Interview with Elma Lucy Spooner [typescript] Interviewer: Susan Marsden, Hindmarsh Oral History Project, Adelaide, recorded 27 Sept. 1979.

and banks.’⁷⁴ Furthermore, the organisational records are often silent on the way in which institutions prepared for or were affected by the increasing number of women employees. During Miss Spooner’s period of employment, the *Annual Reports of the Registrar General of Motor Vehicles* were summarised in the *Auditor General’s Annual Report*, and, therefore, the only organisational records now available are the list of employees. There is no organisational analysis of the impact of women employees in the Motor Vehicles Department.

While the institutional histories often pass over the increasing number of skilled and semi-skilled women being employed in formerly all-male occupations, they do note the first appointments of professional women. For example, the Adelaide City Council appointed its first public health nurse, Theodora Sweetapple, in 1899,⁷⁵ and its first Social Worker, Joy MacLennan, in 1943. As one of the earliest graduates of the Diploma in Social Work established at the University of Adelaide in 1936,⁷⁶ Joy MacLennan was very much aware that first appointments to some professional positions had few qualified colleagues and mentors to advise on the work to be done:

None of us in those days had proper job specifications. We developed the job as we went along ... We were mostly on our own, literally.⁷⁷

A comparison of male and female employees between 1911 and 1961 reveals that it was only towards the end of this period that male employees dominated the male labour force to the extent that female employees had always dominated the female labour force. In long-term trend analysis the data on women employees may be regarded as a bell wether for the dominance of employees, as against employers, self-employed and unemployed in the Australian labour force.⁷⁸ From 1911 to 1961, women employees were between

⁷⁴ Hunter, ‘The employment of women in Australia’, p. 100.

⁷⁵ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 33.

⁷⁶ Martin, E., ‘Amy Wheaton and the education of social workers in South Australia, 1935–46’, *Historical Studies*, vol. 20, no. 81, 1983, pp. 574–89.

⁷⁷ Adelaide City Council Archives: MacLennan, J., OH 29, Interview with Miss F. Joy MacLennan, Council Social Worker [sound recording] Interviewer: Bruce Edwards, City of Adelaide Oral History Project, Adelaide, interviewed 10 July 1985.

⁷⁸ The institutional practices and socio-economic developments, which caused some self-employed single women to become employees, are discussed in the relevant section of this chapter.

81.41% in 1921 and 87.17% in 1947 of the South Australian female labour force. In comparison, the equivalent range for male employees was from 52.97% in 1933 to 77.71% in 1961. The relevant numbers and percentages are in Tables 8 and 9 below.

TABLE 8
Numbers of Male and Female Employees, Including Those Under 25
Years, in the South Australian Labour Force, 1911–1961

Census Year	Male Population	Male Labour Force	Male Employees	Male Employees Under 25 Years	Female Population	Female Labour Force	Female Employees	Female Employees Under 25 Years
1911	207,358	140,847	93,696	36,353	201,200	33,958	25,733	16,176
1921	248,267	158,661	104,858	32,583	246,893	38,461	31,312	18,272
1933	290,962	187,347	94,941	26,733	289,987	49,129	37,169	20,901
1947	320,031	211,124	153,918	37,357	326,042	56,176	49,378	27,360
1954	403,903	253,567	195,568	41,158	393,151	68,182	59,437	26,636
1961	491,406	288,339	223,241	50,515	480,081	89,222	75,447	35,410

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961.*

TABLE 9
Percentages of South Australian Male, Female and Never Married
Women Employees Under 25 Years in the Labour Force, 1911–1961

Census Year	Male Employees as % of Male Labour Force	Female Employees as % of Female Labour Force	Male Employees Under 25 Years as % of All Male Employees	Female Employees Under 25 Years as % of All Female Employees
1911	66.52%	75.77%	38.99%	62.86%
1921	66.09%	81.41%	31.07%	58.35%
1933	52.81%	75.65%	27.02%	56.23%
1947	72.9%	87.9%	24.27%	55.41%
1954	77.13%	87.17%	21.05%	44.81%
1961	77.42%	84.56%	22.63%	46.93%

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961.*

It is also worth highlighting the percentage differences in the ages of male and female employees. Although the percentage of South Australian women employees under 25 decreased from 62.86% in 1911 to 44.81% in 1954, male employees under 25 never comprised more than 31.07% in 1921 and had decreased to 21.05% in 1954. The above total employee statistics also camouflage the number of teenage employees. Thelma Hunter noted that, in 1954, 40% of the Australian female workforce were in the 15–24 age group, compared with 19% for males.⁷⁹ It is reasonable to assume that most of these were employees. Even in the 1961 Census there were, in South Australia, 821 male and 840 female employees between the ages of 10 and 14 years when the school leaving age was 14 years.

The data from the 1933 Census reveals that in South Australia, as in Victoria⁸⁰ and the rest of Australia,⁸¹ women employees were less likely than their male counterparts to have been laid off during the Great Depression. Male employees as a percentage of the male labour force fell from 66.09% in 1921 to 52.81% in 1933 and rose to 72.9% in 1947. In comparison, the equivalent percentages for female employees were 81.42% in 1921, 75.65% in 1933 and 87.9% in 1947.⁸² These percentages are all the more significant because the 1933 Census also identified separately the number of male and female helpers who were not receiving a wage or salary. In South Australia, 3,626 of the 3,729 male helpers were never married, and of the 243 female helpers 243 were never married.⁸³ The extent to which the lower wages paid to women affected their employment was stressed in Muriel Heagney's 1935 pamphlet arguing for equal pay for equal work.⁸⁴ Melanie Nolan has noted also the divisive role of the unions and employers for women in the labour force during the Great Depression when they distinguished between married and single women:

⁷⁹ Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia', p. 96.

⁸⁰ Heagney, M., *Are Women Taking Men's Jobs?*, Hilton & Veitch, Melbourne, 1935.

⁸¹ Power, 'The making of a woman's occupation'.

⁸² See Tables 8 and 9 above.

⁸³ *Australian Census*, 1933, pp. 1674, 1675.

⁸⁴ Heagney, *Are Women Taking Men's Jobs?*

The census of 1933 shows that ... 94 per cent of women in public administration, professional and clerical occupations had never married. The clerical union defended single women's employment against what it saw as encroachments from married women.⁸⁵

2.5.2 Single Women Employers

Although employers and the self-employed are small percentages of the female labour force, the Census data on single women who were classified thus provides an opportunity to examine how particular single women both contested and colluded with the dominant ideologies relating to women in the paid workforce. There was a sharp decline in the percentage and total number of single women employers⁸⁶ between 1911 and 1961. From a high of 30.5% of all women employers in 1921, single women employers fell to 6.4% in 1961. Therefore, disaggregation of the Census data reveals that in the occupational status category of employer, single women have been a minority group for far longer than Thelma Hunter's post-World War II conclusion would suggest: less than 25% of the employers since 1933. The detailed statistics are in Table 10 below.

TABLE 10
Female Employers in South Australia, 1911–1961

Census Years	Female Labour Force	Total Female Employers	Single Female Employers	% Single Female Employers
1911	33,958	1427	425	29.78%
1921	38,462	790	241	30.50%
1933	49,129	1910	430	22.51%
1947	56,176	1915	379	19.79%
1954	68,182	2441	281	11.51%
1961	89,222	4081	260	6.37%

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961.*

⁸⁵ Nolan, 'Making clerks and re-shaping the white-collar workforce in the twentieth century', p. 80.

⁸⁶ Discussion of particular single women employers is below.

This research revealed that single women employers were a mixture of women who were never in the paid workforce and others who were also self-employed. For example, Eva and Lily Waite, the unmarried daughters of the pastoralist and philanthropist Sir Peter Waite,⁸⁷ were never part of the paid female labour force but they employed household staff and gardeners when they moved to their own home after their parents died. In contrast, their contemporary Dr Helen Mayo worked full-time in her own medical practice and employed the necessary nursing and household staff to enable her to carry out her paid and voluntary work.

The records of many single women employers between 1911 and 1961 show that they were in labour intensive service industries. Teachers and nurses are the best known examples. Until after the end of World War II, only a small start-up capital was required to open small independent schools and private hospitals. Thus, the Misses Brown who owned and ran the Wilderness School from 1884 until 1948 opened their first class in the family home, and all the family lived on the school grounds until their deaths.⁸⁸ Similarly, Jewell Baker who owned Walford House School from 1917 until 1955 accommodated boarders in her mother's home from 1919 and moved the school there in 1936.⁸⁹ Dorothy Selth, who ran the Osmond Terrace Private Hospital from 1937 until 1952, first rented and later purchased the property where she established her hospital.⁹⁰ When these women sold their businesses, they were all close to retiring age, but Dorothy Selth stressed the impact of Government regulation in a changing society:

Things had changed so much and the government was coming into the picture with new regulations.⁹¹

Once schools and hospitals increased in size and required more professional staff and expensive technology, then more capital was needed. World events also affected single

⁸⁷ Healey (ed.), *S.A.'s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques*, p. 141.

⁸⁸ Scales, *The Wilderness: One Hundred Years of History and Legend 1884–1984*.

⁸⁹ Walford Anglican School for Girls, *Walford: A Centenary History*.

⁹⁰ City of Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Civic Collection: Selth, D., Code 13:95, Interview with Miss Dorothy Selth [sound recording] Interviewer: Denise Schumann, Kensington and Norwood Oral History Program, Norwood, SA, recorded 19 Oct. 1995.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

women employers. For example, World War II and the associated petrol rationing meant that Mabel Hardy had to close Stawell, the private school which she ran with Patience Hawker at Mount Lofty, because the students had too far to travel.⁹²

At a lower socio-economic level, the single women who ran boarding houses or guest houses either inherited the family home or rented suitable accommodation. Doris Crowley recalled that even during the Depression she was always able to get work:

I went to be housemaid – waitress in – I can't think of the woman's name – Murton House the guest house was, and she was Margot⁹³ but I can't think of the rest of 'er name ... She was a very hard lady to work for so I always knew that I could get a job when I was out of work at Holdens ... She must have had about forty guests that boarded there in those days ... and they were mostly school teachers or in permanent positions ... Yes, they were paying guests, yes. They had all their meals there.⁹⁴

Doris Crowley's memories recall a world now gone where even professional people lived in family homes or in guesthouses. Once flats became available and were the preferred accommodation for workers in professional, service and manufacturing industries, then, as Leonore Davidoff noted, landlords had to reconsider their self-employment prospects.⁹⁵ In South Australia, the rapid decline of boarding houses was post-1961. For example, the YWCA, the Salvation Army and the Catholic Women's League closed their hostels in the early 1970s when declining demand and expensive Government regulations made the

⁹² The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Australian Federation of University Women – South Australia, Records of Oral History project: Interviews with early South Australian women graduates and related people, Papers of the Australian Federation of University Women South Australia, Inc., Series no. 33, Adelaide, Sept. 1981–Feb. 198[8].

⁹³ Margot Leigh, a feisty Irish immigrant, was a friend of my mother. Doris Crowley's description of Margot is accurate.

⁹⁴ Adelaide City Council Archives: Crowley, D., OH 50, Interview with Miss Doris Crowley, Resident [sound recording] Interviewer: Elizabeth Harris, City of Adelaide Oral History Project, Adelaide, interviewed 9 Feb. 1987.

⁹⁵ Davidoff, L., 'The separation of home and work?: Landladies and lodgers in nineteenth- and twentieth-century England', in *World Between: Historical Perspectives on Gender and Class*, ed. L. Davidoff, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995, pp. 151–79.

necessary upgrading uneconomic.⁹⁶ Single women landladies, who would not have had the same access to capital as these institutional hostels, probably left the market earlier.

Changing economic conditions after World War II encouraged the growth of larger business and government organizations at the expense of small businesses. For example, the growth of supermarkets and the greater acceptability of ready-made clothing destroyed the businesses of women who were employers or self-employed in delicatessens, dressmaking and millinery establishments. This development, which equally affected male and female employers and the self-employed as well as employees, is a partial explanation of the post-World War II increasing percentage of employees in the labor force statistics.

Because these single women were also employers, their employment practices must be acknowledged. As private employers, they were not bound by the Regulations for Government departments, but they were very much aware of the dominant ideologies. Therefore, the fact and the reasons why Miss Brown of Wilderness employed a married woman as a part-time music teacher are significant:

During her University years she [Gwen Adamson] taught music at the school, continuing until she married in 1928. Miss Brown did not approve of married women working, but later she agreed that Gwen Adamson, now Robinson, should resume some teaching so that her two small daughters would be able to have all their schooling with the Browns. Mrs Robinson continued to teach private pupils and classes until she retired in 1963.⁹⁷

From their practice, it is possible to argue that the Misses Brown considered the education of girls more important than conformity to the domestic ideology. The histories of the independent girls' schools⁹⁸ reveal how many married women were employed throughout

⁹⁶ O'Neil, *Learning For Life: St Mary's Hostel (1916–1972) and the Catholic Women's League Child Care Centre (1975–1999)*, p. 32.

⁹⁷ Scales, *The Wilderness: One Hundred Years of History and Legend 1884–1984*, p. 27.

⁹⁸ e.g. Phillips, *Not Saints, But Girls: The First Hundred Years of St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School*; Gale (ed.), *Women and Education at St Aloysius College Adelaide 1880–2000*; Twynam, P. M., *To Grow in Wisdom: The Story of the First Seventy-five Years of the Methodist Ladies College 1902–1977*, The School Council, Adelaide, 1977.

this period, even if only in part-time positions as sports teachers as happened at my own school.⁹⁹

Furthermore, marriage was no bar for single women who were employers and self-employed as the *Adelaide News* reported proudly, if somewhat surprisedly, when Mary Tenison Woods and Dorothy Somerville established their legal practice in 1925:

For the first time so far as Adelaide is concerned, and, it is believed for the first time in the history of the Commonwealth, the unique occurrence of two women members of the legal profession entering into partnership will be an accomplished fact on April 25. Mrs Julian Tenison Woods, well known by her maiden name – Miss Mary Kitson – and Miss Dorothy Somerville have decided to be pioneers in the first actual partnership of women lawyers.¹⁰⁰

After the partnership was dissolved in 1927, Dorothy Somerville practised alone till 1991.¹⁰¹ Many professional women practised in partnership with their husbands, such as Drs Winifred Wall and Dorothy Sorby Adams.¹⁰²

Some single women employers also widened work opportunities for all women. Dorothy Selth, matron and owner of the Osmond Terrace Private Hospital between 1937 and 1952, was one of the first matrons to employ Aboriginal women as trainee nurses. In 1995, she vividly recalled the social attitudes of the early 1950s and the conflict between her sense of social justice with the potential impact on her income:

Well, he [Dr Duguid] came to me one day and he said, “Look, I wonder if you would take two Aboriginal girls as part of their training ... He’d been to the Memorial Hospital – should I say this? – and they refused to take them because they were coloured. He said, “They don’t take them at the Royal Adelaide either,” and he said, “they do want to take up nursing.” And that was a sort of a blow because I was a private hospital and the patients mightn’t want them. I had nothing against them ... I thought for a while, and then I said, “Well, I’ll tell you what Dr Duguid, we’ll leave it to the patients. If they don’t like them

⁹⁹ I was at school between 1945 and 1956.

¹⁰⁰ ‘New legal firm: Women lawyers join forces: Adelaide leads the way’, *The News*, 17 Feb. 1925

¹⁰¹ ‘Law loses two identities’, *Bulletin (Law Society of South Australia)*, Nov. 1992, p. 23.

¹⁰² South Australian Medical Women’s Society, *The Hands of a Woman*.

I'm afraid I won't be able to keep them because it's my hospital ... And so they came ... and the patients just lapped them up ... By the time they did their two years at Osmond Terrace, they were taking everybody at the Royal Adelaide.¹⁰³

Dorothy Selth's willingness to take Aboriginal women as trainee nurses is one example of a single woman who changed the employment practices in her institution and thereby demonstrated to other employers that these innovations were both efficient and effective.

2.5.3 Self-Employed Single Women

Table 11 below charts the movement of single women out of the self-employed section of the female labour force. From a high of 1,817 single women which was 56.48% of self-employed women in 1911, their numbers and percentage fell to 712 and 12.7% respectively in 1961. Like the employers, self-employed single women have been a minority group for far longer than Thelma Hunter's post-World War II conclusion would suggest, less than 50% of the self-employed since 1933.

TABLE 11
Self-Employed Women in South Australia, 1911–1961

Census Years	Female Labour Force	Total Female Self-Employed	Self-Employed Single Women	% of Self-Employed Single Women
1911	33,958	3,217	1,817	56.48%
1921	38,462	4,288	2,007	46.8%
1933	49,129	3,779	1,811	47.92%
1947	56,176	3,270	1,092	33.39%
1954	68,182	4,521	903	19.97%
1961	89,222	5,850	712	12.17%

Source: *Australian Census*, 1911–1961.

¹⁰³ City of Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Civic Collection: Code 13:95, Interview with Miss Dorothy Selth [sound recording].

Unlike self-employed men, self-employed women faced additional financial and social hurdles. If they started their working lives as employees, their lower wages meant that it took women longer than men to save the necessary capital for self-employment. Professional women who eventually became partners in law or medical practices started on meagre salaries which the lawyer Beryl Linn recalled:

On one occasion I was asked to attend to the payment of salaries ... I was shocked to find that my salary was less than that of the typists.¹⁰⁴

The wider institutional discrimination against self-employed women was most clearly evident in banking practice. Throughout this period, women seeking bank loans had to have male guarantors irrespective of their earning capacity. For example, the South Australian Medical Women's Society recorded the struggles of Dr Mildred Mocatta to establish the general practice which she ran for 23 years:

The negotiation was not easy. She sought a loan from each of the banks, but it was bank policy at that time, and for many years, not to lend money to women. She borrowed from her family and repaid them proudly in two years.¹⁰⁵

It was post-1961 before Australian banks gave house mortgages to women without requiring male guarantors.

As Janet Holland noted, 'the evidence of discrimination against women in the labour market is formidable,'¹⁰⁶ be they single or married, self-employed or employees. Thus Mary Tenison Woods (1893–1971), the first woman to graduate in law from the University of Adelaide, had to have the law changed in 1921 when she applied to become a public notary because the 'existing Public Notaries Act did not include women as "persons".'¹⁰⁷ This is but one example of why women in this period, and working single women in

¹⁰⁴ Linn, B., 'Beryl Linn AM: A lady of the law', *Bulletin (Law Society of South Australia)*, Mar. 1998, pp. 30–2, p. 32.

¹⁰⁵ South Australian Medical Women's Society, *The Hands of a Woman*, pp. 89–90.

¹⁰⁶ Holland, *Work and Women: A Review of Explanations for the Maintenance and Reproduction of Sexual Divisions*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁷ Radi, H. (ed.), *200 Australian Women: A Redress Anthology*, Women's Redress Press Inc., Sydney, 1988, p. 197.

particular, considered it important to ensure that their rights as citizens were enshrined in legislation.

Even Dame Roma Mitchell (1913–2000), South Australia’s most successful woman lawyer, judge, University Chancellor and State Governor, acknowledged that society’s attitude towards women had affected the areas of law in which she practised between 1934 and 1965:

I did in fact limit myself in that I did very little criminal work because I felt I was a curiosity at the Criminal Bar there being only male jurors and male Judges and a certain horror that women should hear some of the evidence. I thought that I would do a disservice to the client.¹⁰⁸

In an organisational cultural analysis, Dame Roma would appear to be colluding with the dominant ideology when she ‘did very little criminal work’. However, her justification, ‘I thought I would do a disservice to the client’, reveals that she recognised the strength of the ideology which had driven the practice of male-only jurors and judges in criminal trials. This meant that Dame Roma had to choose between her responsibility to clients and contesting the values and assumptions of that time. The hospital home-owner, Dorothy Selth, also had to contest a dominant ideology when she was asked to employ Aboriginal nurses, but her patients were more amenable to change than the criminal courts. These examples support Deborah Nord’s judgement that ‘gender was the unavoidable and central issue with which women were forced to contend.’¹⁰⁹

The management and organisational literature highlights the importance of networks and networking for career success.¹¹⁰ Practically, referrals and recommendations were and are essential for self-employed single women be they lawyers, doctors, dentists, music teachers, dressmakers or milliners. The oral histories reveal that these women were as adept as men at using the social and professional networks which strengthen a successful

¹⁰⁸ Powell, L., ‘A life in law’, *Law Society Bulletin*, Jan./Feb. 1991, pp. 4–9, p. 4.

¹⁰⁹ Nord, D. E., “‘Neither pairs nor odd’: Female community in late nineteenth-century London”, *Signs*, vol. 15, no. 4, 1990, pp. 733–54, p. 753.

¹¹⁰ Halford & Leonard, *Gender, Power and Organisations: An Introduction*, pp. 73, 115.

business. The dressmaker Hazele Thornton commented uncritically on the networks which enabled her to conduct her own business until 1967:

I didn't seem to have to go about it at all. They just seemed to come. One told another.¹¹¹

But the dentist, Gwenyth Hannon, noted that professional women from the very beginning used their networks deliberately to overcome the lack of referrals from their male colleagues:

These women had such a bad time that they would go out of their way to send their own patients ... from one to another rather than send them on to a man ...¹¹²

To supplement their income, some self-employed professional women worked part-time for other employers. For example, the dentist Winifred Preedy¹¹³ worked at the Dental Hospital and the artist Marie Tuck¹¹⁴ taught at the South Australian School of Art.

Many employer and self-employed single women are best remembered for their efforts to improve conditions for women and children. Most did this through their voluntary work in women's organisations. Thus Ellinor Walker (1893–1990), who owned the Kindergarten, Greenways School, for twenty-four years, was an active member of the League of Women Voters for sixty-five years. In 1972, Ellinor Walker considered that the following were the achievements of the League of Women Voters:

I should say the work for women police and women on public boards ... The statute book is different because of the League of Women Voters, outstanding examples being the

¹¹¹ Adelaide City Council Archives: Thornton, H. C., OH 26, Interview with Miss Hazele Clarice Thornton, Resident [sound recording] Interviewer: Bruce Edwards, City of Adelaide Oral History Project, Adelaide, interviewed 25 June 1985.

¹¹² The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Preedy, W. E. & Hannon, G. E., Miss Winifred Preedy and Mrs Gwenyth Hannon, Records of Oral History project: Interviews with early South Australian women graduates and related people, Papers of the Australian Federation of University Women South Australia, Inc., Series no. 33, Adelaide, 1981.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Robertson, J., Marie Tuck [radio script], Personalities Remembered (Radio program), no. 80, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Adelaide, broadcast 19 Dec. 1971.

Guardianship of Infants Act, which was passed in nineteen hundred and forty, and which gave equality of power to mother and father over the child; and then the law for women jurors, which was passed just a few years ago ... Equality for women in every aspect of life, including of course, the economic one, which has always been to the fore, and it's been a long struggle.¹¹⁵

2.6 Census Data on the Gendered Division of Labour in South Australia, 1911–1961

In Australia, Census information on the gendered division of labour is found in the industry statistics. The relationship between the occupational status statistics and the industry statistics in the labour force data is as follows. All women whom the Census classified as having an occupation were then included in the industry statistics. But, because the Census did not recognise all working women as having an occupation, they were not included in the industry statistics. The work of the young May Mills discussed earlier may have been atypical, but the unpaid work and the 'black economy' payments for dressmaking, laundry etc. to women¹¹⁶ do raise questions about the accuracy of the industry data in the Australian Census. Only employers, the self-employed, employees and the unemployed are included in industry statistics. Furthermore, four women working as accountants or bookkeepers in a boarding house, a printing firm, a credit union or a medical practice would be classified in separate industries. Their occupations are the same, but their industry classifications are different.

Historical tables trace the movement of women in and out of particular industries. In his report on the 1961 Census, the Commonwealth Statistician supplied, for the first time, 'an analysis of the economically active female population for the Censuses 1901–1961.'¹¹⁷ However, in an unfortunate note for this research, the Commonwealth Statistician reported that it was 'not possible to provide any comparison with statistics for previous Censuses in

¹¹⁵ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Radio interview with Ellinor Walker [sound recording].

¹¹⁶ Aungles, A., 'Family economies in transition: Adelaide women in the Depression', MA thesis, Flinders University of South Australia, 1982; Bettison, M., *Selina Dunstan's Papers 1885–1921: Family Life and Work in the Kapunda District of South Australia*, Educational Technology Unit, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, 1997.

¹¹⁷ *Australian Census*, 1961, vol. 8, p. 260.

respect of the full range of industry groups with conjugal condition.’¹¹⁸ The Commonwealth percentages in Table 12 below give an overall picture of where particular industries are classified; for example, the separation of clothing manufacturing from all other manufacturing and the inclusion of health and education under the more general industry heading of public authority and professional. The table also reveals the different growth patterns for the number of women in the health and education industries: a steady growth of women in the health industry, with a wave-like development for women in education. The extent to which South Australian statistics corresponded with the Commonwealth pattern is now examined.

Table 12 also provides the Australian context for the Adelaide data below of W. A. Sinclair, who traced the movement of women out of domestic service and into manufacturing and commercial industries (Table 13), and the personal stories of single women who moved from one industry to another. For example, Elma Spooner was one single woman who moved from the manufacturing industry to commerce. She trained and worked as a milliner before becoming a typist in the Department of Motor Vehicles: a life-long single woman who relocated from the industry of manufacturing of articles of dress to the industry of a public authority.¹¹⁹

The work history of Mary Conry¹²⁰ is one example of the inter-related economic and social conditions and ideologies which marked the movement of working class single women between various industries. Mary Conry was born in 1913. When she left school in 1927, she applied for a position at Fauldings but was told, ‘No, we don’t have Catholics here.’ She found work at Bickford’s ‘putting labels on the bottles ... from when I was fifteen till I was sixteen.’ At sixteen years of age, Mary Conry was entitled to higher wages. However, the Depression was starting and she was laid off. For the next four years, Mary Conry was on relief rations. This first stage in Mary Conry’s work history is an example of the impact of the Depression on the employment prospects of teenage female workers who were on low wages in the manufacturing industry.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

¹¹⁹ State Library of South Australia: OH 25/38, Interview with Elma Lucy Spooner [typescript].

¹²⁰ Adelaide City Council Archives: Conry, M., OH 53, Interview with Miss Mary (Molly) Conry, Resident [sound recording] Interviewer: Elizabeth Harris, City of Adelaide Oral History Project, Adelaide, interviewed 28 & 30 Sept. 1988. All the quotations are taken from this oral interview.

TABLE 12
Percentage of Females in Specified Classes of Industry to Total Females
in Industry, Australia, Censuses 1911–1961

Industry Group	1911	1921	1933	1947	1954	1961
1 Primary Activities						
1.1 Agricultural, Pastoral, Dairying	4.1	2.2	3.3	3.4	3.8	3.8
1.2 Other	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Total	4.1	2.3	3.4	3.5	4.0	3.9
2 Secondary Activities						
2.1 Manufacturing & Construction of	22.7	17.1	13.1	12.0	10.0	7.7
2.2 Other Manufacturing	5.7	9.2	10.5	16.9	18.1	18.1
Total	28.4	26.3	23.6	28.9	28.1	25.8
3 Other Activities						
3.1 Transport	0.4	0.6	0.8	2.2	1.8	1.8
3.2 Communication	0.9	1.0	1.2	2.3	2.0	1.8
Total	1.3	1.6	2.0	4.5	3.8	3.6
4 Commerce & Finance						
4.1 Property & Finance	1.9	1.4	1.9	3.4	4.1	5.3
4.2 Commerce	10.7	14.4	17.4	19.6	22.7	22.8
Total	12.6	15.8	19.3	23.0	26.8	28.1
5 Public Authority & Professional						
5.1 Health	4.4	5.8	6.1	7.8	9.1	10.3
5.2 Education	6.8	7.8	6.2	5.4	6.2	7.4
5.3 Other	2.4	4.8	6.1	7.6	7.0	7.7
Total	13.6	18.4	18.4	20.8	22.3	25.4
6 Entertainment, Sport & Recreation	0.3	0.5	0.7	1.1	1.1	1.1
7 Personal & Domestic Service						
7.1 Private Domestic service	26.8	21.4	21.4	5.9	3.7	2.6
7.2 Commercial Domestic Service	10.2	11.4	8.2	9.1	7.8	6.8
7.3 Other	2.7	2.3	3.0	3.2	2.4	2.7
Total	39.7	35.1	32.6	18.2	13.9	12.1
GRAND TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: *Australian Census*, 1961, vol. 8, p. 261.

TABLE 13
Industrial Composition of the Adelaide Female Workforce
 (percentages)

Year	Domestic Service	Manufacturing	Commercial	Professional	Other
1911	36.2	32.5	15.6	13.5	2.2
1921	33.5	26.1	20.3	16.2	3.7
1933	33.3	18.9	23.9	19.3	4.6
1947	16.8	18.0	24.2	22.4	8.6
1954	12.9	25.9	27.5	23.9	9.8

Source: Sinclair, W. A., 'Women at work in Melbourne and Adelaide since 1871', *Economic Record*, vol. 57, 1981, pp. 344–53, p. 349.

From manufacturing and after four years unemployment, Mary Conry moved into household domestic work. Her plain account of her duties highlights the conditions which encouraged working women to move out of this section of the industry of domestic service.¹²¹ For fifteen years she went almost every day to do the ironing, cooking and cleaning at a private house. Her wages started at ten shillings per week and were twenty-five shillings per week when she finished in 1945. The hours were long and the work demanding:

Well, I think I used to have Sat'day afternoon and Sunday afternoon off and in the end I was working then, too, looking after the little granddaughter ... I never got the opportunity to go to any outings like [dances] because I was working late at night ... They had something one night – they had over thirty people to a dinner – and I was the only one to do it all and I did, I coped ... I never had a holiday, never got [one].

Because of her health, Mary Conry was not conscripted for munitions work during World War II. 'I went to the doctor and he told me that I could not stand factory work.' However, the heavy domestic service had affected Mary Conry's health, and despite the demand for domestic servants she resigned:

¹²¹ Kingston, *My Wife, My Daughter, and Poor Mary Ann: Women and Work in Australia*.

Well it was not that they didn't need it, they did, but I was getting sick, my mother was ill
 ...

Probably it was the Commonwealth Unemployment Allowance that enabled Mary Conry to barely exist between 1946 and 1954. Because she was untrained for anything except domestic work, Mary Conry could only find short-term jobs where she was in the unenviable position of being the last person employed and the first one laid off:

I found it very hard to live, very hard to manage. Yes, I worked in quite a few places for a short time. I worked at Tandy's in town and when their busy time ended I got put off.

Mary Conry finished her working life, the end of which spanned 1954 to 1967, working as a cleaner in the University of Adelaide. Whether or not she was a typical domestic worker who moved from private to commercial domestic work is unknown. Most interesting are her comments on the institutional differences for her as a worker:

I'd been used to being my own boss. I had to learn to fit in with other people – younger, older – work for a boss, get used to different nationalities and their ways and language and things like that.¹²²

Although the industry statistics drawn from the Australian Censuses and the *Statistical Register of South Australia* do not separate married and single women, the South Australian industry statistics on women in nursing, the largest female group in the health industry,¹²³ and the education industry correspond with the Commonwealth data. Table 14 below traces the dramatic growth in the number of registered nurses, the slow but steady growth in the number of independent school teachers and the significant differences in the number of female and male teachers in the Education Department. The statistics are not strictly comparable. Student nurses who were the majority of nursing staff in the hospitals are not included and it is possible that many of the registered nurses were no longer practising. The nursing numbers are almost completely female, because it was 1956 before

¹²² Adelaide City Council Archives: OH 53, Interview with Miss Mary (Molly) Conry, Resident [sound recording].

¹²³ The *Statistical Register of South Australia* does not identify whether registered doctors were male or female.

the first man completed the general course of nurse training, and only the few male psychiatric nurses were registered nurses.¹²⁴

TABLE 14
Registered Nurses, and Female and Male Teachers in Education
Department (E.D.) and Independent Schools (I.S.), 1911–1961

Census Year	Registered Nurses	E.D. Female Teachers	I.S. Female Teachers	E.D. Male Teachers	I.S. Male Teachers
1911	N.A.	978	503	429	187
1921	796	1,583	628	677	188
1933	1,687	1,787	698	1,409	193
1947	3,380	1,724	706	1,614	219
1954	4,724	2,902	854	2,016	283
1961	6,123	4,414	1,053	4,285	402

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia, 1911–1961.*

There are important historical reasons for the relatively high growth in the number of nurses and the wave-like growth in the number of Education Department teachers, both females and male. The *Nurses Registration Act 1920* coincided with society's greater acceptance of treating sick people from all classes in hospitals, rather than in their own homes. Many interviewees for 'S.A. Speaks' in 1986 noted that, while they had been born at home and/or had been nursed through typhoid at home, people went to hospital in the 1980s. Nursing historians have also stressed that, with Registration, nursing became an acceptable occupation for middle-class women.¹²⁵

Using the data from Table 15 below, I am suggesting that the wave-like growth in the numbers of the Education Department's teachers from 1911 to 1961 arose from the complex and inter-related economic and social conditions which disadvantaged the women

¹²⁴ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 92.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

teachers. The introduction of compulsory education for primary age children and the registration of schools in the *Education Act 1875* strengthened the employment power of the educational institutions, both State and independent. Therefore, by 1911 the small dame schools were closing and women seeking teaching appointments had to meet the criteria of the employers or be unemployed.¹²⁶ There is a striking fact in Table 15 below. This is, that the rise in the number of women teachers corresponds with the rapid growth in the number of schools between 1911 and 1933, and the ratio of female to male teachers between 1933 and 1947 decreased with the number of Education Department Schools. The *Annual Reports of the Minister of Education* are silent on whether or not the South Australian Education Department implemented a policy to increase the number and ratio of male teachers in Education Department schools.

TABLE 15

Education Department (E.D.) Teachers, Students and Schools, 1911–1961

Census Year	E.D. Female Teachers	E.D. Male Teachers	E.D. Schools	Total E.D. Students
1911	978	429	737	55,294
1921	1,583	677	960	80,178
1933	1,787	1,409	1,092	89,898
1947	1,724	1,614	759	75,538
1954	2,902	2,016	689	122,994
1961	4,414	4,285	679	181,097

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia*, 1961–62, p. 26.

Furthermore, between 1876 and 1965, the Education Department also had a Pupil Teacher/Junior Teacher system whereby students too young and/or without the Leaving Certificate to enter Teachers College were appointed to primary schools where they were expected to teach under supervision whilst completing their studies.¹²⁷ The junior teacher

¹²⁶ Whitehead, 'Women's "life-work": Teachers in South Australia, 1836–1906'.

¹²⁷ Jones, A. W., 'The end of the Junior Teaching System', *Education Gazette*, suppl., Mar. 1966, pp. 1–2.

system was as much apprenticeship training as the nursing training without the advantages of peer group support found in the nurses' homes. The Education Department's employment of female junior teachers is an example of an institution employing males at the senior level in a feminised occupation. Anthony McGuire has stressed the economic benefits to the organisation of this system:

Overall, there were far more female than male junior teachers employed and this alone is an example of one problem being solved by the imposition of another – females who would be paid a lower wage than men for the whole of their teaching lives being used to assist in departmental budgeting.¹²⁸

This occurred during the Depression and World War II when the wages of young single women were supplementing the income of their families of origin.

The above analysis has demonstrated that, throughout the period 1911–1961, teaching and nursing in South Australia were feminised professions 'where women formed a higher proportion of workers in those occupations than they did in the work force as a whole.'¹²⁹ This is one reason why this research concentrates upon the work of nurses and teachers.

2.7 Conclusion

This analysis of South Australian Labour Force Statistics has demonstrated the value of looking beyond the labour force totals and the general category, female labour force. The occupational status examination revealed that Thelma Hunter's 1961 judgement about the youth and single status of women prior to the end of World II in the labour force really only applied to women employees. By contrast, married women dominated the occupational categories of female employer and self-employed before World War II. This comparison suggests that the employment practices of time provide the major explanation as to why female employees were predominantly young and never married. These employment practices were integrated into institutional structures and cultures.

¹²⁸ McGuire, A., 'Pupil teachers and junior teachers in South Australian schools 1873–1965: An historical and humanistic sociological analysis', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 1999, p. 709.

¹²⁹ Power, 'The making of a woman's occupation', p. 23.

The examination has sought to demonstrate the power of the Australian Bureau of Statistics as an institution. The Bureau's definition of single women as 'never married women', its implicit acceptance of work as paid work and its limited recognition of the contribution of voluntary work to the economy has limited the accuracy of its demographic data, and industry classifications in particular. The discussion and analysis in this chapter has focused on a review of single women in different occupations and of different occupational status. To further study the range of institutions which have structured the work of all women, Chapter 3 analyses the major factors affecting the occupational choices, the occupational segregation and career achievements of single women.

3 AN UNSUITABLE JOB FOR A WOMAN¹

3.1 Introduction

The domestic ideology dominant between 1911 and 1961 in South Australia meant that full-time work outside of caring for husband and family in the home was regarded as a lesser option for an adult woman. In this respect, the life-long single women in the labour force at that time could be described as working in non-traditional occupations, despite the fact that the majority of them were in the ‘feminized’ occupations examined in Chapter 2. As a group, the single women worked in a range of occupations: professional, clerical, service, manufacturing and voluntary. Therefore, the work of these women provides the opportunity for a re-examination of the factors affecting occupational choice, occupational segregation and career achievement. This chapter has two aims. The first is to highlight the interrelationships between the factors affecting particular single women’s choice of occupations. The second is to explore whether or not there were significant differences in the institutional structures and institutional controls for single women in different occupations. This examination is done through case studies of the experiences of particular women.

Single women needed paid work. The majority had few other options. As more and more of the work formerly done in the family, for example, the education of children, nursing of the sick, food preparation, tailoring and dressmaking, moved into the public world of schools, hospitals, factories, and retail shops, single women followed the work. In South Australia between 1911 and 1961 the unmarried daughters, sisters and aunts, the emigrants or the daughters and granddaughters of the first colonists, had few extended families and wealthy fathers or brothers to support them. Furthermore, the few single women of independent means accepted their social responsibilities to do voluntary work. Paid work was essential for poor women, but as early as 1878, the social activist Catherine Helen Spence had identified the need as well as the right of middle-class South Australian women to paid work:

¹ James, P. D., *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*, Faber and Faber, London, 1972.

The movement for a wider range of employments for women arises in great part from another cause than the marriage difficulty. All the avocations which the middle-class woman used to pursue at home, by which she saved money if she did not earn it, are slipping one by one from her by the encroachment of machinery and the profitable division of labour ... A few years hence every man with a life-income who has more than one or two daughters will bring them up to some remunerative employment.²

3.2 Factors Affecting Occupational Choice

As this thesis seeks to demonstrate, the distinctive feature of single women's work between 1911 and 1961 was its heterogeneity. The factors which affect occupational choice – ability, family, education, class, religion, economic and social conditions – are well known and widely researched.³ But the following analysis emphasises the extent to which the influence of these factors crossed the social and economic boundaries between single women. This examination is structured according to Janet Holland's categorization of the literature on occupational choice, i.e.:

- A. Explanations at the personal or psychological level which constrain women
- B. Explanations at the structural level, that is, built into the institutions and/or practices of social formation.⁴

My use of Janet Holland's category B explanations will include a particular emphasis on the 'external environmental factors,'⁵ such as the two World Wars and the Great Depression which dominated the period 1911 to 1961. Furthermore, the analysis is done according to the life span perspective recommended by Millicent Poole and Janet Langan-Fox⁶ and Katherine Allen.⁷

² Spence, *Catherine Helen Spence*, pp. 535, 537.

³ e.g. Holland, *Work and Women: A Review of Explanations for the Maintenance and Reproduction of Sexual Divisions*; Poole & Langan-Fox, *Australian Women and Careers: Psychological and Contextual Influences Over the Life Course*.

⁴ Holland, *Work and Women: A Review of Explanations for the Maintenance and Reproduction of Sexual Divisions*, p. 17.

⁵ Poole & Langan-Fox, *Australian Women and Careers: Psychological and Contextual Influences Over the Life Course*, p. 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*

3.2.1 Personal Factors Affecting the Occupational Choices of Single Women

To the extent that the life-long single women examined in this research achieved their occupational objectives, they do not seem to have been constrained by Janet Holland's Category A explanations; the personal feelings that their choices were unsuitable for women or that they would not succeed in their work. Nevertheless, they needed the personal qualities of perseverance and fortitude to overcome the structural obstacles to their occupational choices. Thus Dr Helen Mayo (1878–1967), the second woman to graduate in medicine from the University of Adelaide in 1902, recalled in 1960:

It had been my intention, for as long as I can remember, to qualify as a Doctor of Medicine.⁸

It is interesting to note that it is the personal qualities of a successful person, which are first referred to in obituaries. For example, when Sir Herbert Mayo was asked about his parents' attitude to his sister Helen's choice of a medical career, it was her resolution which remained with him:

It would not have mattered what they thought, Helen was a very determined person.⁹

The oral histories of single working class women reveal the extent to which these women recognised their own self-direction and initiative. While the factory worker Doris Crowley (1910–) brushed aside being laid off during the Depression with the comment, ' 'course, I found myself another job',¹⁰ the telephonist, Mary Matthew (1909–1997), was more reflective.¹¹ She left school when she was 15 years old and found her first position working in a florist's shop. Because she was interested in shift work and working in the

⁷ Allen, *Single Women/Family Ties: Life Histories of Older Women*.

⁸ Mayo, H., 'After sixty-four years', *Adelaide University Graduates Union Gazette*, vol. 3, no. 3, Mar. 1961, unnumbered.

⁹ Horan, 'A goodly heritage: An appreciation of the life and work of the late Dr Helen Mayo', p. 420.

¹⁰ Adelaide City Council Archives: OH 50, Interview with Miss Doris Crowley, Resident [sound recording], p. 19.

¹¹ State Library of South Australia: Matthew, M. M., OH 1/32, Interview with Mary Margaret Matthew [sound recording] Interviewer: Beth M. Robertson, 'S. A. Speaks': An Oral History of Life in South Australia before 1930, Adelaide, recorded 29 May 1986.

Central Exchange of the Adelaide GPO, Mary Matthew went to Stott's Business College to prepare for the telephonist's examination while she was still working for the florist:

First of all, I went to Stott's Business College for about four weeks, just to have an idea of what the examination would be like ... They had papers there that were set for previous exams – they knew the standard of work that would be required for the exam ... From the day I went to the examination until I retired was two days off forty-nine years.¹²

While research studies such as Alison Mackinnon's *Love and Freedom*¹³ have highlighted the determination of professional women to achieve their occupational objectives, it is equally important to acknowledge that working-class, life-long single women demonstrated the same initiative in achieving their occupational objectives. For example, Elma Spooner left the local high school at 14 years of age to be apprenticed to a milliner. Because she wanted to do office work where the money and hours were better, she took night classes in typewriting at the School of Mines. This enabled her to apply for a clerical position in the Department of Motor Vehicles, where she worked until her retirement.¹⁴

3.2.2 Role of the Family

The extent to which parents and family control the education and consequently shape the working lives of their children is always acknowledged in the literature.¹⁵ What is more interesting is that a study of individual women reveals the extent to which parental attitudes to the education of their daughters, especially in comparison with that of their sons, crossed class boundaries. For example, Dr Helen Mayo and the Quaker artist and teacher Mary P. Harris (1891–1978) both came from families who believed that their daughters should be educated. Dr Helen Mayo recalled it thus:

¹² Ibid., pp. 39, 40.

¹³ Mackinnon, *Love and Freedom: Professional Women and the Reshaping of Personal Life*.

¹⁴ State Library of South Australia: OH 25/38, Interview with Elma Lucy Spooner [typescript].

¹⁵ e.g. MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*.

My father held strong views on education. An engineer himself, he contended that physics, being a basic science, should be taught before the other sciences, and when I went to school he insisted that I do physics but not botany or physiology.¹⁶

For the pastoralist's daughter, Dorothy Gilbert (1885–1973), her father's attitude appeared to be that girls only needed a cultural, domestic education, as her sister Marjory related:

I think if she'd been encouraged by Father, she [Dorothy] would probably have just done station work which was badly needed, but as I say, we hadn't been brought up to do it. But she was very clever at bookkeeping and all those things.¹⁷

Elma Spooner (1896–) also referred to this social and familial approach to the education of girls when she compared her own education, and leaving school aged 14, with that of her brother:

Oh no, my mother paid for him [to go to Pulteney Grammar School], he was an Accountant after that ... They thought the boy had to have a good education to get on ...¹⁸

Even when parents educated their daughters for a range of occupations, they sometimes still influenced their choice of a particular one. The interview with May Mills (1890–1984) revealed how her parents redirected her occupational choice. On her Jubilee 150 plaque, North Terrace, Adelaide, May Mills is commemorated as an educationist and sports administrator.¹⁹ However, spending thirty-two years teaching at Unley High School was not May Mills' first choice of occupation, as she told Lynne Arnold in an ABC radio interview in 1969:

I had hoped to do medical training, but I'm one of nine children, and though Father told me to make my own decision – I could go on if I wished – Mother pointed out there were five

¹⁶ Quoted in Mackinnon, A., *The New Women: Adelaide's Early Women Graduates*, Wakefield Press in association with the University of Adelaide Foundation, Adelaide, 1986, p. 61.

¹⁷ State Library of South Australia: Gilbert, M., OH 31/2, Interview with Marjory Gilbert [sound recording] Interviewer: Beth M. Robertson, South Australian Women's Responses to the First World War, Adelaide, recorded 29 Aug. 1979.

¹⁸ State Library of South Australia: OH 25/38, Interview with Elma Lucy Spooner [typescript], p. 21.

¹⁹ Healey (ed.), *S.A.'s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques*, p. 90.

younger ones still to come on for secondary education and that if I went on to that extensive training, she was afraid some of the others would suffer. Well of course that influenced me mightily and I decided to go home and I've never regretted it because I learned an enormous amount in those years that I stayed at home.²⁰

Graham Dawson might describe the above story as an example of 'composure', but it is also possible to see it as an example of Janet Holland's 'reality principle' in operation. In her account, May Mills delineated clearly the roles of her mother and father and acknowledged their influence whilst stressing that the final choice was her own.

There is an extensive literature on the dual workload of married women who are both wives and mothers, and in the paid workforce,²¹ but there does not seem to be the same recognition that working life-long single women had family responsibilities which they discharged. The interview with May Mills makes it very clear that she was also taking on family responsibilities, something she did again in 1923 and 1933:

When Father and Mother moved to Sturtbrae, at their request, I sold my house at Blackwood, bought a car and went home to live, for we all realized we needed one another.²²

When my father died ... the family affairs were such that someone had to take the lead and I was appointed to do that.²³

These statements from May Mills support the research findings which Katherine R. Allen published in her book, *Single Women/Family Ties*.²⁴ Using the life course perspective and distinguishing between the single woman's family of orientation and the married woman's family of procreation, Allen highlighted the single woman's role within the family; a role often ignored:

²⁰ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Radio interview with May Mills [sound recording], p. 1.

²¹ e.g. Caine et al. (eds), *Australian Feminism: A Companion*.

²² Mills, *Millbrae and Its Founding Family*, p. 74.

²³ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Radio interview with May Mills [sound recording], p. 5.

²⁴ Allen, *Single Women/Family Ties: Life Histories of Older Women*.

An enduring, auxiliary family role for the single woman was discovered. This role was essential to maintaining the family of orientation, and it augmented the important work of women who reproduce and extend the family.²⁵

May Mills, together with another unmarried sister, cared for their parents in their old age, and, after their deaths, managed the family's merino stud at Sturtbrae. The extent to which life-long single women took responsibility for their families of orientation during the Great Depression was an important argument in the 1931 Living Wage for Women case. Witnesses emphasised how many single women were the breadwinners for their families:

Miss Glasson says so many girls still in work are members of families where the father or male bread-winner is out of work and their wages go towards their family.²⁶

Margaret Davey's reminiscences reveal the extent to which parents internalised the dominant sex role socialisation and consequently redirected their daughter's choice of occupation. Although her father was a doctor, he did not favour his daughter doing the same:

I was always wanting to be a doctor. But I was born into the time when there were very few Medical women. My father said to me, "It's no good you doing Medicine, you will get married soon after and then it will be just a waste of years." I think he was sorry afterwards.²⁷

Margaret Davey's 'composure' was more neutral than May Mills' discussed above. Margaret Davey clearly recognised that her father's role in her occupational choices was based upon his acceptance of sex role stereotypes, but she did not disclose her own view.

In this research, single South Australian women artists illustrated in microcosm the extent to which families exerted a life-long influence on their single daughters, even when they

²⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

²⁶ State Records of South Australia: GRG 112/2/5, Papers of the 1931 living wage enquiry (females).

²⁷ State Library of South Australia: OH 611/1, Interview with Margaret Davey [sound recording], p. 1.

were geographically apart.²⁸ The fathers of the artists Mary Packer Harris (1891–1978) and Jessamine Buxton (1895–1966) were at opposite ends of the spectrum in the education of their daughters. In her autobiography, Mary Packer Harris recounted her father's practice of his Quaker beliefs:

A fine new Art School was built in Edinburgh on the site of the old cattle market and thither I went in 1909 and my studentship continued till the year of the first world war ... My father shared implicitly the Quaker ideal of the equality of the sexes ... My education, as a girl, was as assured as that of my two brothers.²⁹

Her broad education enabled her to introduce the 'modern art world'³⁰ to students of the South Australian School of Arts and Crafts between 1922 and 1953. Such opportunities were not available to Jessamine Buxton whose father forbade her to take up an overseas art scholarship.³¹

Whether or not the father's decision was a 'strict care for his young daughter'³² or a recognition that 'travel was a conventional and approved way for many young women to shake off the patriarchal bonds'³³ is a side issue in this research. What is important is that other artists, for example, Marie Tuck (1866–1947),³⁴ Dorritt Black (1891–1951)³⁵ and Lisette Kohlhagen (1890–1969),³⁶ benefited from overseas training. Families were important income sources for some women artists. The independent family based incomes of Dorritt Black and Lisette Kohlhagen gave them both the opportunities to travel interstate

²⁸ See also Sharpe, 'Dealing with love: The ambiguous independence of the single woman in early modern England'.

²⁹ Harris, *In One Splendour Spun: Autobiography of a Quaker Artist*, p. 2.

³⁰ Tuck, R., 'Mary P. Harris', *Kalori*, Dec. 1968, unnumbered.

³¹ Biven, *Some Forgotten... ..Some Remembered: Women Artists of South Australia*.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Speck, C., 'The negotiation of career: Women as artists and teachers in the South Australian School of Art 1888–1968', *7th Australian Women's Studies Association Conference*, Australian Women's Studies Association, Adelaide, 1998, pp. 141–60, p. 146.

³⁴ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Robertson, Marie Tuck [radio script].

³⁵ North, I., *The Art of Dorritt Black*, Macmillan Co. of Australia and the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 1975.

³⁶ Maidment, I., *Lisette Kohlhagen – Artist*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 1977.

and overseas to extend their art education, and also the freedom to teach part-time with more occasions to spend at their own painting. In another illustration of single women's responsibilities for their family of origin, Dorritt Black had to close her Modern Art Centre in Sydney and return to Adelaide in 1935 to care for her ailing mother.³⁷

As a shaping institution on women artists, the family did more than educate and provide for their daughters. In a 1971 radio talk, Janet Robertson said Marie Tuck's steadfast decision to be a painter was a 'great disappointment' to her father.³⁸ Even when painting is well nigh a family business, fathers may still believe women artists cannot combine marriage and a career, while mothers provide unobtrusive support. For example, it was Mrs Heysen who encouraged Nora Heysen (1911–2003) to have a studio separate from her father, Hans Heysen. In an interview with the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1935, Nora Heysen not only acknowledged her mother's help and her father's views, she also foretold her own future after she had married in 1953:

Once a woman marries, marriage should be her career ... I don't know that he isn't right, but it doesn't work out that way for me.³⁹

This research supports the conclusions of Cathy Speck,⁴⁰ Neville Weston⁴¹ and Caroline Ambrus⁴² on the ambivalent family attitudes towards their daughters as professional artists when there was a 'perception that predominantly middle-class women students attended art classes to acquire feminine accomplishments and civilising skills.'⁴³

³⁷ North, *The Art of Dorritt Black*.

³⁸ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Robertson, Marie Tuck [radio script], p. 3.

³⁹ Quoted in Ambrus, C., *Australian Women Artists: First Fleet to 1945: History, Hearsay and Her Say*, Irrepressible Press, Canberra, 1994, p. 76.

⁴⁰ Speck, 'The negotiation of career: Women as artists and teachers in the South Australian School of Art 1888–1968'.

⁴¹ Weston, N. E., 'The professional training of artists in Australia, 1861–1963, with special reference to the South Australian model', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 1991.

⁴² Ambrus, *Australian Women Artists: First Fleet to 1945: History, Hearsay and Her Say*.

⁴³ Speck, 'The negotiation of career: Women as artists and teachers in the South Australian School of Art 1888–1968', p. 143.

3.2.3 Role of Education

Even when parents agreed with a girl's occupational choice, the education system still caused structural obstacles which had to be overcome. The following discussion concentrates upon the ways in which all South Australian secondary schools between 1911 and 1961 structured a gendered curriculum which disadvantaged girls seeking to enter the paid workforce, especially in non-traditional areas. There is also a brief examination of the family and external factors which influenced the work choices of some single women when the educational institutions supported their ambitions.

'Gendered curriculum' is a modern shorthand phrase which stresses the role of education 'in the process in which biological differences between males and females are assigned social significance and are used as a means of social classification.'⁴⁴ A gendered curriculum is grounded on two basic assumptions: the intellectual differences between girls and boys, and that a girl should be educated for domesticity and a boy for a masculine occupation. For example, the idea that girls excel in the humanities subjects while boys are better at the more abstract subjects of mathematics and science; or that given their future roles as wives and mothers, girls should be educated in the home sciences. Recent research⁴⁵ and policy documents from Australian Education Departments⁴⁶ have demonstrated that, in the formal school curriculum, the subject choices available to boys and girls, the sexual bias and stereotyping in textbooks, and teachers' attitudes are the major elements in a gendered curriculum. As Lyn Yates stressed in the 'Education' article in *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, 'debates about education make many feminist issues visible.'⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Jary, D. & Jary, J., *Collins Dictionary of Sociology*, HarperCollins, Glasgow, 1991, p. 254.

⁴⁵ e.g. Stromquist, N. P., 'Gender and education', in *International Encyclopedia of the Sociology of Education*, ed. L. J. Saha, Pergamon, New York, 1997, pp. 539–44; Donn, G., 'Feminist approaches and the curriculum', in *The International Encyclopedia of Education*, vol. 4, eds T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite, Pergamon, New York, 1994, pp. 2287–92; Davies, B., 'Gender theories in education', in *The International Encyclopedia of Education*, vol. 5, eds T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite, Pergamon, New York, 1994, pp. 2453–8.

⁴⁶ Clark, M. & Page, C., *Gender Equity: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning* [online], Department of Education, Tasmania, 2002, viewed 24 Aug. 2004, <<http://www.education.tas.gov.au/equitystandards/gender/framework/curriculum.htm>>; Clark, M. & Page, C., *Gender Equity: Understanding the Processes of Gender Construction* [online], Department of Education, Tasmania, 2002, viewed 24 Aug. 2004, <<http://www.education.tas.gov.au/equitystandards/gender/framework/construction.htm>>.

⁴⁷ Yates, L., 'Education', in *Australian Feminism: a companion*, eds B. Caine et al., Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 74–84, p. 74.

The strength of the gendered curriculum and its institutional controls were very obvious to the English political scientist, Norman MacKenzie, when he reported on 'women's place in Australia'⁴⁸ in 1962. MacKenzie used the term 'sex bias'. He acknowledged that the various educational systems provided for 'formal equality between the sexes' but stressed that these systems assumed different roles for men and women in Australian society:

Schools do not offer girls the same encouragement or facilities to study mathematics or science as they provide for boys; education authorities put a good deal of emphasis on home sciences, arts courses and biology in the curricula of girls' schools. It is assumed by all concerned that a boy must seek to make a good career and a girl must seek to make a good home.⁴⁹

In South Australia between 1911 and 1961, the most visible aspects of what is now known as the gendered curriculum were the different subjects for boys and girls and the compulsory feminine or masculine subjects which could not be studied by the opposite sex. The schedule of subjects available to girls and boys in the Public Examination stream at Unley High School in the 1930s⁵⁰ reveals that all girls had to do Domestic Science as an additional subject but the boys did not have to take Woodwork. My contemporaries reported that this was still the practice at Unley High School until the 1960s. Girls could take History as an alternative to Mathematics II from their first year in high school although Mathematics II was compulsory for boys throughout their secondary education at Unley High School. Physics was the subject which revealed the different practices in the Education Department's high schools. Colleagues of mine, who attended Woodville and Unley High Schools in the 1950s, reported that at Woodville High School girls could take Physics as well as Chemistry but at Unley High School girls who wanted to study Physics had to have a letter from their parents. This had been a practice since the 1920s. When there was a choice of subjects, boys had to choose between science and humanities, for example Chemistry or French, while girls only had two humanities subjects, French or History.⁵¹

⁴⁸ MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*, p. xi.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 98, 100.

⁵⁰ Miller, P., *Long Division: State Schooling in South Australian Society*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, p. 142.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

The gendered curriculum also crossed the socio-economic and religious boundaries between schools between 1911 and 1961. In 1925, the South Australian Education Department established the single-sex technical high schools. The class and economic differences between the academic high schools and these alternative secondary schools were hinted at in the 1925 report to Parliament of the Director-General, William McCoy:

The purpose of the Central School is to provide an education and training modified to some extent by a vocational bias for pupils who, being 13 to 16 years of age, will leave school to enter upon commercial, industrial or home-making pursuits.⁵²

Central schools were renamed technical high schools in 1940 and their curricula re-examined ‘to relate the schools as closely as possible to the life of the community,’⁵³ but the same gendered subject choices were still offered to students. Typing was optional for the boys but compulsory for the girls; and Mathematics was available to boys only, with Arithmetic offered to the girls. Of course Domestic Science and Woodwork were compulsory for the respective sexes.

If the central/technical schools were examples of class and gendered education for their students, the girls’ central/technical schools were very important for secondary women teachers seeking promotion. Until the re-establishment of the academic Adelaide Girls’ High School in 1951, these single sex schools offered women teachers more opportunities for promotion than were then currently available in the co-educational academic high schools. However, these schools were established in 1925 and disestablished in 1972,⁵⁴ in response to the growing social and educators’ demand for co-education. This is one more example of the institutional control of women’s work and the importance of ideology in establishing that control.

Norman MacKenzie was particularly concerned about the shortage of science teachers and laboratories in all schools but which was worse in the girls’ schools.⁵⁵ For Anne

⁵² McCoy’s full statement on Central Schools is in the Appendix to Chapter 4, section AC4.3.5.

⁵³ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1940, p. 10.

⁵⁴ Karmel, P. C., *Education in South Australia: Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1969–1970*, Govt Printer, Adelaide, 1971, p. 196.

⁵⁵ MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*, p. 114.

McCusker, the first woman to graduate in Civil Engineering from the University of Adelaide in 1968, such educational obstacles were still in place in 1960 when she matriculated for admission to the Faculty of Engineering:

Anne was encouraged by her father, who in her words 'is a very practical civil engineer' to study engineering despite attending a school where mathematics and physics were not taught in the final year.⁵⁶

Anne McCusker attended Loreto Convent, an independent Catholic girls' school, but the earlier discussion revealed that the same problem of a gendered curriculum faced girls in the Education Department's secondary schools. In the history of Commonwealth intervention in secondary education in Australia, it is notable that the Commonwealth's first foray was in the provision of science facilities after 1964.

In their reminiscences, life-long single women acknowledged both the educational barriers to their occupational choices and the individual teachers who encouraged them to overcome these barriers. After training as an infant teacher, Ann Milne became very interested in students with special needs.⁵⁷ Her recollections were a strong reminder that the educational barriers to occupational choice could be very strong within the schools:

The Infant Mistress was very much a product of her training. If children did not learn there were two possible reasons. They were lazy or the teaching was inefficient ... But behind my formidable Infant Mistress was Miss Longmore, the wise woman whose personality had turned me to infant work. I have often thought since of the heartbreaking task Miss

⁵⁶ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, p. 284. Anne McCusker's reference to 'the final year' refers to the fact that, throughout this period, and unlike the other Australian States, South Australian students could matriculate for entrance to the University of Adelaide with the Leaving Certificate done at the end of Year 11. Year 12 was then called the Leaving Honours year and most prospective university students did Leaving Honours although some, like Anne McCusker, went straight to university after matriculating. Since physics and mathematics were not available to Anne McCusker at Leaving Honours level, it was more realistic for her to go straight to the University of Adelaide. However, it was highly unlikely that any of her male colleagues in the first year Engineering classes would have studied all of Anne McCusker's Matriculation subjects which included Music and Greek and Roman History.

⁵⁷ i.e. delinquent and difficult children as well as those with learning disabilities.

Longmore had of struggling for the very forward looking things she wanted and against the entrenched forces of established custom.⁵⁸

Between 1911 to 1961, women and girls were also able to take advantage of the wider educational opportunities becoming available to them. For women already in the workforce, night classes in business colleges enabled them to change their occupations. Through this means Mary Matthew transferred from working as a florist to being a telephonist in the Adelaide GPO and Elma Spooner from a milliner to a clerk-typist. New professional occupations with formal educational qualifications were also established during this period. For example, the University of Adelaide established a Diploma in Social Work in 1936⁵⁹ and a Diploma in Physiotherapy in 1945.⁶⁰ The University's *Calendars* reveal that the majority of graduates from these courses were women,⁶¹ an example of Kerreen Reiger's point that women moved into the new work opportunities available to them.⁶²

But, as the interviews with individual women reveal, neither family nor the education system could influence their occupational choices, if they considered that economic factors dictated their choices. For example, Mary Helen Newport, born 1927, retired after many years as the personal Press Secretary to three Australian Prime Ministers. She was born and educated in South Australia. Her mother died of cancer when she was twelve years old. Mary Newport won a secondary scholarship to St Aloysius Convent where she successfully completed the three year Intermediate Examination in two years. The Sisters of Mercy offered her another scholarship but Mary had also won a scholarship to Chartres Business College. In her account of her career decision and the influential family circumstances, Mary Newport also acknowledged what she surrendered:

⁵⁸ Milne, A., *Sketcher in an Educational Landscape*, Wattle Park Teachers Association, Adelaide, 1986, p. 19.

⁵⁹ Martin, 'Amy Wheaton and the education of social workers in South Australia, 1935–46'.

⁶⁰ Casely, E., 'Physiotherapy in South Australia', *Australian Journal of Physiotherapy*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1955, pp. 164–9.

⁶¹ e.g. University of Adelaide, *Calendar of the University of Adelaide*, 1957.

⁶² Reiger, *The Disenchantment of the Home: Modernizing the Australian Family, 1880–1940*.

Having decided I wanted to pursue a career as a secretary, I was torn between these two scholarship offers. However, the economic pressure was great, and I felt that I had to get out to work, so I took the Chartres one. In reflection now, of course, I would love to have gone on and gone to university, but we couldn't have afforded it anyway.⁶³

The cost of university education affected women throughout the period 1911 to 1961. Thus, May Mills had wanted to go to the University of Adelaide in 1911, Mary Newport in 1941 and Valmai Hankel in 1958. These women had gone to private secondary schools and Valmai Hankel rationalised it thus:

Probably why they couldn't afford to send me to university because they'd spent it all on educating me.⁶⁴

The State-wide economic conditions, which influenced the occupational choices of some single women, were two world wars, the Great Depression, and South Australia's major droughts in pastoral and agricultural areas in 1911–1916, 1926–1930, 1939–1940, 1943–1946 and 1959–1962.⁶⁵ Because the droughts affected farming families, some single women cut short their education. For example, Anne Liddy, who later trained as a nurse and became the owner of the Unley Park Private Hospital, recalled that 'very early my parents' anxieties communicated themselves to me.' She insisted upon leaving school at 13 years when she failed the Year 7 Qualifying Certificate in 1914, the year in which the bank repossessed the family farm on Eyre Peninsula:

I left school and went to work in Tumbly ... My mother was very disgusted with me. She used to scold me about it. But there was nothing anyone could do about it ... Well, Mr Monfries came to our sale. We had a sale, you know, 'distress sale' as they called them. And I think he was the bank with which my father had dealings and he asked my father if

⁶³ State Library of South Australia: Newport, M. H., OH 593/2, Interview with Mary Helen Newport [sound recording] Interviewer: Peter Donovan, The Honoured Women Oral History Project Part II, Adelaide, recorded 1 June 2001, p. 2. Mary Newport is here referring to the fact that between 1911 and 1961 scholarships which paid the university fees were available to the top Matriculation students but there were no living allowances and parents still had to support their daughters during their university studies.

⁶⁴ State Library of South Australia: Hankel, V., OH 592, Radio interview with Valmai Hankel [sound recording] Interviewer: Philip Satchell, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Adelaide, broadcast 5 Apr. 2000.

⁶⁵ *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 86.

his eldest daughter would be – if he'd allow her to come and work for them. My father said, 'Yes' and there I was ...⁶⁶

While it is easy to point to the well known external events, such as world wars, droughts and depressions, which influenced or dictated individual career choices, it is equally important to recognise the effect of smaller developments. For example, when Dr Helen Mayo was doing her undergraduate clinical year, the Adelaide Hospital Row, 1894–1901, was at its height and the hospital was closed to university students.⁶⁷ Therefore, Helen Mayo had to do her clinical year at the Adelaide Children's Hospital. The doctors, who wrote *The Hands of a Woman*, and who had known Helen Mayo, considered that that experience redirected her future medical career into the care of women and children:

That year in the wards among children from the poorer districts of Adelaide gave Helen a sympathetic insight into the problems faced by many families in times of illness and economic recession.⁶⁸

Dr Helen Mayo is best known as the founder of the Adelaide School for Mothers, (later known as the Mothers' and Babies' Health Association, now called Child and Youth Health) and the Mareeba Babies Hospital.⁶⁹ However, the quality of Dr Helen Mayo's research in bacteriology for which the University of Adelaide awarded her the Doctor of Medicine in 1926 demonstrated that she could have spent her medical career in pure research.

⁶⁶ State Library of South Australia: OH 1/4, Interview with Anne Angela Liddy [sound recording].

⁶⁷ Van den Hoorn, R. & Playford, J., 'The Adelaide Hospital row', in *The Flinders History of South Australia: Political History*, ed. D. Jaensch, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, pp. 215–25. The Adelaide Hospital Row began in 1894 when Nurse Margaret Graham contested the senior appointment of a less qualified and experienced colleague. When the honorary medical staff resigned from the hospital in 1896 and clinical teaching ceased, the University of Adelaide had to send its fourth and fifth year medical students to other hospitals. Clinical teaching at the hospital resumed in 1902.

⁶⁸ South Australian Medical Women's Society, *The Hands of a Woman*, pp. 37–8.

⁶⁹ Healey (ed.), *S.A.'s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques*, p. 85.

3.3 Case Studies of Institutional Control of Women in the Labour Force

The following case studies concentrate on the ways in which institutions controlled women working in different feminine occupations. They also provide the opportunity to examine the factor Janet Holland described as the operation of the reality principle in individual women's occupational practices.⁷⁰ Labour force statistics and feminist researchers have revealed the strength of the gendered division of labour in Australia. But further investigation is needed to establish whether or not the institutional controls were the same or different for women in the different feminine occupations.

3.3.1 Munitions Work of South Australian Women in World War II

World War II brought many Australian women from diverse backgrounds into the labour force.⁷¹ In South Australia, the percentage increase in women's participation was far greater than in the other Australian States, as shown in Table 16.

TABLE 16
Rate of Increase of Women in the Labour Force

State	% Increase on 1939/40 to 1940/41	% Increase on 1940/41 to 1941/42
New South Wales	10.6	13.7
Victoria	9.4	9.1
South Australia	23.4	42.3
Queensland	14.1	14.3
Western Australia	2.0	8.0

Source: MacKenzie, N., *Women in Australia*, F.W. Cheshire, Melbourne, 1962, p. 140.

⁷⁰ Holland, *Work and Women: A Review of Explanations for the Maintenance and Reproduction of Sexual Divisions*, p. 35.

⁷¹ e.g. May Douglas and Kathleen Kyffin Thomas as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

The South Australian increase is partially explained by the number of Commonwealth munitions factories located in South Australia.⁷² The relationship between the establishment of munitions factories and the increase and subsequent decrease in the number of South Australian women working in factories corresponds closely to the number of women working in the munitions factories. This is demonstrated in Table 17.

TABLE 17

South Australian Women in Factory Employment, 1941–1945

Year	Munitions Factories in S.A.	Women in S.A. Munitions Factories	Women in all S.A. Factories
1941	2	1,460	15,334
1942	3	4,936	19,958
1943	4	4,789	18,909
1944	9	2,422	16,416
1945	6	1,706	13,665

Source: Vamplew, W. et al. (eds), *South Australian Historical Statistics*, A Historical Statistics Monograph, History Project Inc., Kensington, NSW, 1987, p. 66; *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia*, 1944/45, pp. 1045, 1051.

The then South Australian Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, had successfully argued that there were women available to work in the munitions factories. However, to ensure that there would be sufficient women to staff these factories, the Commonwealth Government had to override the power of the South Australian Industrial Court to determine wages and working conditions for South Australian women employees.⁷³ To alleviate the shortage of labour, especially in munitions, the Commonwealth needed to know how many women were available, be able to compel them to work, and to deal with the difficult legacy of

⁷² Fort, C. S., 'Developing a national employment policy, Australia 1939–45', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 2000. Carol Fort attributed the number of Commonwealth munitions factories in South Australia to six factors. These were South Australia's distance from the main theatre of war; its deep sea port; its motor vehicle industry; railway workshops; the largely under-employed population; and the persistent lobbying of South Australian bureaucrats, industrialists, and politicians, at both the State and Federal level.

⁷³ The role of the South Australian Industrial Court is examined in Chapter 6.

Justice Higgins,⁷⁴ the payment of women for doing men's work. National Security Regulations between 1941 and 1942 established the Manpower Register to gather the relevant information and the Women's Employment Board to regulate the wages of women doing men's work.

The Women's Employment Board was empowered to set women's wages at not less than 60 per cent, and not more than 100 per cent, of men's wages. In reality less than half the women in the workforce were able to push their wages beyond 75 per cent of male rates.⁷⁵

In this, the wartime Australian Government sidelined its own Federal and State industrial courts. The situation was significant in South Australia at a time when the female living wage was only 50% of the male basic wage.⁷⁶

The experiences of single women working in munitions factories provide the personal stories, the other side of the coin to the official histories of World War II⁷⁷ and feminist studies of the work of the Women's Employment Board.⁷⁸ Three single women who worked in South Australian munitions factories during World War II offer very different perspectives on this work. They were the experienced factory worker, Doris Crowley, the enthusiastic volunteer, Audrey Morphett and the reluctant conscript, Emily Batchelor. Single women already in the workforce stressed the industrial issues such as improved job opportunities, the higher wages and the challenges and the occupational health and safety issues of munitions work. For example, Doris Crowley, who was already working in the Trim Section at General Motors-Holdens at the beginning of the War, moved first into

⁷⁴ Justice Higgins was the President of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission from 1906 to 1920. In his Harvester Judgement of 1905 and the 1912 Mildura Fruitpicker's judgement, Justice Higgins cemented into Australian industrial relations until 1969 the concepts of a family wage for the working man and a living wage for working women without dependants. This issue is examined in detail in Chapter 6.

⁷⁵ Mitchell, D., 'Wages and employment', in *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, eds B. Caine et al., Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 355–65, p. 357.

⁷⁶ A full discussion of the South Australian Living Wage for Women is in Chapter 6.

⁷⁷ Hasluck, P., *The Government and the People 1939–1941*, Australia in the War of 1939–1945, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1952; Hasluck, P., *The Government and the People 1942–1945*, Australia in the War of 1939–1945, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1970; Butlin, S. J. & Schedvin, C. B., *War Economy 1942–1945*, Australia in the War of 1939–1945, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1977.

⁷⁸ Larmour, C., 'Women's wages and the WEB', *Labour History*, no. 29, Nov. 1975, pp. 47–58; Fort, 'Developing a national employment policy, Australia 1939–45'.

‘making tents and bags’ and then became a welfare worker ‘to see to the girls’ protection more-or-less.’⁷⁹ In her matter-of-fact style, Doris Crowley thus recalled her war experiences:

Through the War there was full employment for everybody ... Welfare workers had to be on and we had to walk around and see that those girls had caps on their heads because otherwise they got caught in the drills and things and got their hair ripped off. We had one girl had her hair ripped out, for having it hanging down ... They were all married women and all ages of people but you still had to keep them back on their job. Our job was also, besides escorting them around and seeing that they were safe, was to see that they were working, that they hadn’t gone off to have a little sleep in the lavatories or anywhere like that.⁸⁰

Doris Crowley did not continue her welfare/supervisory work after the War. Indeed, she seems not to have considered it real work:

They’d given me a job on welfare where I didn’t actually work.⁸¹

But there were also economic reasons why she changed jobs after the war. Doris Crowley and another girl went to Frith’s boot factory, because ‘we got £2.13.0 a week there and we were only getting £2.6.0 at Holdens.’⁸² However, there were, in some munitions factories, welfare workers such as the South Australian Helen Crisp who recognised the need for ‘trained, industrial welfare officers,’⁸³ to ensure the necessary production targets.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Adelaide City Council Archives: OH 50, Interview with Miss Doris Crowley, Resident [sound recording].

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Crisp, H., ‘Women in munitions’, *The Australian Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 3, 1941, pp. 71–6, p. 73.

⁸⁴ In this respect, Helen Crisp, ‘the first official government social worker in industrial welfare’, was the Australian example of the British industrial welfare supervisors whom Angela Woollacott has shown used their experiences in World War I to widen and strengthen their career opportunities. Woollacott, A., ‘From moral to professional authority: Secularism, social work and middle-class women’s self-construction in World War I Britain’, *Journal of Women’s History*, vol. 10, no. 2, 1998, pp. 85–111.

General publications have stressed the enthusiasm of women to volunteer for work in World War II.⁸⁵ In her ten-week study, Helen Crisp established that 47 of the 798 women who started work in the munitions factory had never ‘before entered the labour market.’⁸⁶ Audrey Morphett (1902–1993), granddaughter of two of South Australia’s first white settlers, was one such enthusiastic volunteer. Told at first that she was too old for the army, Audrey Morphett returned to fundraising for the war through the Girl Guides Thrift campaign. Then she was called up for munitions work which she recalled thus:

Then I was contacted out of the blue, and asked if I would go to Salisbury munitions factory. Not to *join* the army but actually to *work* for the army.⁸⁷

Unlike the General Motors-Holden factory which specialised in aircraft munitions, explosives were manufactured at the Salisbury factory. Therefore, before she could be appointed Chief of Inspections, Audrey Morphett had to go to Maribyrnong for training in the use of nitro-glycerine, cordite, TNT, tetryl, lead azide, lead styphrate, and mercury fulminate to fill ammunition caps with explosives. From first-hand experience, Audrey Morphett knew the dangers of this precise, yet routine work for inexperienced women workers:

You had to constantly retrain yourself to be acutely observant. Cordite caps had to be very carefully handled. If they bumped together they could explode ... Cordite was bad to work with. Some girls could not tolerate it. They became ill. They would absorb it through their skin. It smelled badly too ... It was all routine work but with a difference. I was walking on the ‘clearway’ towards a room to inspect it and the girl workers when it blew – one woman was among those killed. Their work was very dangerous.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, various chapters.

⁸⁶ Crisp, ‘Women in munitions’, p. 72.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Adam-Smith, P., *Australian Women at War*, Nelson, Melbourne, 1984, p. 327.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 328.

Despite the dangers inherent in munitions work, munitions factories were not considered theatres of war. Therefore, the 1944/45 *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth* did not record the number of deaths in the factories, but did record deaths in the 'theatres of war'.⁸⁹

In contrast to Doris Crowley and Audrey Morphett, Emily Batchelor was a reluctant conscript to munitions work, about half way through the war. She bluntly told the officer her views:

I said I didn't want to do anything. 'Cause I said I can use my time in helping other people and I didn't see why I had to be called up.⁹⁰

Although she only worked in munitions for about twelve months, Emily Batchelor stressed its monotony, clocking in and off, the constant pressure to complete 1,000 items per day, the impact of a supervisor on someone who had never been in the paid workforce and her casual approach to pay:

Threading tape through cardboard, two slots in the cardboard which eventually ended as covers for the 25 pounder shell but on where the machine was there was the six all [sic] girls, sitting there by the machinist and each girl had to do a certain thing to it before it got to this machine ... I never had to do the same job day in and day out week after week, and sit there until you did it, and you got tired of doing the same thing ... When the time came for pay all those minutes were added up and you were all docked that much for not being there at that time ... I thought well we were not getting much pay so I didn't worry about getting that much less ... We were paid £2.18.0 a week, but I think I only got one full pay all the time I was there.⁹¹

Neither Audrey Morphett nor Emily Batchelor had been in the paid workforce before World War II, but Audrey Morphett's voluntary work as District and Deputy State Commissioner of the Girl Guides⁹² meant that she had worked within organisational

⁸⁹ *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia*, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra, 1944/45.

⁹⁰ State Library of South Australia: OH 25/3, Interview with Emily Eileen Batchelor [sound recording].

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, p. 64.

structures, an experience unknown to Emily Batchelor. Emily Batchelor's attitude to employment in the labour force highlighted the importance of Helen Crisp's plea for more welfare workers in industrial and business organisations.

3.3.2 Doctors and Nurses in the Armed Forces

The wartime experiences of women doctors and nurses are a stark example of the strength of institutional factors and the dominant ideologies. World War I dominated the first decade of this research period, 1911–1961. Therefore, the war service of Dr Phoebe Chapple (1880–1964), Matron Margaret Graham (1860–1942), and Sister Kathleen Waterhouse (1891–1987) provide an introduction to the different experiences of these women, all of whom would now be regarded as health professionals. When the War started in 1914, the English immigrant Matron Margaret Graham of the Royal Adelaide Hospital and a member of the Army Nursing Reserve embarked with the first contingent of Australian soldiers.⁹³ Once she had completed her training at the Adelaide Children's Hospital in 1917, Sr Kathleen Waterhouse enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service, Australian Imperial Force, and was sent to India.⁹⁴ In contrast, Dr Phoebe Chapple was refused admission to both the Australian Army Medical Corps and the Royal Army Medical Corps and could only go to the French battlefields with Queen Mary's Volunteer Reserve.⁹⁵ There, for her 'gallantry and devotion to duty', Dr Chapple was awarded the Military Medal.⁹⁶ That single women were fully aware of being discriminated against in the gendered division of labour was illuminated in Dr Helen Mayo's 1961 comment on Dr Phoebe Chapple's war service:

Had she been an officer (and a man) she would have received the Military Cross. As it was her rank was ignored, although her service and courage were honoured.⁹⁷

⁹³ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 62.

⁹⁴ Hagger, J., 'A time to remember', *Australasian Nurses Journal*, vol. 4, no. 10, 1976, pp. 28–9, p. 28.

⁹⁵ South Australian Medical Women's Society, *The Hands of a Woman*, p. 29.

⁹⁶ Gibberd, J., 'Chapple, Phoebe', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 7, eds B. Nairn & G. Serle, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1981, pp. 615–6, p. 615.

⁹⁷ Mayo, 'After sixty-four years'.

In terms of Janet Holland's reality principle, Dr Phoebe Chapple strove unsuccessfully against the then institutional opposition to the employment of women doctors on battlefields.

The experiences of these South Australian women were not unique. Once Florence Nightingale raised nursing from its 'Sairey Gamp' image during the Crimean War, nurses were an integral part of the armed forces during the American Civil War,⁹⁸ the Boer War⁹⁹ and World War I.¹⁰⁰ Dr Phoebe Chapple's predecessor was Dr Mabel Annie Stobart who 'organized a British all-female nursing company that worked at the front for ten weeks in the Balkan-Turkish conflict (before World War I), after the British Red Cross had excluded women from medical teams it dispatched there.'¹⁰¹ However, the labour demands of World War II broke the institutional opposition to women doctors in the armed forces. Women doctors were able to enlist in the armed forces of Britain, Australia and the United States, in 1939,¹⁰² 1940¹⁰³ and 1943¹⁰⁴ respectively: the dates when these nations were totally involved in World War II and experiencing severe labour shortages.

The different wartime experiences of nurses and doctors provide yet another example of employers who employ women when they are needed; Braverman's reserve army of labour theory in practice.¹⁰⁵ Throughout the time period of this research, nursing was a feminine occupation. Therefore, if the army needed nurses, women had to be admitted to the armed forces. However, in World War I women doctors were still in the minority, and the armed

⁹⁸ Goldstein, J. S., *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001.

⁹⁹ South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee, *Nursing in South Australia: First Hundred Years, 1837–1937*, South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee, Adelaide, 1938.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*, p. 313.

¹⁰² Adam-Smith, *Australian Women at War*, p. 209.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

¹⁰⁴ Walsh, M. R., 'Doctors Wanted: No Women Need Apply': *Sexual Barriers in the Medical Profession, 1835–1975*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1977, p. 230.

¹⁰⁵ Frances, R., "'No more Amazons": Gender and work process in the Victorian clothing trades, 1890–1939', *Labour History*, no. 50, May 1986, pp. 95–112. The literature on women in particular branches of the armed forces also reveals some surprising omissions. For example, there is no index entry under women doctors in the Australian study, *Gender and War*.

force had sufficient male doctors willing to enlist. According to current terminology and Margaret Power's analysis,¹⁰⁶ Dr Phoebe Chapple and Nurse Kathleen Waterhouse were both health professionals but the former was working in a male-dominated profession and the latter in a female-dominated one.

The efforts of Dr Phoebe Chapple are also an example of how many single women relied upon themselves and not the support of a group to achieve their personal work objectives. This stands in stark contrast to the single women working through organisations to ensure equal citizenship with men for women and children and which Marilyn Lake stressed in *Getting Equal*.¹⁰⁷ The role of Dr Constance Davey in the successful passing of the Equal Guardianship Bill in 1940 is one example. A personal friend, Ann Milne, named the outside networks which Constance Davey used to achieve her objectives:

I think her greatest strength was that she never stood in any awe whatsoever of the Education Department as such – the god before whom so many worshipped. Instead she kept touch with a wider world. The University, and Professor Mitchell's wise counsel and support, Women Graduates, the Lyceum Club, the League of Women Voters. All these were the agencies by which changes were brought about – things like the Equal Guardianship Bill – and no one ever realized the hand that was pulling strings so adroitly.¹⁰⁸

The League of Women Voters (first known as the Women's Non-Party Political Association) existed from 1909 until 1979. Dr Constance Davey joined the League in the 1920s and she was its president from 1942 to 1946. Historians¹⁰⁹ and the then visible face of the League of Women Voters, Ellinor Walker,¹¹⁰ have highlighted that Ellinor Walker wrote the draft Guardianship of Infants Bill which Roma Mitchell checked. This draft was passed unchanged in the South Australian Parliament. *The Guardianship of Infants Act*

¹⁰⁶ Power, 'The making of a woman's occupation'.

¹⁰⁷ Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*.

¹⁰⁸ Milne, *Sketcher in an Educational Landscape*, p. 21.

¹⁰⁹ Jones, *In Her Own Name: A History of Women in South Australia from 1836*, p. 254; Szekeres, V., 'A history of the League of Women Voters in South Australia 1909–1976', BA (Hons) thesis, University of Adelaide, 1976.

¹¹⁰ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Radio interview with Ellinor Walker [sound recording].

1941 gave mothers equal rights with fathers in relation to children for the first time in South Australia. In her self-published book, *Children and Their Law-makers*, Dr Constance Davey gave all the credit for the 1941 Act to the League of Women Voters.¹¹¹

3.3.3 Women Police

The establishment, growth and closure of the Women Police Branch is an example of the number of institutions and ideologies affecting women's participation in the paid labour force, an example of Henry Mintzberg's 'external and internal influencers of an organization.'¹¹² In 1915, the Women's Non-Party Political Association (better known by its later name as the League of Women Voters) was part of a deputation of sixteen religious and philanthropic associations who lobbied the Chief Secretary to appoint women police 'for the protection of the morals of young girls.'¹¹³ But, before these women could be appointed, it was necessary to amend legislation so that 'In every Act ... every word of the masculine gender shall be construed as including the feminine gender.'¹¹⁴ The fact that the legislation had to be amended before the Police Commissioner could advertise for applications for appointment as women police is but one example of the interrelationship between citizenship and employment opportunities for all women.¹¹⁵

Equal pay, a cornerstone for women in the paid labour force, was also important in the history of the Women Police Branch between its opening in 1918 and its closure in 1974. Kate Cocks (1875–1954) is well known in South Australia as the British Empire's first policewoman. While Kate Cocks was not the first woman in the world to be appointed a police constable, she was the first to be appointed with equal powers of arrest and on the same salary as that of her male colleagues.¹¹⁶ Indeed, in 1918, the five members of the

¹¹¹ Davey, C. M., *Children and Their Law-makers: A Social-Historical Survey of the Growth and Development from 1836 to 1950 of South Australian Laws Relating to Children*, Griffin Press, Adelaide, 1956, p. 93.

¹¹² Mintzberg, *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*, p. 100.

¹¹³ Higgs, P. & Bettess, C., *To Walk a Fair Beat: A History of the South Australian Women Police 1915–1987*, Past and Present Women Police Association, Lockleys, SA, 1987, p. 11.

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Jones, *In Her Own Name: A History of Women in South Australia from 1836*, p. 243.

¹¹⁵ Caine et al. (eds), *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, p. 137.

¹¹⁶ Higgs & Bettess, *To Walk a Fair Beat: A History of the South Australian Women Police 1915–1987*, p. 19.

Women Police Branch along with over three hundred of their male colleagues resigned 'after a dispute for higher pay and better working conditions had been rejected by the government.'¹¹⁷ Furthermore, the strike continued until the government agreed to increase the wages and conditions of both male and female police.

The South Australian Government, not the South Australian Industrial Court, determined wages for the police. The case of the Women Police Branch suggests that employers implemented equal pay only for a small group of women in very specialised occupations. Like its counterparts in other Australian States,¹¹⁸ the Women Police Branch in South Australia was always small, rising from two staff in 1915 to thirteen in 1934 and twenty-seven when it was disbanded in 1974.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, the promotion positions available to women in the Women Police Branch were very limited. When the Branch was disbanded in 1974, the Principal, Women Police, Joyce Richardson, was qualified for appointment as sergeant third grade, but as Principal she was paid only the salary of a sergeant second grade.¹²⁰

In her British study of YWCA social workers, women police officers and women industrial welfare officers, Angela Woollacott used the term, 'From moral to professional authority,'¹²¹ to describe how educated, middle-class women used the domestic ideology of the moral superiority of women to enhance their employment prospects. Marilyn Lake has demonstrated that this concern for the moral and social welfare of women and children, especially those from the working class, was characteristic of Australian feminism during the period 1911 to 1961.¹²² The Women Police Branch was responsible for the moral and social welfare of women and children, yet another example of women in the labour force moving into new jobs which related to children and their own sex.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹¹⁸ Nixon, C., 'The history of women in the police service', *Women and the Law: Proceedings of a Conference held 24–26 September 1991*, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1993, pp. 225–8.

¹¹⁹ Higgs & Bettess, *To Walk a Fair Beat: A History of the South Australian Women Police 1915–1987*, pp. 21, 90, 179.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

¹²¹ Woollacott, 'From moral to professional authority: Secularism, social work and middle-class women's self-construction in World War I Britain'.

¹²² Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*.

The power of the employer was a constant thread in the history of the Women Police Branch and this power was exercised in the light of the most expedient ideology. Kate Cocks had not applied for the position of Principal, Women Police, but was appointed despite the fact that she was more than twenty-nine years old, which was the maximum age for entry to the South Australian Police Force.¹²³ In 1918 the doctrine of separate spheres for men and women meant the establishment of a separate Women Police Branch. By 1974 equal opportunity called for an integrated police service and the Police Department closed the Women Police Branch and integrated male and female police officers in the same seniority list. Employers and employees can and do agree about changing social conditions and dominant ideologies. Thus, former policewomen, Patricia Higgs and Christine Bettess, recall their thoughts in 1974:

And so it was with mixed feelings that the women prepared for the end of an era spanning more than fifty years. They had made themselves responsible for the moral and social welfare of women and children in dire circumstances ... However, much of their work was now duplicating the rapidly expanding services of the Department of Social Welfare.¹²⁴

3.3.4 A Comparison of the Working Lives of Teachers and Nurses

A comparative analysis of the working lives of the nurse/matron Kathleen Waterhouse (1891–1987) and the teacher/unionist May Mills (1890–1984) provides the opportunity to study the different institutional structures affecting the careers of two women working in different feminised occupations. Since the publication in 1969 of Richard and Ida Simpson's landmark study, 'Women and bureaucracy in the semi-professions',¹²⁵ teaching, nursing and librarianship have been stamped as female-dominated semi-professions subject to more bureaucratic control than the traditional, apparently autonomous, professions of law and medicine. The evidence which the Simpsons used to reach their conclusions were the dominance of women in these occupations, the lower educational levels of entry, the

¹²³ Higgs & Bettess, *To Walk a Fair Beat: A History of the South Australian Women Police 1915–1987*, p. 17.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

¹²⁵ Simpson, R. L. & Harper, I., 'Women and bureaucracy in the semi-professions', in *The Semi-Professions and Their Organizations*, ed. A. Etzioni, Free Press, New York, 1969, pp. 196–265.

suitability of this work for married women, and the organisational cultures and norms which encouraged patriarchal control of women at work.

The *floruit* years of the nurse/matron Kathleen Waterhouse (1891–1987) and the teacher/unionist May Mills (1890–1984) are contiguous.¹²⁶ Kathleen Waterhouse and May Mills began their training for their lives' work in 1914. After leaving school, both had stayed home to help their ailing mothers.¹²⁷ In this respect, May Mills and Kathleen Waterhouse accepted early in life their family responsibilities as the domestic ideology demanded. But it was the outbreak of World War I which precipitated both these women into the labour force – yet another example of the social context which shaped women's work.¹²⁸ Kathleen Waterhouse did her four years of apprenticeship training at the Adelaide Children's Hospital because her father would not allow her to train at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.¹²⁹ At this time, student nurses had to pay a bond of at least £5, were unpaid during their probationary period which might last six months, and their monthly wages increased from 20/- a month to 30/- a month by the end of their training.¹³⁰ May Mills did her six months' teacher education at Adelaide Teachers College where she was paid 15/- per week and was bonded to the Education Department for a further two years. In 1914, male student teachers were paid £1 per week during their training.

There were significant differences in the education and educational institutions available to prospective nurses and teachers. Before the establishment of the Nurses Registration Board which took over the responsibilities for nurse education in 1922, the Australasian Trained Nurses Association (ATNA) recognised certain hospitals as training schools and ATNA members prepared the syllabus, conducted the nurses' examinations and kept the

¹²⁶ Their work illustrates the value of Richard Anker's demand for a disaggregation of industry statistics, since, as Karen Mumford reported in 1989, '68.5 per cent of female professionals are either employed as nurses or teachers.' Mumford, *Women Working: Economics and Reality*, p. 20.

¹²⁷ State Library of South Australia: Waterhouse, K. L., OH 33, Interview with Kathleen Lucy Waterhouse [sound recording] Interviewer: Beth M. Robertson, Adelaide, recorded 17 May 1985. May Mills' decision was discussed earlier in this chapter.

¹²⁸ Mills, *Millbrae and Its Founding Family*, p. 69; State Library of South Australia: Waterhouse, K. L., OH 17/23, Interview with Kathleen Lucy Waterhouse [sound recording] Interviewer: Joan Durdin, History of Nursing in South Australia, Adelaide, recorded 10 Jan. 1983.

¹²⁹ State Library of South Australia: OH 17/23, Interview with Kathleen Lucy Waterhouse [sound recording].

¹³⁰ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 86.

register of trained nurses.¹³¹ Therefore between 1911 and 1961 prospective nurses could do their training at public hospitals such as the Royal Adelaide Hospital; not-for-profit hospitals such as the Adelaide Children's Hospital or Calvary Hospital; or private, for-profit hospitals such as Wakefield Street Private Hospital.¹³² Furthermore, student nurses could start at small country hospitals, as did Anne Liddy at Tumby Bay, and transfer to the larger city hospitals for the final two years.¹³³ Nurses also had the options for specialised training, for example, the three year course at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the nursing of children at the Adelaide Children's Hospital, or training in a hospital whose religious ethos matched their own or that of their parents, for example, Memorial Hospital.

The variety of registered training hospitals meant that probationary nurses had more choices than student teachers. In contrast to the many and geographically spread hospitals for nurse training, formal and full-time teacher education during this period was only available in the city of Adelaide. The Education Department controlled Adelaide Teachers College, established in 1876 and, after 1957, Wattle Park Teachers College. In 1907 the Kindergarten Union established specialist and fee-paying kindergarten teacher education at the Kindergarten Teachers College. In the 1920s, the independent schools established a part-time teacher education course but it was discontinued during the Great Depression.¹³⁴

Throughout the period 1911 to 1961, both student nurses and future Education Department teachers had to submit to a degree of institutional control over their private lives which reflected dominant attitudes towards women. The best known is the ban on nurses and female teachers¹³⁵ continuing their training if they married during their courses. However, it is also important to recognise the role of accommodation for student nurses and teachers. The student nurses lived on site, an important consideration for country parents, in particular. As my nursing friends have recalled, 'You went from Boarding School to the Nurses Home.' Unlike the nurses with their guaranteed board and lodgings, student

¹³¹ Ibid., pp. 52–3.

¹³² South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee, *Nursing in South Australia: First Hundred Years, 1837–1937*, 1938.

¹³³ State Library of South Australia: OH 1/4, Interview with Anne Angela Liddy [sound recording].

¹³⁴ Twynam, *To Grow in Wisdom: The Story of the First Seventy-five Years of the Methodist Ladies College 1902–1977*.

¹³⁵ This ban did not apply to male student teachers.

teachers from the country had to find their own accommodation in private homes or the hostels such as the YWCA, the Girls Friendly Society or St Mary's Hostel.¹³⁶

Compulsory residency in on site nurses' homes is one example of the employers' control of the private lives of nurses throughout this period.¹³⁷ But the Education Department also strove to control accommodation for its female student teachers. In 1926 the Department appointed Phebe Watson to the new position of Women's Warden, a position which continued in the Teachers Colleges when they became autonomous Colleges of Advanced Education in 1973. Throughout this period, one of the duties of the Women's Warden was the selection and inspection of boarding places.¹³⁸ While the reminiscences of nurses¹³⁹ and teachers who lived in hostels¹⁴⁰ stress the camaraderie of community living, the dominant social attitudes are revealed in the following extract from the 1927 *Annual Report* of Dr Adolf Schulz, the Principal of Adelaide Teachers College:

One further pressing need of the College must be mentioned, and that is the provision of hostels for the students, especially women students. A great deal of valuable work is at present done by the Women's Warden in inspecting and regularly reporting on the approved lodging houses where the students live. Nevertheless, the system is on the whole unsatisfactory for the students' studies and particularly because of the absence of adequate supervision and control and of all those valuable influences for good with regard to outlook and manners and character which proper residential conditions can give.¹⁴¹

Nurses' homes and the role of the Women's Warden in the Teachers Colleges are yet another example of this period's concern for the moral as well as social welfare of young women entering the labour force.

¹³⁶ O'Neil, *Learning For Life: St Mary's Hostel (1916–1972) and the Catholic Women's League Child Care Centre (1975–1999)*.

¹³⁷ Nicholson, S.-A., "A home from home": The role of the Nurses' Home in post-war South Australian history', *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no. 28, 2000, pp. 70–83.

¹³⁸ Personal knowledge as a staff member of Adelaide Teachers College.

¹³⁹ e.g. Durdin, J., *Eleven Thousand Nurses: A History of Nursing Education at the Royal Adelaide Hospital 1889–1993*, Royal Adelaide Hospital, Adelaide, 1999.

¹⁴⁰ e.g. O'Neil, *Learning For Life: St Mary's Hostel (1916–1972) and the Catholic Women's League Child Care Centre (1975–1999)*.

¹⁴¹ *Annual Report of Adelaide Teachers College*, The College, Adelaide, 1927, p. 129.

Today, when the educational pre-requisites for entry to university-based teacher and nursing studies are equivalent, it is easy to forget the different entry requirements for student teachers and nurses between 1911 and 1961. To attend the teachers colleges, students had to be 17 years of age and have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate. Trainee nurses also had to be at least 17 years of age, but the minimum educational requirements until 1959 was successful completion of Grade 7, the last year of primary education in South Australia,¹⁴² a situation deplored in the 1938 publication, *Nursing in South Australia*:

Much has been said for and against higher education for nurses, and certainly if any nurse contemplates nursing in private homes, this is a most important factor, for one comes in contact with many cultured people, who look to a nurse for companionship, as well as nursing attention, and there is nothing retards a patient's progress, quite as effectively as an illiterate nurse.¹⁴³

What is most interesting about the educational requirements for entry to nursing training throughout this period is the role of the Education Department. In his history of the Nurses Registration Board of South Australia, David White reported that when, in 1933, the Board attempted to raise the educational prerequisite to Intermediate Certificate (now Year 10), the Director General of Education successfully proved that the South Australian entry requirements were equivalent to those of New South Wales. Therefore, 'Parliament overruled the decision to increase the entry standard.'¹⁴⁴ Interstate comparisons have always been influential in establishing the working conditions for South Australian women.¹⁴⁵ Until the introduction of tertiary-based nurse education in 1975 at the then Sturt College of Advanced Education,¹⁴⁶ the education of all nurses was an apprenticeship system with external examinations. Student nurses worked on wards and with patients alongside registered nurses. Kathleen Waterhouse graphically described the amount of

¹⁴² Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 189.

¹⁴³ South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee, *Nursing in South Australia: First Hundred Years, 1837–1937*, 1938, p. 332.

¹⁴⁴ White, *A New Beginning: Nurse Training and Registration Policy 1920–1938: The Role of the Nurses Registration Board of South Australia*, p. 16.

¹⁴⁵ Discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

¹⁴⁶ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 195.

basic cleaning and housekeeping done by student nurses, work now done by cleaners, enrolled nurses and nursing aides:

Nurses in those days were responsible for all the sweeping and cleaning of wards. They also had to wash out wet and soiled drawsheets, a job the probationers disliked.¹⁴⁷

The personal records studied for this research reveal interesting differences between the working lives of teachers and nurses. Women teachers tended to spend their working lives either in the Education Department or the independent school system, while nurses moved easily and often between public and private hospitals, home- and community-based nursing.¹⁴⁸ Thus May Mills spent 32 years teaching at Unley High School, before taking her first trip to Europe after her retirement in 1962.¹⁴⁹ In contrast, nursing took Kathleen Waterhouse to India, North America and Europe as well as Broken Hill and district nursing in Tailem Bend and Narrung before she retired from the position of Matron of the Adelaide Children's Hospital in 1952.¹⁵⁰

Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether or not there were institutional developments and/or controls which encouraged the mobility of nurses and restricted that of women teachers. One possible reason why nurses moved so easily interstate and overseas could be related to the legislative authority of their registration. After the passing of the *Nurses Registration Act* in December 1920, all women who wished to work as qualified nurses in either public or private hospitals had to be registered with the Nurses Registration Board of South Australia.¹⁵¹ In contrast, the equivalent Teachers Registration Board was not established until 1972, despite the fact that it 'had been sought by the profession for more than sixty years.'¹⁵² Certainly, the Education Department had a Classification Board for its own teachers after the passing of the *Education Act 1915*, but

¹⁴⁷ Hagger, J., 'Reflections of 1945–52', *Australasian Nurses Journal*, vol. 4, no. 9, 1976, pp. 2–4, p. 2.

¹⁴⁸ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*.

¹⁴⁹ Smithson, M., 'Hard work keeps her young: May Mills at 88', *The Community Courier*, 19 July 1978, p. 10.

¹⁵⁰ Hagger, 'A time to remember'; Hagger, 'Reflections of 1945–52'.

¹⁵¹ White, *A New Beginning: Nurse Training and Registration Policy 1920–1938: The Role of the Nurses Registration Board of South Australia*.

¹⁵² Thiele, C. M., *Grains of Mustard Seed*, Education Department, South Australia, Adelaide, 1975, p. 232.

the independent schools were not legally required to employ qualified teachers. The Education Department did, in times of extreme teacher shortage, appoint untrained and unclassified teachers between 1911 and 1961. Therefore, while a nurse's qualifications were recognised and registered by law, and were accepted throughout the world, the same was not true for the teacher's qualifications.

Another possibly significant factor in the mobility of nurses could be the range of their employers. In its contribution to South Australia's centenary celebrations in 1936, the South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee published *Nursing in South Australia*.¹⁵³ The book has a section called 'Careers available for Certificated Nurses'. This reveals the breadth of work opportunities available to registered nurses. The growth of these employment opportunities for nurses occurred during the period 1911 to 1961. The District and Bush Nursing Society of South Australia was established in 1894. Industrial and Occupational Health nurses were appointed to the department stores, Charles Birks and Myers, to the railway workshops in the 1920s, and to munitions factories in the 1940s.¹⁵⁴

In contrast, the employers for single women teachers were fewer and concentrated in the capital city, Adelaide. While there were probably as many nurses as teachers working in country areas, the dominant employer for these teachers was the South Australian Education Department. However, country hospitals, the District and Bush Nursing Society, or private individuals could have employed the nurses. Kay Whitehead¹⁵⁵ has documented the gradual exclusion of lay single women out of the Catholic education system and married women out of the Lutheran education system, both of which existed alongside the Education Department school system. Therefore, qualified and single women teachers had to choose between working for the State Education Department or in

¹⁵³ South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee, *Nursing in South Australia: First Hundred Years, 1837–1937*, 1938; South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee, *Nursing in South Australia: First Hundred Years, 1837–1937* (incl. suppl. covering 1938–1945 and update covering 1946–1989), updated edn, Nurses' Memorial Foundation of S.A. Inc., Adelaide, 1989.

¹⁵⁴ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, pp. 113, 130.

¹⁵⁵ Whitehead, 'Women's "life-work": Teachers in South Australia, 1836–1906'.

one of the independent schools, most of which were Protestant denominational schools which encouraged the employment of their own old scholars.¹⁵⁶

One possible reason why so few single women teachers followed the example of nurses and moved easily and often between government and private employers could have been financial. In what was effectively a completely female occupation, the wages for nurses were low no matter who employed them, and especially in comparison with women teachers.¹⁵⁷ For example, in 1933, the Matron of Kimba Hospital was paid £102 per annum,¹⁵⁸ while May Mills, an assistant at Unley High School was paid £160 per annum, and Veta Macghey, a Senior Mistress at Kadina High School was paid £184 per annum.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, women teachers in the Education Department received higher salaries than their counterparts in independent schools. In 1973, when the retired Infant Mistress and Teachers College Lecturer, Ann Milne, was asked if she had ever been tempted to leave the Department for an independent situation, she replied thus:

Well, I've come through two wars and a Depression and finance and family circumstances, family needs, I think didn't give me very much scope for wondering about that. Of course, it would have been wonderful to be able to – later on, to be able to take leave, but it's only quite recently that leave has been freely available in the Department.¹⁶⁰

Throughout the period 1911 to 1961 and as the histories of independent girls' schools reveal,¹⁶¹ senior staff in these schools knew that the salaries they offered could not compete with Education Department's salaries. Phyllis Twynam, a long-serving staff member and deputy headmistress of Methodist Ladies College, thus described the situation

¹⁵⁶ e.g. Twynam, *To Grow in Wisdom: The Story of the First Seventy-five Years of the Methodist Ladies College 1902–1977*; Phillips, *Not Saints, But Girls: The First Hundred Years of St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School*.

¹⁵⁷ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁵⁹ *The Education Gazette*, 16 Jan. 1933, pp. 8, 9.

¹⁶⁰ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Milne, A., Radio interview with Ann Milne [sound recording] Interviewer: Mary Rose Goggs, Now in Retirement (Radio program), 2nd series, 1972/73, no. 61, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Adelaide, broadcast 4 Nov. 1973, p. 6.

¹⁶¹ e.g. Walford Anglican School for Girls, *Walford: A Centenary History*; Phillips, *Not Saints, But Girls: The First Hundred Years of St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School*.

in the 1950s when she was a staff representative on the Girls' Secondary Schools Committee to recommend on salary scales, superannuation and long service leave:

Teachers salaries, still well below salaries paid by the Department, were nevertheless pegged to them and to rises in the minimum wage ... Teachers at MLC, concerned by perennial staff shortages and by the disparity between salaries and conditions in Department and independent schools, saw the situation as threatening the quality of teaching; there appeared to be small inducement for good young qualified teachers to join the staff ... Certainly there were attractions for teachers of independent mind in schools such as MLC where the curriculum was flexible and teaching techniques could be chosen by staff to maximise their individual interests and talents.¹⁶²

3.3.5 Voluntary Work of Single Women in Unions and Professional Associations

The significant differences in the salaries of nurses and the State and independent women school teachers point to the role of unions and professional associations in the determination of wages and working conditions for women in the paid workforce between 1911 and 1961. Linda Reid, born 1891, reported the real impetus for the women at Frearson's (where she worked) to join the printing union was when the company imported machines and English girls and paid the newcomers £1.5.0 per week:

And these three girls they gave them 25/- a week. And our girls they had been there for 12 years some and they only got 10/6 per week. Well of course that's when they started the Union. [So the Union didn't really do much for all of you?] Oh, yes. They did – they all got more money and different conditions.¹⁶³

The role of some unions is examined in Chapter 6. Here the emphasis is on the voluntary work of single women teachers and nurses, beyond the payment of their subscriptions, in their relevant unions and professional associations. This voluntary work was particularly important between 1911 and 1961 when the unions had few paid staff. For example, the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (SAPTU), founded in 1896, appointed its first

¹⁶² Twynam, *To Grow in Wisdom: The Story of the First Seventy-five Years of the Methodist Ladies College 1902–1977*, p. 208.

¹⁶³ State Library of South Australia: Reid, L., OH 25/37, Interview with Sarah Lyndon 'Linda' Reid [typescript] Interviewer: Susan Marsden, Hindmarsh Oral History Project, Adelaide, recorded 21 Dec. 1979.

full-time, paid and male general secretary in 1922.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, when May Mills, the first female president of SAPTU in 1943–44, attended the Public School Teachers Case in the South Australian Industrial Court, her fellow teachers had to take extra classes to cover her absence.¹⁶⁵

The institutional differences between a union and a professional association provide a partial explanation for the different work of women members of these respective organisations. In industrial terms during this period, the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (SAPTU), 1896–1951, the Women Teachers' Guild (WTG), 1937–1950, and the South Australian Institute of Teachers (SAIT), 1951–1997, were unions.¹⁶⁶ In contrast, the Australian Trained Nurses Association (ATNA), 1900–1956, now the Royal Australian Nursing Federation (RANF)¹⁶⁷ and the South Australian Medical Women's Society¹⁶⁸ were professional associations. Using Sidney and Beatrice Webb's definition of trade unions, Mike Quinlan defined them as 'continuous associations concerned to protect and enhance their conditions of employment and living standards.'¹⁶⁹ The long recognised definition of a professional association is that of Carr-Saunders: i.e. to uphold minimum standards of qualifications, to enforce a code of ethics, and to raise the status of the profession.¹⁷⁰

The differences between the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (SAPTU) and the Australian Trained Nurses Association (ATNA) are evident in the institutional structures they developed to achieve their goals and objectives. In broad terms, the objective of SAPTU was 'to consider questions affecting all teachers in the service of the Education Department, and to arrange for an annual conference of all teachers.'¹⁷¹ But the more

¹⁶⁴ Vicary, A., *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1997, p. 277.

¹⁶⁵ Campbell, C., *State High School Unley 1910–1985*, C. Campbell, Mile End, SA, 1985, p. 118.

¹⁶⁶ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*.

¹⁶⁷ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*.

¹⁶⁸ South Australian Medical Women's Society, *The Hands of a Woman*.

¹⁶⁹ Davison et al. (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, p. 647.

¹⁷⁰ Carr-Saunders, A. M., *Professions: Their Organization and Place in Society*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1928.

¹⁷¹ Quoted in Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 18.

specific aims of its successor, the South Australian Institute of Teachers, reveal its union emphasis on wages and working conditions:

In every possible way to further the interests of Education in South Australia. To obtain and secure for its members reasonable conditions and proper and sufficient remuneration and to guard them against hardship, oppression or injustice in connection with their employment. To watch over and protect the professional interest of members and to consider and deal with all matters affecting them and their professional relations.¹⁷²

In contrast, the objectives of the Australian Trained Nurses Association were:

- a) to promote the interests of trained nurses in all matters affecting their work as a class;
- b) to establish a system of registration for trained nurses;
- c) to afford opportunities for discussing subjects bearing on the work of nursing;
- d) to initiate and control schemes that will afford to nurses the means of providing an allowance during incapacity for work caused by sickness, accident, age or other necessitous circumstances.¹⁷³

The above aims and objectives of teachers' unions and the Nurses Association read as comparable. But, in the period of this research, the Australian Trained Nurses Association, unlike the teachers' unions, was not a recognised organisation to negotiate with employers or to appear in the South Australian Industrial Court where wages and working conditions were determined. Professional association could make submissions to employers but because their members included employers and self-employed as well as employees, they did not represent a specific employee group. For example, the South Australian Medical Women's Society started its lobbying for equal pay for women doctors in 1951 but did not succeed until 1971.¹⁷⁴

The end result of these institutional differences was that the teachers' unions concentrated upon wages and working conditions, while the nurses' professional association was limited to raising the education and the status of the profession. The Australian Trained Nurses

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 116.

¹⁷³ Quoted in Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 47.

¹⁷⁴ South Australian Medical Women's Society, *The Hands of a Woman*, p. 8.

Association had no role ‘in the determination of salaries paid to nurses in hospitals.’¹⁷⁵ Until the Royal Australian Nursing Federation (formerly the Australian Trained Nurses Association, 1900–1956) appointed, in 1970, an Industrial Officer to ‘apply for a state award to cover all nurses in South Australia’, the Public Service Association represented nurses in the State government hospitals.¹⁷⁶ Indeed, charge nurses at the Royal Adelaide Hospital during this period had to join the Boilermakers Union in case the hospital furnace stopped during the night and it had to be relit when boilermakers were off duty.¹⁷⁷

The reasons why nurses adopted the medical model of a professional association rather than a trade union are popular and contested topics in the research literature.¹⁷⁸ The issues involved are neatly summed up in the title of Glenda Strachan’s, ‘Sacred office, trade or profession?: the dilemma of nurses’ involvement in industrial activities in Queensland, 1900 to 1950.’¹⁷⁹ One of the few Australian and comparative studies of the industrial activities of teachers and nurses is Margaret Gardner’s paper ‘The “fateful meridian”: Trade union strategies and women workers’.¹⁸⁰ This is an examination of the Equal Pay Campaigns of the New South Wales Teachers Federation between 1918 and 1959 and the New South Wales Nurses Association¹⁸¹ between 1945 and 1974. Margaret Gardner emphasised the different strategies of the two groups: the decentralised, political action of the teachers and the centralised, industrial action of the nurses. She concluded the former was the more successful.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁵ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 53.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

¹⁷⁷ Personal communication from Pat Burgess and Lynette Stanley.

¹⁷⁸ e.g. Bashford, A., ‘Starch on the collar and sweat on the brow: Self-sacrifice and the status of work for nurses’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, no. 52, 1997, pp. 67–79.

¹⁷⁹ Strachan, G., ‘Sacred office, trade or profession?: The dilemma of nurses’ involvement in industrial activities in Queensland, 1900 to 1950’, *Labour History*, no. 61, Nov. 1991, pp. 147–63. ‘Sacred office’ is a shorthand reference to nurses ministering to the sick and the poor which Florence Nightingale emphasised in her writings. However, in an industrial situation, this service ethic undervalues the important work of nurses and could be considered an example of the problems associated with the definition of ‘work’, wherein service is not equated with paid work.

¹⁸⁰ Gardner, M., ‘“The fateful meridian”: Trade union strategies and women workers’, in *Managing Labour?*, eds M. Bray & V. Taylor, McGraw-Hill, Sydney, 1986, pp. 169–94.

¹⁸¹ Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*, p. 121. Durdin emphasises that this Association was a union, of which there was no equivalent in South Australia.

¹⁸² Gardner, ‘“The fateful meridian”: Trade union strategies and women workers’, p. 190.

Because May Mills and Kathleen Waterhouse were active and influential members of their respective trade union/professional associations, their involvement provides an entry point for an examination of the role of life-long single women in trade unions and professional associations. In 1943–45, May Mills was elected the first female president of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union. This was a significant appointment because it occurred just as the separate Women Teachers' Guild, 1937–1950, became the driving force in the improved salaries for women teachers in the 1943 Public School Teachers Case in the South Australian Industrial Court. In one of its publicity pamphlets, the Guild asserted that it had been established because 'the interests of the women in the S.A.P.T.U. had been sacrificed to those of the men, especially when it came to salaries.'¹⁸³ As a secondary school teacher, May Mills believed that the interests of women teachers in secondary schools were not best served by the Women Teachers' Guild, most of whose members were primary school teachers.¹⁸⁴

Even though she became the State president of the Australian Trained Nurses Association and a member of the Nurses Registration Board of South Australia,¹⁸⁵ Kathleen Waterhouse never had the industrial opportunities of May Mills to work for better working conditions and improved salaries for nurses. Without their own union, nurses concentrated their professional activities on improving the education of nurses through the Nurses Registration Board, the Australian Trained Nurses Association and after its foundation in 1950, the College of Nursing, Australia. For example, Kathleen Waterhouse was an examiner for the Nurses Board of South Australia for many years, a foundation representative for the national College of Nursing, Australia, and Superintendent of Nurses at the Adelaide Children's Hospital from 1945 to 1952. With the authority derived from her senior positions in these organisations, Kathleen Waterhouse acted as a mentor for junior nurses and encouraged as many as possible to gain higher qualifications.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ State Library of South Australia: Mills, M., PRG 26, May Mills, 'Private papers of Miss May Mills' (summary), 1906–1982; see Appendix to Chapter 6, section AC6.5 (Figure 13).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, PRG 26/1.

¹⁸⁵ Hagger, 'Reflections of 1945–52', p. 4.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*; Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*.

The union activities of Adelaide Miethke, Phebe Watson, May Mills and Veta Macghey seeks to show how this voluntary work concerned all women teachers and required the women to work inside and outside the male-dominated teachers' unions. Improving the conditions for women teachers was the field in which these women were most 'active crusaders'. They did not work alone but they were the acknowledged leaders of women teachers. To improve the salaries of women teachers, the senior women had to work through the relevant teachers' unions, first the South Australian Public Teachers' Union (SAPTU), and later the South Australian Institute of Teachers (SAIT), and the Women Teachers' Guild (WTG).

The Women Assistants' Association, an affiliate of SAPTU, was formed in 1904 and changed its name in 1906 to the Women Teachers' Association. Adelaide Miethke was the first secretary of the latter association and in 1915 she became the first president of the South Australian Women Teachers' Progressive League (WTPL), a position which she held until her appointment as Inspector of Girls' Schools in 1924. WTPL was affiliated with SAPTU. Adelaide Miethke also became the first female vice-president of SAPTU in 1915–16 and again in 1919–1920.¹⁸⁷ Never a token member of any committee, she moved the salaries' motion at the 1919 Annual Conference of the union:

That this mass meeting of teachers affirms the necessity for the immediate revision of salaries, with a view to substantial increase to meet the ever-increasing cost of living.¹⁸⁸

Adelaide Miethke made the special case for the salaries of women teachers in 1917 when, as president of WTPL, she stressed that only 293 of the 1,120 women teachers were receiving over £100 a year.¹⁸⁹ This was when the Living Wage for Women in unskilled occupations was £72.11.0 a year. These two different motions can be interpreted as an example of Adelaide Miethke's willingness to work within the rules of a particular organisation. SAPTU represented the interests of all teachers and one group, the women teachers, could not be singled out for special treatment. Their special case had to be made through WTPL.

¹⁸⁷ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*.

¹⁸⁸ *The South Australian Teachers Journal*, 23 June 1919, p. 10

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 18 Dec. 1917, p. 57.

Side-by-side with Adelaide Miethke in WTPL and SAPTU was her ‘oldest friend’,¹⁹⁰ Phebe Watson, who was Secretary of WTPL from 1915 until 1923 and vice-president of SAPTU from 1921 until 1926. Phebe Watson’s extensive knowledge of the conditions facing women teachers began in 1900 when she first became involved with the education of pupil teachers at Grote Street Public School and continued until her retirement as Mistress of Method and Women’s Warden at Adelaide Teachers College in 1936.¹⁹¹ As part of her voluntary union activities, Phebe Watson appeared in the South Australian Industrial Court as a witness for employees, in particular the student teachers, in the Women’s Living Wage Case of 1919.¹⁹²

After her retirement in 1936, Phebe Watson became the public face of women teachers, and primary women teachers in particular, when in 1937 she became the first president of the independent Women Teachers’ Guild (WTG). Unlike WTPL which had been affiliated with SAPTU, WTG was a separate union. The Women Teachers’ Guild which existed between 1937 and 1950 was the only all-women union in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. In a 1944 recruitment pamphlet, the Women Teachers’ Guild explained their foundation in terms of their second class treatment within SAPTU.

The reason was that for four years **the interests of the women in the S.A.P.T.U. had been sacrificed to those of the men, especially when it came to salaries.** [bold in original]¹⁹³

May Mills and Veta Macghey were the powerful female teacher unionists in the 1940s. When May Mills was elected as the first female president of SAPTU, Veta Macghey was an active member of WTG, and its energetic editor for the *Guild Chronicle*. Veta Macghey was the last president of WTG from 1948 until 1950, and first president of the Women’s Branch of the re-united South Australian Institute of Teachers in 1951.¹⁹⁴ While both were secondary school teachers May Mills and Veta Macghey belonged to opposing

¹⁹⁰ State Library of South Australia: Miethke, A. L., PRG 107, Adelaide Laetitia Miethke, ‘Papers of Adelaide Miethke’ (summary), 1872–1954.

¹⁹¹ ‘Retirements’, *The Torch*, vol. 16, 1936, pp. 24–5, p. 24.

¹⁹² *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 3, p. 33.

¹⁹³ See Appendix to Chapter 6, section AC6.5 (Figure 13).

¹⁹⁴ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*.

unions, SAPTU and WTG respectively. It is generally acknowledged that it was May Mills who kept the majority of women secondary teachers in SAPTU after the establishment of the Guild.¹⁹⁵ Primary women teachers dominated the membership of the Women Teachers' Guild.

The 1937 establishment of the Women Teachers' Guild, a union for the Education Department's women teachers, raises the interesting question of whether or not this was the application of the doctrine of separate spheres in work institutions. The Women Teachers' Guild, as a registered union in the South Australian Industrial Court, demonstrated that a women-only union could improve salaries and working conditions for its members, issues which tended to be largely ignored when men both led and dominated numerically the relevant union. In 1951, the Women Teachers' Guild and the South Australian Public Teachers' Union were reunited in the new South Australian Institute of Teachers. Veta Macghey stressed the pragmatism of the union in her final statement:

It would be in the best interests of the teaching fraternity if a new organisation, planned on the principle of equal representation for both men and women, could be formed ...¹⁹⁶

The equal opportunity argument, which Veta Macghey used to convince WTG members for amalgamation, looked forward to the broader gender equality aim of late twentieth century feminists. In the light of her experience, Veta Macghey believed that the common interests of all teachers were more important than the sectional interests of women teachers.

The history of the membership of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union, later the South Australian Institute of Teachers, and the Australian Trained Nurses Association raise interesting and relevant questions about the commitment of women workers to their union and/or professional association. The aggregated statistics on trade union membership in

¹⁹⁵ Whitehead, "Many industrial troubles are due to the presence of female labour": The Women Teachers' Guild in South Australia, 1937-42'; Hyams, B. K., 'The battle of the sexes in teachers' organizations: A South Australian episode 1937-1950', *ANZHEs Journal*, vol. 3, 1974, pp. 36-45; Campbell, *State High School Unley 1910-1985*.

¹⁹⁶ Quoted in Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 94.

South Australia¹⁹⁷ and feminist research¹⁹⁸ have stressed the dominance of men and male interests and culture in Australian unions. Despite the fact that the Education Department has always employed more female than male teachers, it was 1957 before 'women constituted 52 per cent of the full membership of SAIT.'¹⁹⁹

An examination of the executive members of the nursing and the teachers' professional associations, trade unions and registration board reveals that the women members were life-long single women already holding senior positions within their employing institutions. For example, Adelaide Miethke became the first female vice-president of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union in 1915–16 and again between 1919 and 1921 when she was a Senior Mistress at Woodville High School.²⁰⁰

Similarly Phebe Watson, the first president of the breakaway Women Teachers' Guild in 1938, was vice-president of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union between 1921 and 1924.²⁰¹ The Matrons Dorothy Carroll from the Queen Victoria Hospital, Hilda Hanton of Memorial Hospital and Kathleen Scrymgour of the Royal Adelaide Hospital were active and committed executive members of both the Australian Trained Nurses Association and the Nurses Registration Board of South Australia. In the period 1911 to 1961, it appears that women had to be in senior positions at their place of employment and/or with sufficient time to actively participate in their trade union and/or professional associations. Most of these senior women were single. Feminist labour researchers stress that time is still an issue in the relationship between women and trade unions.²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 72.

¹⁹⁸ e.g. Pocock, B., 'Challenging male advantage in Australian unions', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 1996.

¹⁹⁹ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 108.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

²⁰² Franzway, S., 'Women working in a greedy institution: Commitment and emotional labour in the union movement', *Gender, Work and Organization*, vol. 7, no. 4, 2000, pp. 258–68; Pocock, 'Challenging male advantage in Australian unions'; Pocock (ed.), *Strife: Sex and Politics in Labour Unions*.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the working lives of a group of single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961 have been examined for their correspondence with the research literature. The analysis established that, for these women, the identified factors affecting occupational choice – personal qualities, family, education, employers, governments and government instrumentalities – were all present. The single women recognised the influence of the dominant factors in their occupational choices. The investigation also suggested that these institutional factors crossed class, religious and economic boundaries in the occupational choices of particular single women.

While the relevant research literature discussed in the Introduction emphasised the impact of employment practices on married women, the examination in this chapter has demonstrated that life-long single women were also disadvantaged. For example, Dr Phoebe Chapple was discriminated against in her desire to work in the non-traditional field of army medicine during World War I. An examination of the number of employers available to nurses and female teachers revealed mixed results. In comparison with independent school teachers and nurses, the Education Department gave female teachers the best working conditions and salaries, even though male teachers earned more. From the stories of the nurses,²⁰³ it appears that they appreciated their more varied and wider work opportunities, whilst acknowledging their poor salaries and harsh working conditions. Without a specialist union to represent their interests, nurses achieved very few improvements in their education, working conditions and salaries in the period 1911 to 1961. The dominance of life-long single nurses and teachers in their respective professional association and trade union has raised a little-considered issue: the effect of length of working life on women's active participation in union activities.

The Women Police Branch illustrates in microcosm many of the issues examined in this research. The establishment of the Branch is an example both of women's organisations working with other groups, and of the external influences on a work organisation to widen work opportunities for women. The equal pay, which the women police received, is an example of employers granting equal pay only to small groups of women in specialised

²⁰³ e.g. Durdin, *They Became Nurses: A History of Nursing in South Australia 1836–1980*; South Australian Trained Nurses' Centenary Committee, *Nursing in South Australia: First Hundred Years, 1837–1937*, updated edn, 1989; Hagger, 'A time to remember'.

occupations. In this, the State Government action foreshadowed the later decisions of the South Australian Industrial Court, the subject of Chapter 6. The Women Police Branch and the girls' technical high schools opened within the time period of this research and were closed just outside the period. They are examples of institutions opening and closing work opportunities for women in response to the rise and fall of the doctrine of separate spheres for women and men. Single women took advantage of the expanded work opportunities in these institutions.

This chapter has explored the working lives of some single women. The next three chapters concentrate upon particular institutions, beginning in Chapter 4 with the South Australian Education Department and the work of its single women holding senior appointments.

4 ‘ACTIVE CRUSADERS NOT PASSIVE SERVANTS OF THE STATE’:¹ THE WORK OF SENIOR WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, 1911–1961

4.1 Introduction

Between 1911 and 1961, the South Australian Education Department was the largest employer of professional women in the State.² It employed doctors, psychologists, dentists, nurses, laboratory assistants and secretaries as well as the teachers for which it is best known. The application of Henry Mintzberg’s analytical scheme shows the Education Department to have been a professional bureaucracy dominated by men and where there were few females in senior positions to act as mentors for younger women teachers.³ This was in spite of the fact that most of its employees were young single women, often appointed to one-teacher schools in the country. Nevertheless, in this period, some single women, for example, Dr Gertrude Halley, Dr Constance Davey, and Inspectors Adelaide Miethke and Lydia Longmore, were the first female, long-term appointments to senior positions within the Department.⁴ At the same time Phebe Watson, May Mills and Veta Macghey became presidents of the teachers’ unions. With the exception of the medical doctor, Gertrude Halley, all the women had started their working lives as classroom teachers and became headmistresses, union officials, school inspectors or an educational psychologist.

This chapter analyses the work of single women who were influential in the South Australian Education Department between 1911 and 1961. Through a study of their work, the chapter will demonstrate how the women were promoted to senior positions, executed their responsibilities and integrated paid and voluntary work. There is a particular

¹ Hart, ‘Feminism and bureaucracy: The minimum wage experiment in the District of Columbia’, p. 7.

² As examined in Chapter 2.

³ The full discussion of Mintzberg’s concept is later in this chapter.

⁴ In 1897, Blanche McNamara was the first woman inspector appointed in any Australian Education Department, but she contracted tuberculosis in 1898 and died in 1900.

emphasis on the way each woman successfully negotiated the Department's bureaucratic and masculine culture, and whether or not the different positions which each one held affected their strategies. The way in which these women also worked for and used a number of voluntary organisations is an important part of the analysis. This chapter is a South Australian study along the lines which Vivien Hart suggested in 1992:

Three considerations which might become an agenda for future research: first, the 'style' with which women fill positions in bureaucracies; second, the role of policy networks outside the bureaucracy; third, the advantages and disadvantages of new and gendered policies and institutions and the relationship between innovation, separatism and marginalization.⁵

4.2 The Educational and Social Context

The 1915 *Education Act* was not substantially revised until 1973. Therefore, this Act was the legislative authority wherein the Education Department controlled the education of all South Australian children and administered the work of its own teachers between 1915 and 1961. For students, the 1915 *Education Act* raised the school leaving age from twelve to fourteen years, closed most exemptions from compulsory school attendance which had been possible under the *Education Act 1875*, and mandated the Qualifying Certificate taken at the end of primary school as the minimum level of education.⁶ This Act also provided for the establishment of schools where an 'average annual attendance thereof of at least six children' could be guaranteed. The resultant growth in the number of Education Department teachers, schools and students in relation to the South Australian population between 1911 and 1921 is shown in Table 18.⁷

⁵ Hart, 'Feminism and bureaucracy: The minimum wage experiment in the District of Columbia', p. 18. The particular strength of Vivien Hart's agenda is that it arose from her research into the District of Columbia Minimum Wage Board between 1918 and 1923 when Clara Mortenson Beyer was its first and only Secretary.

⁶ However, Section 45 of the Act authorised the Minister of Education or his officers to grant exemptions from compulsory attendance 'if in his discretion he deems it necessary to do so by reason of the poverty or sickness of any parent of such child.' These exemptions were still possible in the 1950s. Indeed, during my time at school in the 1950s, some of my friends left secondary school before they were 14 years old because their parents had proved economic hardship. Even in the 1961 Census there were 840 South Australian female employees between the ages of 10 and 14 years.

⁷ The year-by-year growth between 1911 and 1921 is shown in Table 24 in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.1.

TABLE 18
Growth in Education Department (E.D.) Schools, Teachers and Students,
1911–1921

Year	E.D. Schools	Total Students	Total Teachers	Total Population
1911	737	55,294	1,407	408,558
1921	1,083	79,769	2,123	495,160

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia, 1922–23.*

The impact of the stricter controls on compulsory attendance is emphasised by the fact that the proportional age structure of the South Australian population remained relatively constant for males and females between 0 and 14 years between 1911 and 1921: that is, 31.5% of the total population.⁸ Compulsory attendance was enforced alongside the opening and closing of Education Department schools. The closure of one-teacher schools after 1933 particularly affected country students and their female teachers. From a high of 1,092 schools in 1933, the Education Department had reduced the number of schools to 679 in 1961.⁹

The employment practices of the Education Department between 1911 and 1961 highlight the complex relationships between world events, the dominant ideologies and their effects on the employment of women in the paid labour force. The first implementation of the compulsory attendance provisions of the 1915 *Education Act* occurred during World War I when many male teachers had enlisted in the armed services. Although proportionally fewer Australian women entered the labour force than in Britain,¹⁰ the South Australian Education Department had to employ more women to fulfil its obligations under the Act: from 1,581 women and 703 men in 1915 to 2,033 women and 854 men in 1921.¹¹ In

⁸ *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 8.

⁹ For details, see Table 19 below. The effect on women teachers is examined below.

¹⁰ Woollacott, 'From moral to professional authority: Secularism, social work and middle-class women's self-construction in World War I Britain'; Woollacott, A., 'The fragmentary subject: Feminist history, official records, and self-representation', *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 21, no. 4, 1998, pp. 329–39.

¹¹ *Statistical Register of South Australia, 1921–22*. NB These figures are not comparable with those in Table 18 because Monitors, Sewing Mistresses and Student Teachers are included in the totals.

accord with the departmental Regulation of 1915 which banned the permanent employment of married women,¹² the new female teachers were young and single, many of whom had never before been employed in the paid labour force. May Mills (1890–1984) was one of these women:

In 1914, I went off to train as a teacher, for, as always, teachers were in short supply.¹³

Table 19 highlights the percentage changes and wave-like trends in the number of women teachers in the Department between 1911 and 1961, from a high of 70.04% in 1921 to a low of 50.74% in 1961. The statistics suggest that the Education Department both reinterpreted the ideology of the domestic role for adult women, and adjusted its own employment policies in the light of world events and financial restrictions.

TABLE 19
Students, Female and Male Teachers in Education Department Schools,
1911–1961

Year	Schools	Female Teachers	% of Female Teachers	Male Teachers	Total Students
1911	737	978	69.51%	429	55,294
1921	960	1,583	70.04%	677	80,178
1933	1,092	1,787	55.91%	1,409	89,898
1947	759	1,724	51.19%	1,614	75,538
1954	689	2,902	59%	2,016	122,994
1961	679	4,414	50.74%	4,285	181,097

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia*, 1961–62, p. 26.

From the percentage changes in female teachers in Table 19, it appears that during the Great Depression and as much as was possible after World War II, the Education

¹² Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 85.

¹³ Mills, *Millbrae and Its Founding Family*, p. 69.

Department consciously or unconsciously employed more male than female teachers whilst simultaneously reducing the number of departmental schools.¹⁴ The closure of the one-teacher schools, for both educational and economic reasons, particularly affected women teachers since research has shown that they were more likely to start their careers at the lower level of junior teachers and in one-teacher schools.¹⁵ This is the other side of the coin for that which Kerreen Reiger found in her research: ‘that as the reform strategies became institutionalized, they produced new career opportunities many of which were suited to, and seized by, women.’¹⁶ At the same time as women were moving into medicine, law and social work and beginning to take over clerical occupations, their numerical dominance of the teaching profession fluctuated in South Australia. This employment practice would have been in accord with the then dominant ideology of the man as breadwinner in Australian society and was implemented despite the limited funds available to the Education Department. This further disadvantaged women teachers.¹⁷

But there was also a significant difference between the additional women teachers whom the Education Department employed in World Wars I and II. In the latter war and especially during the post-World War II migration and baby boom, the Department had to employ as temporary teachers married women both trained and untrained. Again, the Education Department kept to the letter, if not the spirit of the dominant ideology, by employing married women as temporary teachers. This employment policy of the Education Department had a long-term economic impact on women teachers. When experience and length of service were the necessary criteria for promotion, there were fewer qualified and experienced women teachers to apply for the increasing number of promotion positions available after World War II. During an ABC radio interview in 1951, Inspector Ruth Gibson ascribed the shortage of women teachers to the depression and more employment opportunities for women:

¹⁴ Of course, it is possible that the increasing number of male teachers corresponded with the increasing number of secondary school students, most of whom were male during this period.

¹⁵ McGuire, ‘Pupil teachers and junior teachers in South Australian schools 1873–1965: An historical and humanistic sociological analysis’. For McGuire’s statistics on gender differences in junior teachers, see Table 25 in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.2.

¹⁶ Reiger, *The Disenchantment of the Home: Modernizing the Australian Family, 1880–1940*, p. 216.

¹⁷ McGuire, ‘Pupil teachers and junior teachers in South Australian schools 1873–1965: An historical and humanistic sociological analysis’.

The depression years are mainly responsible, for during those years the birth rate fell alarmingly ... Add to that the greatly increased demands of industry and business, and during the past years there has been a much wider range of opportunities for girls.¹⁸

The *Education Act 1915* also provided for major changes in the administration of the Education Department, particularly in the development of separate infant schools, alternative secondary schools and the re-organisation of teacher education. Apart from the appointment of Dr Charles Fenner as Superintendent of Technical Education in late 1916, most of these changes had to wait for the appointment of a new Director General of Education in 1919. In effect, there was a leadership vacuum in the Education Department between 1913 and 1919. Director General Alfred Williams had extended periods of sick-leave before his death in 1913, and his successor, Milton Maugham, had to take early retirement in 1919. Therefore, the Education Department's teachers were looking forward to the implementation of the administrative changes foreshadowed in the *Education Act 1915* when William McCoy was appointed Director General of Education in 1919.

The Sydney-born and educated William McCoy (1866–1929) came to South Australia from Tasmania where he had been Director General of Education from 1910 to 1919. William McCoy is best remembered for the re-organisation of State secondary education.¹⁹ Rather than developing technical secondary schools which could compete on equal terms with the academically-oriented high schools, McCoy introduced central and area schools.²⁰ These schools provided limited vocational training and did not offer students all the subjects necessary for admission to all university courses.²¹ Although the central schools, later renamed technical high schools, were never developed as envisaged by Dr Fenner, the Director of Technical Education,²² the girls' central schools offered secondary level

¹⁸ National Archives of Australia: Australian Broadcasting Commission, South Australian Branch, AP1003/10, 'Women's sessions' (National & State) including 'Women in the News' [Scripts], Adelaide, 1 June 1942–31 Dec. 1956.

¹⁹ Hyams, B. K., 'W.T. McCoy, Director of Education, Tasmania, 1910–1919; South Australia 1919–1929', in *Pioneers of Australian Education*, vol. 3, ed. C. Turney, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1983, pp. 12–80.

²⁰ As discussed in Chapter 3.

²¹ Miller, *Long Division: State Schooling in South Australian Society*.

²² Trethewey, L., 'Fenner, Charles', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 8, eds B. Nairn & G. Serle, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1981, pp. 481–2.

women teachers a longer ladder of promotion than was then available in the high schools. For example, in 1941 Ruth Gibson was promoted to the position of Inspector from being Chief Assistant in a technical school.²³

William McCoy also established separate infant schools which he reported thus in the Minister of Education's 1921 report to Parliament:

When the attendance exceeds 500 children, the school becomes unwieldy and the head master is unable to give adequate attention to all the grades ... Separate Infant Departments were established in such schools, and placed in charge of women who have acquired special qualifications for dealing with young children ... Twenty-two such departments are now in existence.²⁴

William McCoy's reference to women with 'special qualifications for dealing with young children' is an example of what Marilyn Lake has called the 'maternal feminism' of this period.²⁵ It is notable that when, in 1971, the Karmel Committee recommended the re-integration of the State's 85 infant schools within the 530 primary schools, committee members reversed McCoy's organisational and educational arguments:

Continuous educational experience is more easily provided in an institution under single direction.²⁶

The establishment and disestablishment of separate infant schools in South Australia between 1920 and 1972 is one more example of the power of institutions to open and then close the avenues of promotion for women in a particular work organisation. Specialist infant school teachers, all of whom were women, could aspire to becoming Infant Mistresses and Inspector of Infant Schools, promotion positions which were not then available to women teachers in primary schools of equivalent size.

²³ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 84.

²⁴ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1921, p. 22. William McCoy's full statement on Infant Schools is in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.3.1.

²⁵ Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*.

²⁶ Karmel, *Education in South Australia: Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1969–1970*, p. 176.

William McCoy was Director General of Education at an opportune time. Wartime restrictions had been lifted, funds were available to increase teachers' salaries,²⁷ and the successive Liberal and Labor Governments as well as the community at large supported his moderate reforms.²⁸ In this William McCoy was a 'shrewd tactician.'²⁹ Once he had implemented the administrative changes envisaged in the *Education Act 1915*, William McCoy was able to appoint women to a few senior positions. Dr Constance Davey was appointed the Education Department's first psychologist in 1924, the same year as Adelaide Miethke was promoted to the first female Inspector of Girls' Central Schools and High Schools. Phebe Watson was appointed the first Women's Warden at Adelaide Teachers College in 1926. B. K. Hyams made a tepid assessment of William McCoy's support for women teachers:

The development of infant classes and the growth of high schools and central schools expanded promotional opportunities for women through the opening of infants' and girls' sections. Elsewhere, however, women were precluded from taking charge of anything but the smallest schools and McCoy did nothing to change the situation.³⁰

The management literature stresses the importance of mentors and mentoring for women in senior positions.³¹ It is impossible to identify the extent to which William McCoy was a mentor to senior women in the Department because the relevant staff records of senior appointments are not available.³² He had worked in the Tasmanian Education Department with Dr Gertrude Halley, who, in 1913, was appointed the first Medical Inspector of Schools in South Australia. Perhaps McCoy wrote a reference for Dr Halley. Certainly, William McCoy defended Dr Halley in 1922 when the Minister of Education asked for a report on why, at a public meeting, Dr Halley 'disclosed information [re spread of

²⁷ See Public School Teachers Case of 1925 in Chapter 6.

²⁸ Thiele, *Grains of Mustard Seed*, p. 153.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

³⁰ Hyams, 'W.T. McCoy, Director of Education, Tasmania, 1910–1919; South Australia 1919–1929', p. 58.

³¹ e.g. Halford & Leonard, *Gender, Power and Organisations: An Introduction*, p. 115; Wajcman, J., *Managing Like a Man: Women and Men in Corporate Management*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1999, pp. 1125–30.

³² I have read the teachers' history sheets for this period and the staff records of these women are not included (State Records of South Australia: GRG 18/167).

infectious diseases in schools] acquired in the course of her duties without the permission of the Minister'. In her explanatory Memorandum to the Director, Dr Halley did not hesitate to state her position: 'I did not disclose any information ... that had not already been published.'³³

The personal and institutional records are almost silent about the role of male mentors for senior women in the Education Department. For example, when William McCoy wrote in his 1920 report to Parliament that a separate Correspondence School had been established, he acknowledged impersonally the voluntary work of Lydia Longmore:

Previous to the establishment of this school, Miss Inspector Longmore, with the help of a number of friends, had endeavoured to carry out the work of teaching these children through the post, as a labour of love, but the large number of applicants for assistance, and the greater demands made upon the volunteer teachers by the increase of their ordinary duties, and the expansion of work in other directions, rendered it advisable to appoint teachers who could devote their whole time to this important work.³⁴

Later, Phebe Watson's letter of congratulations to her friend Adelaide Miethke after the very successful Pageant of Empire in 1936 hinted at some male mentoring:

I wish VIP could know what a wonderful thing you've done, because I know you always feel you owe something to him in those things.³⁵

In contrast women teachers enthusiastically acknowledged the encouragement and support of senior women in the Education Department. Ann Milne thus recalled the role of Dr Constance Davey in her career:

I enrolled for Dr. Davey's training course. Good fortune put me in the path of an outstanding personality. I greatly value my every contact with her ... I had been at the top of the Infant promotion list and had perforce steadily refused promotion to Infant Mistress-

³³ State Records of South Australia: GRG 18/1/313, Correspondence files ('ME' files).

³⁴ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1920, p. 24. The full text is in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.3.6.

³⁵ State Library of South Australia: PRG 107, Adelaide Laetitia Miethke, 'Papers of Adelaide Miethke' (summary).

ship. Dr. Davey must have become aware of this because she, very gently – but quite firmly – told me she was not re-appointing me [to Minda Home School]. So she set the door open for me to return to the Infant Service and, after a term as an assistant, the school I was offered was Challa Gardens. (I fancy I see her hand in this.)³⁶

William McCoy also encouraged teachers to improve their qualifications and the women who were later promoted to senior appointments heeded this advice. For most of these women, as Joan Young recalled in 1986, they achieved their higher qualifications by part-time study, ‘the long saga of continuing education.’³⁷ This was also the period when teachers college students took the University of Adelaide subjects and/or degrees as part of their teacher training. Therefore, May Mills returned to the Teachers Training College³⁸ in 1918/19 to retrain as a secondary school teacher and took out her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1939.³⁹ Inspector Adelaide Miethke who started teaching in 1905 completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1924 just before her promotion as Inspector. Similarly, Inspector Ruth Gibson who started teaching in 1921 was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1937 and the Diploma of Education (Secondary) in 1940. Veta Macghey left the Adelaide Teachers College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1919 and completed part-time her Master of Arts in 1930.

Some of the single women had the opportunity to further their specialist educational qualifications with full-time study. For example, Lydia Longmore was sent to Melbourne to obtain the Infant Teachers Certificate in 1906 and to Sydney in 1915–16 for further training in the Montessori⁴⁰ method of infant education. Dr Constance Davey did her classroom teaching at St Peters Girls’ College whilst completing part-time her Bachelor of Arts and subsequently her Master of Arts at the University of Adelaide. In 1921, Constance Davey was the second recipient of the Catherine Helen Spence Scholarship. She did her doctoral studies with Charles Spearman, one of the pioneers of mental testing, at University College, London. In 1924, after an interview in London with William

³⁶ Milne, *Sketcher in an Educational Landscape*.

³⁷ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, p. 192.

³⁸ More commonly known as Adelaide Teachers College and hereafter referred to as such.

³⁹ State Records of South Australia: GRG 18/167, Teachers’ history sheets.

⁴⁰ Maria Montessori (1872–1952) developed a system of infant education which stressed three things: (a) sense training, (b) self education, (c) liberty.

McCoy,⁴¹ Dr Davey was one of the first four Education Department psychologists appointed in New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia between 1922 and 1926.⁴²

It is notable that union activism was no barrier to promotion in the Education Department. Like many of her male colleagues in the Union, Adelaide Miethke was promoted to Inspector. For example, Alfred Williams, who was Director General of Education from 1905 to 1913, had been president of SAPTU between 1903 and 1905. In 1951, Veta Macghey was appointed the first woman headmistress of a traditional academic high school in South Australia, Adelaide Girls' High School,⁴³ after being very active in the Women Teachers' Guild since its inception in 1937 and its president from 1947–1950.⁴⁴ May Mills was promoted to Senior Mistress at Unley High School in 1942, a year before she became the first female president of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union. However, both Adelaide Miethke and Phebe Watson resigned from executive positions in SAPTU when they were promoted to senior positions within the Education Department. Education unions have a tradition of not having senior education administrators as members of their executives and these women would have been well aware of this unwritten rule. Similarly, Ruth Gibson resigned as secretary of WTG when she became an inspector in 1941.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Milne, *Sketcher in an Educational Landscape*, p. 21.

⁴² Turtle, A. M., 'The first women psychologists in Australia', *Australian Psychologist*, vol. 25, no. 3, 1990, pp. 239–55.

⁴³ Adelaide Girls' High School was on the site of The Advanced School for Girls, an Education Department school which ran from 1879 to 1908.

⁴⁴ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*.

⁴⁵ Whitehead, "'Many industrial troubles are due to the presence of female labour': The Women Teachers' Guild in South Australia, 1937–42", p. 36.

4.3 Application of Vivien Hart's Research Agenda to Work of the Senior Women in the Education Department

Vivien Hart proposed that research into the achievements of women bureaucrats⁴⁶ should concentrate on three separate aspects: management styles, outside networks and the employing organisation's culture and policies.⁴⁷ This analysis of the work of a group of senior women administrators in the Education Department will highlight the inextricable interrelationships between the three factors.

4.3.1 Management Style and Personality

Memoirs and oral histories stress the personal qualities in managerial styles. Gwen Lamshed's own story is one illustration of an ex-pupil's observation that 'You couldn't get away with much with Miss Miethke.'⁴⁸ Gwen Lamshed was at Adelaide Teachers College between 1930 and 1934, a time when all female students had to take Domestic Science, irrespective of whether or not they would be required to teach it. When her Master's degree lectures clashed with the Domestic Science classes, Gwen Lamshed personally asked Adelaide Miethke for exemption from Domestic Science on the grounds that she could both cook and sew. Adelaide Miethke refused. Only the personal intervention of the College principal, Dr Adolf Schulz, enabled Gwen Lamshed to be exempted from Domestic Science.⁴⁹ Even her close friends, Phebe Watson⁵⁰ and Ruth Gibson,⁵¹ acknowledged that Adelaide Miethke was a 'stickler for protocol'.⁵² But these qualities were very reassuring for insecure young teachers as Mrs Florence Leslie recalled in 1979:

⁴⁶ Because Vivien Hart developed her research agenda from an historical study of the work of Clara Mortenson-Beyer and she persuaded me that there was a valid rationale for using the modern terms, bureaucrats, feminism and feminists, I have followed her practice. This is done with due acknowledgment that the women themselves would have stressed that they aimed at equal citizenship with men.

⁴⁷ Hart, 'Feminism and bureaucracy: The minimum wage experiment in the District of Columbia'.

⁴⁸ Edgar, S. & Jones, H., 'Miethke, Adelaide', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 10, eds B. Nairn & G. Serle, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1986, pp. 497–8, p. 497.

⁴⁹ State Library of South Australia: Lamshed, G., OH 4/4, Interview with Gwen Lamshed [sound recording] Interviewer: Claudia Quinn-Young, History of Education Project, Adelaide College of Advanced Education, Adelaide, recorded 9 June 1981.

⁵⁰ State Library of South Australia: PRG 107, Adelaide Laetitia Miethke, 'Papers of Adelaide Miethke' (summary).

⁵¹ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Gibson, Adelaide Miethke [radio script].

⁵² Healey (ed.), *S.A.'s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques*, p. 89.

I liked her – she was so thorough and dependable and knowledgeable ... If you ever wanted any help she would give it to you. She was wonderful.⁵³

While pupils and colleagues respected Adelaide Miethke, the different personality and associated managerial style of Lydia Longmore ensured the warm support of infant school teachers as Ann Milne recalled:

A loving person herself she was greatly beloved, and a richly varied personality herself, she touched life with zest at many points and was always forward looking ... Most of all, she was generous minded, always ready to encourage anything that any of her staff might wish to try and warmly proud of good work.⁵⁴

The Infant Schools Mothers' Clubs Association is the best example of Lydia Longmore's crusading support for the initiatives of infant school teachers. In 1920, Mary Edwards, the Infant Mistress at Norwood, held a meeting for mothers to meet the teachers and discuss matters in common. Lydia Longmore was the guest speaker.⁵⁵ She ensured that her active support for this new movement was included in the 1921 *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*:

A very fine Mothers' Club has been started in connection with the Norwood Infant School ... I am hoping that this movement will, in the near future, extend to other schools.⁵⁶

In a managerial analysis, Lydia Longmore had a feminine style of management which was people-oriented and with a strong stress on co-operation, while Adelaide Miethke is always represented as being task-oriented and authoritative – qualities traditionally associated with male managers.⁵⁷

⁵³ State Library of South Australia: Leslie, F., OH 25/32, Interview with Florence Leslie [sound recording] Interviewer: Susan Marsden, Hindmarsh Oral History Project, Adelaide, recorded 20 Dec. 1979.

⁵⁴ Milne, A., 'Some educational trends in the history of South Australia', *New Horizons in Education*, no. 51, 1974, pp. 2–7, p. 5.

⁵⁵ Nesdale, I., *Never a Dull Moment: A Story of Infant and Junior Primary Schools of South Australia*, The Junior Primary Principals' Association of South Australia Inc. & Early Childhood Organisation, Adelaide, 1988, p. 61.

⁵⁶ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1921, p. 58.

⁵⁷ Wajcman, *Managing Like a Man: Women and Men in Corporate Management*.

The language used in formal reports is another example of managerial style. Formal reports tend to reflect the masculine culture embedded in work organisations. Although apparently gender neutral and with a decided preference for the third person, many reports have masculine and machine metaphors. The extent to which individual single women employees contested and colluded with this aspect of masculine culture is seen in a comparison of the 1934 reports of Inspectors Lydia Longmore and Adelaide Miethke published in the *Education Gazette*. Lydia Longmore used the more familiar teaching and growth metaphors to stress her support for the Montessori method of infant education:

To create the environment conducive to the unfolding of the young human flower in all its beauty the teacher must have *vision* – vision which should extend beyond schemes of work and visible results, and be a conception of *spirit* ... The child's need to be *doing* is of the greatest importance – as purposeful child activity is the very essence of education and growth. [italics in original]⁵⁸

In comparison, Adelaide Miethke seems to have completely internalised the impersonal and gender neutral language for reports as well as the dominant interpretation of the domestic ideology held by her male colleagues. The following extract from her 1934 report on the girls' central schools illustrates how much she located the education of girls in the wider social situation and used the traditional, formal report language:

The principal development in technical subjects has been the more uniform standard throughout the schools. Instead of one or two outstanding schools and others of mediocre or inferior attainment, the standard is higher and more even.

Commercial Work. – Much good practical work is being done, and quite apart from preparation for positions, general business knowledge of the greatest value to the ordinary housewife is being dealt with.⁵⁹

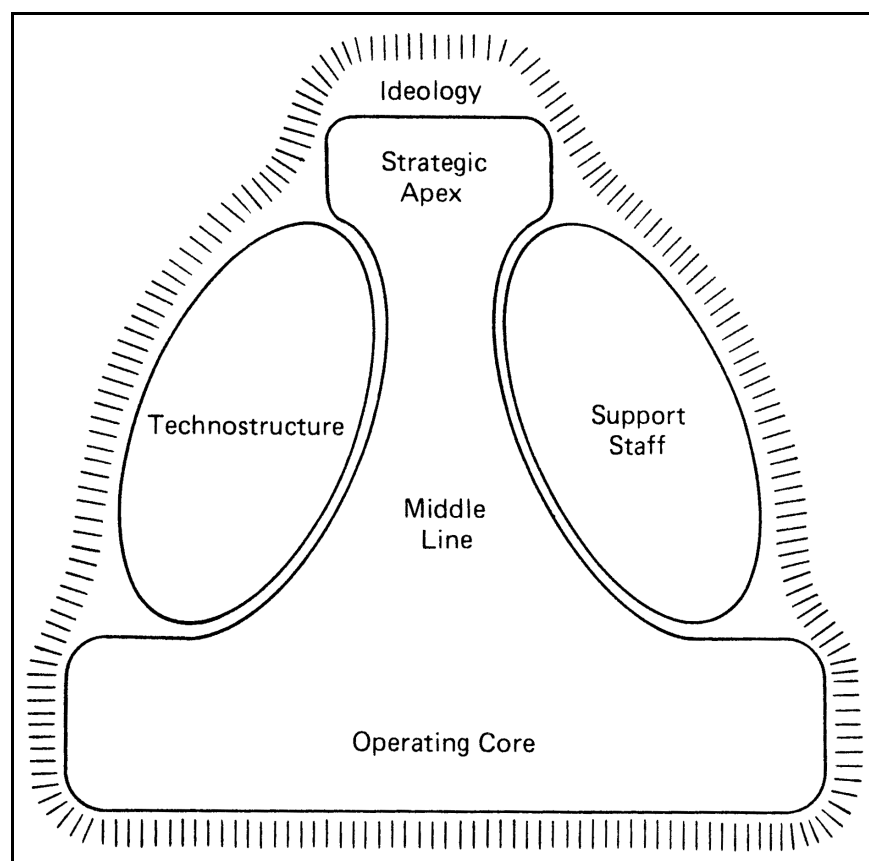
⁵⁸ *The Education Gazette*, 15 Mar. 1934, p. 100.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

4.3.2 Effect of Organisational Structure and Culture on the Work of Inspector Lydia Longmore and Dr Constance Davey, the Education Department Psychologist

A comparison of the work of Inspector Lydia Longmore and the Psychologist Dr Constance Davey, reveals the complex relationship between their achievements and their management positions within the Education Department. For this analysis I am drawing on Henry Mintzberg's concept of the professional bureaucracy⁶⁰ and Linda Smircich's definitions of organisational culture.⁶¹ According to Henry Mintzberg, there are six basic parts in formal organisations: the ideology, the strategic apex, the middle line, the operating core, the technostructure and the support staff, as clearly seen in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3
Six Basic Parts of the Organization



Source: Mintzberg, *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*, p. 99.

⁶⁰ Mintzberg, H., *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of Research*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1979.

⁶¹ Smircich, 'Organizations as shared meanings'.

The roles of each part of the organisation are best described in the relation to the South Australian Education Department. The Director General, the Superintendents of Primary, Secondary and Technical Education, together with inspectors, form the strategic apex to manage the system. School principals are the middle line between the strategic apex and the operating core of classroom teachers. Secretaries and laboratory assistants are examples of support staff. Specialists such as Drs Gertrude Halley and Constance Davey are included in the technostructure because they are outside the 'hierarchy of line authority.'⁶² Around 'every active organization' Henry Mintzberg circled *ideology* for which he noted 'an alternative popular term recently has been "culture".'⁶³ His definition of ideology with its emphasis on traditions and beliefs corresponds with Linda Smircich's definition of organisational culture: 'Organizations exist as systems of meaning which are shared to varying degrees'.⁶⁴

The size and importance of each of the parts is dependent upon the structural configuration of a particular organisation. Henry Mintzberg named five structural configurations; the simple structure, the machine bureaucracy, the professional bureaucracy, the divisionalised form and the adhocracy.⁶⁵ In a professional bureaucracy, represented diagrammatically in Figure 4, the key part of the organisation is the operating core.

For Henry Mintzberg, schools, universities and hospitals were the prime examples of professional organisations. He noted that:

The teacher works alone within the classroom, relatively hidden from colleagues and superiors, so that he has a broad discretionary power within the boundaries of the classroom.⁶⁶

⁶² Mintzberg, *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*, p. 98.

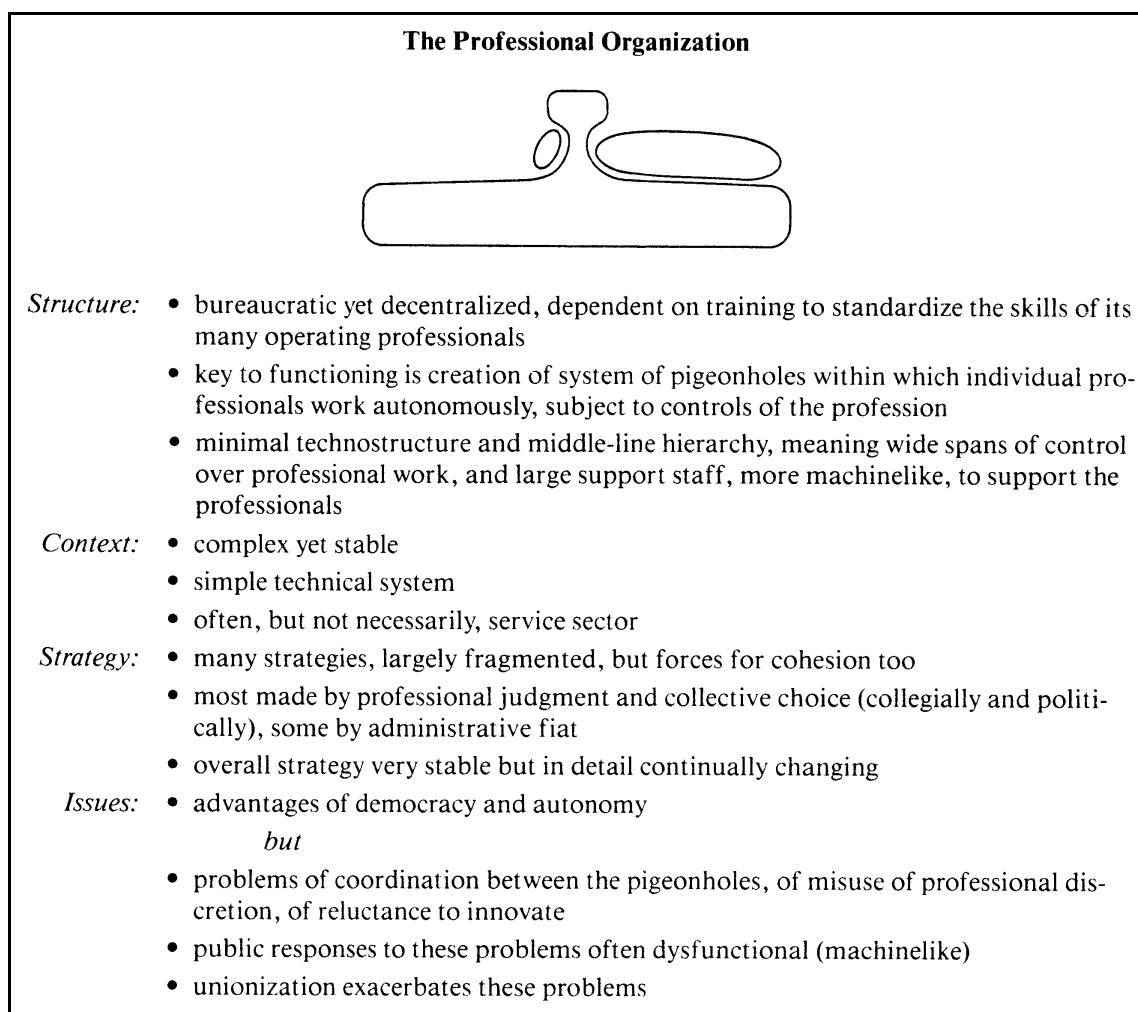
⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁶⁴ Smircich, 'Organizations as shared meanings', p. 525.

⁶⁵ Mintzberg, *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of Research*, p. 301.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 349.

FIGURE 4
The Professional Organization



Source: Mintzberg, *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*, p. 174.

According to the tenets of a professional bureaucracy, Inspector Lydia Longmore, at the strategic apex, had direct contact with the operating core of classroom teachers. In contrast, Dr Constance Davey, in the technostructure, had to work through the Director General of Education to ensure that her recommendations to teachers on the education of children with special needs were implemented.

Lydia Longmore had been an Infant Mistress since 1910 before she was appointed in 1917 first as Inspector responsible for all infant school children and then in 1920 as the Inspector

in charge of infant schools. When Lydia Longmore retired in 1934, there were 31 infant schools⁶⁷ with an average of six staff members per school.⁶⁸

Because Lydia Longmore was also the inspector responsible for the classification⁶⁹ of so many infant school teachers,⁷⁰ she had a critical mass of women teachers among whom a ‘distinctively alternative bureaucratic culture’⁷¹ could grow. This she nurtured through her active support and encouragement for the initiatives of individual infant teachers and infant mistresses, as Ann Milne recalled above. Lydia Longmore stressed the importance of specialised training for infant school teachers, encouraged the growth of the Infant Mistresses’ Club and, in the words of a former infant teacher, ‘[fought] for her girls as we all were to her.’⁷² As early as 1922,⁷³ the Education Department recognised the strong feminine sub-culture within the infant schools and the potential for conflict between Head Masters and Infant Mistresses. This is obliquely acknowledged in the Department’s regular reprinting of the circular, ‘Head Masters and Infant Mistresses’ with its significant closing paragraph:

For all purposes other than those stated below the Infant Mistress shall be regarded as having the same duties in her sphere as the Head Master of a school ...

There may be some matters concerning which it is difficult to lay down definite rules which will differentiate between the duties of the Head Master and the Infant Mistress. Such matters should be the subject of a conference between the Head Master and the Infant

⁶⁷ *The Education Gazette*, 15 Mar. 1934, p. 100.

⁶⁸ Laidlaw, V., ‘The development of the Infant School in the South Australian school system 1875–1925’, MEd thesis, University of Adelaide, 1985, pp. 88–9.

⁶⁹ The 1915 *Education Act* provided for the establishment of the ‘Public School Teachers Classification Board’ for the personal classification of teachers. The classification, based upon teaching and academic qualifications and teaching expertise, was in the form of skill marks. To be promoted teachers had to have the appropriate skills marks as well as years of service.

⁷⁰ Although not the infant teachers in smaller primary schools. Laidlaw, ‘The development of the Infant School in the South Australian school system 1875–1925’, p. 66.

⁷¹ Eisenstein, *Inside Agitators: Australian Femocrats and the State*, p. xxi.

⁷² State Records of South Australia: GRG 18/293, Taped interviews conducted by Colin Thiele and Ron Gibbs, Interview with Mrs Stapleton.

⁷³ See William McCoy’s memorandum to the Minister of Education in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.3.2.

Mistress, and if a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached the matters should be referred to the Director, and in the interim the Head Master's ruling must be observed. It is considered, however, that the exercise of tact and commonsense will, as a rule, obviate the need to refer to the Director.⁷⁴

Researchers and later educational administrators divide on ideological grounds over the contribution of infant schools and infant school teachers. For W. G. Richards, the separate administration of primary and infant schools was not a positive development:

The infant teachers often developed into a closely knit group separated physically and often mentally from the primary school whose head teacher was also their administrative head. The infant department was also inclined to be a seraglio of female teachers educating pupils of both sexes.⁷⁵

Valerie Laidlaw stresses that the institutional barriers between primary and infant schools limited the wider application of Lydia Longmore's educational objectives:

Lydia Longmore's influence was limited by the structural form of education in South Australia ... If she had been placed in charge of infant education within primary schools also, the pedagogy she encouraged could have had wider impact.⁷⁶

Barbara Denman saw the infant schools of this research period as an example of sex role stereotyping no longer appropriate in the late twentieth-century:

Infant schools have been the strongholds of an "empire" carved out by women for women, within a male-dominated state education system ... It was the result of women accepting a sex role stereotype and attempting to work, expand their horizons and realise their aspirations within this stereotype.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ E.D. Circular. No. 43. 4051/1952. This circular is reproduced in full in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.3.3.

⁷⁵ Richards, W. G., 'W.T. McCoy and his directorship of education in South Australia 1919–1929', MED thesis, University of Adelaide, 1973, p. 214.

⁷⁶ Laidlaw, 'The development of the Infant School in the South Australian school system 1875–1925', p. 66.

⁷⁷ Denman, B., 'A search for identity: History of infant teachers in the South Australian Education Department from the introduction of the position of infant mistress in 1917', *Pivot*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1976, pp. 3–9, p. 3.

In 1971, the Karmel Committee was quite definite that positions such as Inspector Lydia Longmore's should be abolished: "We are opposed to promotion positions reserved for women."⁷⁸ Positive discrimination would not be applied for women infant teachers seeking promotion after 1971.

As Lydia Longmore was the Inspector for Infant Schools, she did have automatic access to all these schools and their classroom teachers. In contrast, Dr Constance Davey was responsible for children with special needs spread throughout all the Education Department's schools and she could only find these children with the co-operation of school principals and classroom teachers. William McCoy's 'Circular to Teachers, No. 72' in 1924 outlined her responsibilities in the three separate areas of a consultative service for pupils with special needs, the administration of special schools and classes, and teacher training.⁷⁹ From the beginning, the Director General knew that Dr Davey could only carry out these duties with the support of school principals and teachers, a fact which he acknowledged in the closing paragraph of his circular:

The hearty co-operation of Inspectors, Head Masters, Head Mistresses, Infant Mistresses, and Teachers generally is cordially invited, and it is confidently anticipated that all teachers will not only render her willing assistance in coping with a difficult problem, but will also avail themselves to the fullest extent of her extensive knowledge and experience regarding subnormal, retarded and difficult children.⁸⁰

Dr Constance Davey tackled her duties with energy and enthusiasm. In the Minister of Education's 1925 report to Parliament, the Principal Medical Officer, Dr Gertrude Halley, noted that the Departmental Psychologist had examined 560 children, established Opportunity Classes for 'retarded children' in five schools and delivered ten lectures to student teachers on the 'Subnormal Child and his Training'.⁸¹ In addition, Dr Davey delivered four lectures to practising teachers on the education of the intellectually

⁷⁸ Karmel, *Education in South Australia: Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1969-1970*, p. 176.

⁷⁹ This Circular is reproduced in full in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.3.4.

⁸⁰ *The Education Gazette*, 5 Dec. 1924, p. 286.

⁸¹ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education, 1925*, pp. 25-8.

subnormal child, the nervous child, and the delinquent child.⁸² Despite the fact that Dr Davey suffered all her life from a childhood injury to her hip and spine she successfully carried the heavy workload. She was the only psychologist from 1924 until the appointment of Mary Smith to assist her in 1940.

Furthermore, her friends and colleagues knew that help from inspectors, school principals and classroom teachers was not always forthcoming. Recalling her own experiences of opening the first Opportunity Class in Mount Gambier, Ann Milne charitably ascribed the lack of co-operation to ignorance:

I found that when I got there, that this was much resented locally and taken as a reflection on the District standard of intelligence – so, of course it was not easy for me. Also, the Departmental people from the District Inspector down knew nothing of the recent developments in the Psychology branch.

Dr. Davey's far-seeing wisdom had laid down certain safeguards for her staff ... The situation, of course, would have been impossible otherwise ...

But, frankly, the Primary Staff was not interested ...⁸³

To know how many children with special needs were in a particular school and whether or not an Opportunity Class should be established in that school, Dr Davey needed the information to be sent to her from classroom teachers via school principals and inspectors.⁸⁴ Ann Milne's reminiscences make it very clear that this information was not always given.

Mary Smith vividly recalled the way in which Dr Constance Davey undertook her formidable tasks:

⁸² *The Education Gazette*, 15 July 1925, pp. 194–7; 14 Aug. 1925, pp. 222–3; 15 Sept. 1925, pp. 252–3.

⁸³ Milne, *Sketcher in an Educational Landscape*, pp. 22, 23.

⁸⁴ According to the tenets of Mintzberg's professional bureaucracy, power of the education organisation resides in the operating core of classroom teachers, and they could demonstrate their strength by refusing to co-operate with Dr Davey.

Dr. Davey was appointed Psychologist to the Education Department, that was the whole title, she was the only one. She had a little back corridor as her office, initially, in the Education Building and one typist/secretary. It was the most miserable set-up that you have ever seen, but she did have access to the Director of Education for that she wasn't always blessed, lots of people resented the fact that she didn't go through the next step and the next step and the next step ... Dr. Davey had to endure this kind of opposition but she was a woman who knew what she wanted and went after it.⁸⁵

In an organisational cultural analysis, Constance Davey used the informal organisational structure to achieve her aims. That is, the location of her office gave her easy physical contact with the Director General of Education. The literature acknowledges that there are both formal and informal management structures within large bureaucratic institutions⁸⁶ and that immediate physical access to the sources of power are as important as one's position, a point well made in Rosabeth Moss Kanter's classic study, *Men and Women of the Corporation*.⁸⁷ As the only psychologist for many years, Constance Davey knew that she had limited support within the Department but she was canny enough to use the advantages presented by her physical location. Furthermore, Alison Turtle noted the role of outside policy networks on the achievements of Dr Constance Davey:

Davey was clearly advantaged by the presence in her state of a solid base of women's groups, which provided support for her personally as well as for her work.⁸⁸

Like Dr Helen Mayo,⁸⁹ Dr Constance Davey understood and used Henry Mintzberg's formal and informal, external and internal influences upon an organisation to achieve her aims. It is possible that she persuaded William McCoy to publish the 1924 circular instructing inspectors, school principals and classroom teachers to co-operate with Dr Davey. Not all women teachers were as knowledgeable about management and

⁸⁵ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Smith, M., Miss Mary Smith, Records of Oral History project: Interviews with early South Australian women graduates and related people, Papers of the Australian Federation of University Women South Australia, Inc., Series no. 33, Adelaide, 1984.

⁸⁶ Robbins, S. P. & Barnwell, N., *Organisation Theory in Australia*, 2nd edn, Prentice Hall, New York, 1994.

⁸⁷ Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation*.

⁸⁸ Turtle, 'The first women psychologists in Australia', p. 252.

⁸⁹ See discussion of how Doctor Helen Mayo achieved Government funding for Mareeba Babies Home in Chapter 1.

administration as Dr Constance Davey. For example, the art teacher Jessamine Buxton never seemed to understand the bureaucratic workings of the Education Department. She wrote many letters to the Education Department complaining that she was not promoted. To be eligible for promotion, Jessamine Buxton had to have 75 skill marks. The Department's inspectors awarded skill marks. However, Jessamine Buxton's letters show no recognition of the links between skill marks and promotion.⁹⁰

4.4 Senior Women as 'Active Crusaders'

Between 1911 and 1961, the standard coda to an advertisement for senior appointments in the South Australian Education Department was 'carrying out such other duties as may be allotted by the Director of Education.'⁹¹ The injunction 'such other duties' was one which the senior women in the Education Department understood as expanding the educational opportunities available to students. They worked in individual schools, for special groups of children and teachers, and/or brought together all school children for special occasions. Broadening the physical education of girls were particular interests of the active sportswomen Veta Macghey and May Mills, who were also enthusiastic members of the South Australian Women's Hockey Association.⁹² In addition to their teaching and union activities, both were voluntary sports mistresses. During the 1920s, Veta Macghey at Norwood High School⁹³ and May Mills at Unley High School⁹⁴ introduced their students to hockey competitions. A former Norwood High School student recalled the competition for use of the hockey oval:

Great was the battle fought to gain the right to play hockey matches on the boys' oval!⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Speck, 'The negotiation of career: Women as artists and teachers in the South Australian School of Art 1888–1968'.

⁹¹ A complete example of such an advertisement is in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.4.

⁹² Tarnogursky, T., *South Australian Women in Sport*, Executor Trustee Australia Ltd for the Estate of Tanya Tarnogursky, Adelaide, 1992.

⁹³ Norwood High School. 75 in 85 Celebrations Committee. History Sub-committee, *We Came to Norwood High: The First 75 Years*, History Sub-committee of the 75 in 85 Celebrations Committee, Adelaide, 1985, p. 103.

⁹⁴ Campbell, *State High School Unley 1910–1985*, p. 56.

⁹⁵ Norwood High School. 75 in 85 Celebrations Committee. History Sub-committee, *We Came to Norwood High: The First 75 Years*, p. 103.

Later, when principal of Adelaide Girls' High School, Veta Macghey decided and succeeded in building a swimming pool on the small, inner city site. Doug Anders thus recalled her task:

“We need a swimming pool.” It may have been a royal plural, because everyone from high to low could see excellent reasons why a pool could not be; the fact you can now see for yourself.⁹⁶

May Mills, the voluntary sports mistress at Unley High School for twenty years,⁹⁷ was very clear about the educational value and hard work necessary to establish adequate sports facilities in State high schools:

Sport, we felt, was a very necessary part of secondary education. But for sport there was absolutely nothing. So at this big school, a neighbouring area of ground became available, and the parents of the local committee, together with the staff, really bought that area by piecemeal, literally collecting the material, and the youngsters worked hard, at sixpence a ticket to get that oval.⁹⁸

May Mills did her secondary education at the independent Methodist Ladies College where sport and its associated facilities were an integral part of the curriculum, and she worked tirelessly to achieve the same in Unley High School.

For primary school children in metropolitan areas, Inspector Lydia Longmore and Dr Gertrude Halley took up the cause of municipal playgrounds, a development which the then Director of Education, M. M. Maugham, had urged in the Minister's report to Parliament in 1915.⁹⁹ By 1918, Dr Halley was able to report significant developments:

With Inspector Lydia Longmore I have been appointed to represent the Education Department on the Playground Committee of the Town Planning Association ... This year

⁹⁶ Adelaide High Schools, *Jubilee Magazine*, Adelaide, 1958, p. 28.

⁹⁷ Campbell, *State High School Unley 1910–1985*, p. 79.

⁹⁸ The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Radio interview with May Mills [sound recording].

⁹⁹ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1915, p. 21.

we have devoted some time in trying to perfect the various forms of apparatus used, and in the selecting of the pieces most suitable for children of different ages. Obviously it needs care, as some forms are too strenuous for adolescent girls but suitable for boys ... Adelaide has at last a properly equipped children's playground in the South Park Lands, owing to the generosity of the Mayor ... The supervisor should be under the control of the Education Department ... It is essential that the supervisor should have organizing ability, and be able to keep discipline, though not interfering with the liberty of the children.¹⁰⁰

From the perspective of an historian of children's play, Margaret Peters has stressed that these municipal playgrounds were 'part of a pedagogic practice that was saturated with the notion of a normalised sequence of child development.'¹⁰¹ For this research, the involvement of Lydia Longmore and Gertrude Halley in municipal playgrounds is an example of senior women in the Education Department working within the accepted educational theories of the period to widen the opportunities for under-privileged children.

The voluntary work of Lydia Longmore in proving the need for the Education Department to establish a Correspondence School for children more than three miles from the nearest school has been referred to earlier in this chapter. This is an important example of the voluntary work of teachers, and single women in particular, effecting institutional change with the strong support of an outside group, the parents of potential students. Once the teachers started voluntary correspondence lessons and more rural parents requested the service, the South Australian Education Department had to formalise this voluntary work in the separate establishment and paid staffing of the Correspondence School in 1920. This institutional change is an example of Henry Mintzberg's stress on the role of internal and external influences upon an organisation.

Adelaide Miethke's response to the Director General's 'carrying out such other duties as may be allotted' was with large-scale projects for all school children. During World War I and World War II, she organised and managed the Children's Patriotic Fund and the Schools' Patriotic Fund, which in total raised £527,133.7.4 for the war effort.¹⁰² But

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1918, p. 31.

¹⁰¹ Peters, M. P., 'Children's culture and the state: South Australia 1890s–1930s', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 1992, p. 157. See also the Playground By-Law in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.5.

¹⁰² Miethke, A. L., *Six Years with the SPF: Story of the Schools Patriotic Fund of South Australia, Jan. 1940–Jan. 1946*, The Fund; K.M. Stevenson, Govt Printer, Adelaide, 1946, pp. 11, 21.

Adelaide Miethke never shirked from reminding teachers of their responsibilities to contribute to her voluntary work:

Will teachers kindly note that since the work of carrying on this fund is being undertaken in addition to ordinary duties, communications wrongly addressed increase the amount of work and cause delay.¹⁰³

The school children's pageants for which Adelaide Miethke was best known amongst older South Australians involved displays and mass movements reminiscent of the present day Olympic Games openings. The first of these pageants was the Children's Wonderland Fair in 1916 and raised £5,324.17.1. In 1919, Adelaide Miethke organised the Children's Demonstration in which 12,000 school students participated. She was also responsible for the children's demonstrations during vice-regal visits in 1920 and 1927 and the Girl Guides' farewell to their patron Lady Hore Ruthven in 1934.¹⁰⁴

The largest and most spectacular pageant which Adelaide Miethke conceived, designed and produced was the Pageant of Empire in 1936 to commemorate the centenary of white settlement in South Australia.¹⁰⁵ A notice in the *Education Gazette* informed teachers of the plans:

The Director of Education arranged that Miss Inspector A.L. Miethke should design a pageant ... and the general arrangements and control were placed in the hands of the Superintendent of Primary Education.

The Demonstration will take the form of a symbolic Pageant of Empire, depicting development from the Tudor period to the present time. The special characteristics of the various scenes will be brought out by constantly changing masses of colour, dance and movement, the whole comprising a gigantic and unique performance.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ *The Education Gazette*, 1917, p. 157.

¹⁰⁴ Wormwell, J. F., 'Adelaide Miethke: A lifetime contribution to public education in South Australia, 1905–1950', BEd thesis, South Australian College of Advanced Education, 1984.

¹⁰⁵ Full reports and pictures are in the *Adelaide Advertiser* of 29 and 30 November 1936.

¹⁰⁶ *The Education Gazette*, 15 June 1936, p. 163.

On 27 and 28 November 1936 at the Adelaide Oval, 14,000 school children presented the Pageant of Empire to a paying crowd of 29,000 parents, teachers and citizens.¹⁰⁷ The personal cost and individual opposition, which Adelaide Miethke may have experienced in producing the Pageant of Empire, are hinted at in her friend Phebe Watson's letter of congratulations:

I know what a colossal job it has been with days and nights of intense concentration and the organisation of a one woman job (let alone a one man job). Couldn't have been surpassed anywhere in the world I'm sure!¹⁰⁸

With her proven record of producing children's mass demonstrations, Adelaide Miethke was the natural choice to direct the Education Department's Pageant of Empire, but everyone knew that everything would be done her way.

In a managerial analysis, Adelaide Miethke was the only choice to conceive and direct the 1936 Pageant of Empire. Her voluntary work for the Education Department and the Girl Guides described above had proved that she was both 'confident and highly organised.'¹⁰⁹ Adelaide Miethke's entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* suggests that 'of German ancestry, she possibly needed to demonstrate her loyalty'¹¹⁰ – an undeserved slight when her personal papers are read.¹¹¹ The Pageant of Empire was a series of static and moving displays of the most important events in the history of the British Empire with a final tableau of 'Britannia gathers her people'.¹¹² More interesting is the notice in the *Education Gazette* when read in conjunction with Phebe Watson's letter of congratulations. It is clear that the male Superintendent of Primary Education was the figurehead manager

¹⁰⁷ *The Advertiser*, 28 Nov. 1936, p. 25.

¹⁰⁸ State Library of South Australia: PRG 107, Adelaide Laetitia Miethke, 'Papers of Adelaide Miethke' (summary).

¹⁰⁹ Healey (ed.), *S.A.'s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques*, p. 89.

¹¹⁰ Edgar & Jones, 'Miethke, Adelaide'.

¹¹¹ State Library of South Australia: PRG 107, Adelaide Laetitia Miethke, 'Papers of Adelaide Miethke' (summary). These papers may have been carefully selected for deposit in the Mortlock Library of South Australia, but they are ardently royalist in sentiment.

¹¹² *South Australian Centenary Celebrations, 1836–1936: Official Souvenir Programme, Special Carnival Period, December 18th–31st 1936*, State Centenary Executive Committee, Adelaide, 1936, p. [17].

of the Pageant while Adelaide Miethke was the real manager. Masculine control and power was very strong in the Education Department of 1936.

4.5 Education Department Women and the National Council of Women

The organisation outside the Education Department with which most of the senior Education Department women were involved between 1911 and 1961 was the South Australian Branch of the National Council of Women (NCW). Dr Gertrude Halley, Inspectors Lydia Longmore, Adelaide Miethke and Ruth Gibson as well as May Mills and Phebe Watson were active executive members of the South Australian Branch of NCW. The Council was one of the women's organisations which Norman MacKenzie¹¹³ examined in detail. He concluded that the 'South Australian Council has a great deal of influence in Adelaide.'¹¹⁴ This examination of the work of senior Education Department women in NCW investigates why the Council was an appropriate voluntary organisation for them. NCW was an organisation¹¹⁵ which offered them a venue and voice where their issues could be raised and solutions found.

NCW began at the international and not the local level. At Washington DC in 1888, women from 53 national organisations agreed to form the International Council of Women (ICW) with national branches in each country.¹¹⁶ During their terms as State presidents, Adelaide Miethke and Ruth Gibson both became the Australian presidents of the National Council of Women in 1936–1941 and 1952–1956 respectively. From 1953 to 1956 Ruth Gibson was also vice-president of the International Council of Women. A first attempt at a South Australian branch of NCW existed only between 1902 and 1906. In 1920, the then Lady Hackett convened a meeting to re-establish a South Australian Branch with the following aims:

¹¹³ Norman MacKenzie was the English political scientist whom the Social Science Research Council of Australia had invited in 1958 to 'research the role of women'.

¹¹⁴ MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*, pp. 296, 304.

¹¹⁵ As per Bourdieu's analysis of the basis of social capital discussed in Chapter 1.

¹¹⁶ Pitt, *The History of the National Council of Women in South Australia: 1902–1980*, p. 1.

OBJECTS

1. To promote the interests of women and to secure their proper recognition in the community.
2. To educate and uplift the outlook of the community on the status of women, the importance of the family, and nurture and upbringing of children.
3. To provide a bond of union between women's organisations, and a means of co-ordinated expression for the societies affiliated with the Council.
4. To represent the interests of women in general before Parliament, local governing bodies and the Courts.
5. To promote the moral and social welfare of the community.¹¹⁷

It is these objects which later Australian feminist historians have critiqued most strongly. In her NCW entry for *Australian Feminism*, Judith Smart stressed NCW's 'essentialist assumption of a common and universal female purpose' whilst still acknowledging that the Council could be considered part of 'what has been termed the "modernist project."¹¹⁸ For the single women of the Education Department, the essentialist stance of NCW, which stressed their association with all women, elided their differences from other women and married women in particular. The first object of the South Australian Branch of NCW and its stress on equal citizenship with men was particularly attractive to single women in the workforce who were disadvantaged by the family wage for men and the living wage for women. Within NCW single women could continue their efforts to achieve equal citizenship in the workforce through the broader aim of equal citizenship for all women.

Joy Damousi's analysis of NCW, within her essay on women's mobilisations 1914–1939, highlights the NCW emphasis on the special role of women:

The Council's politics centred around the belief that women could make a special contribution to public life.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Smart, J., 'National Council of Women', in *Australian Feminism: A Companion*, eds B. Caine et al., Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 463–4.

¹¹⁹ Damousi, 'Marching to different drums: Women's mobilisations, 1914–1939', p. 354.

The extent to which the South Australian Branch of NCW believed in women's 'special contribution to public life' is revealed in the statements of its 1920 and 1951 presidents. In her Presidential Address of 1920, the first president, Mrs T. R. Bowman, said, 'We are out to help women and inspire men.'¹²⁰ Again, in 1951, the president, Ruth Gibson (1901–1972), showed how little the views of the South Australian NCW had changed since 1920. In her first Presidential Address, Ruth Gibson thus explained the role of NCW:

The purpose of the Council is not only to help women and children, but practical co-operation with men. Women have the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. We must keep ourselves informed on matters of importance. It is by women themselves that progress can be achieved.¹²¹

Throughout this period, most South Australian women's organisations such as the League of Women Voters,¹²² the Housewives Association¹²³ and the Women's Christian Temperance Union,¹²⁴ held that women had a distinctive and superior moral contribution to make to public life. For example, Ellinor Walker (1893–1990), a driving force in the Women's Non-Party Political Association (renamed the League of Women Voters in 1939) from 1916 until it was disbanded in 1979, always emphasised co-operation between men and women. In an ABC radio interview in 1947, she spoke as the president of the Women for Canberra Movement in South Australia. Her rationale for women politicians was that co-operation between the sexes is necessary for the nation:

Our chief object is, of course, to secure the election of suitable women to the National Parliament, because it is so deeply felt that their full co-operation with men is essential to the building of a happy nation.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Quoted in Pitt, *The History of the National Council of Women in South Australia: 1902–1980*, p. 11.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹²² National Archives of Australia: AP1003/10, 'Women's sessions' (National & State) including 'Women in the News' [Scripts].

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ McCorkindale, I. (ed.), *Torchbearers: The Women's Christian Temperance Union of South Australia, 1886–1948*, Women's Christian Temperance Union of South Australia, Adelaide, 1949.

¹²⁵ National Archives of Australia: AP1003/10, 'Women's sessions' (National & State) including 'Women in the News' [Scripts].

The structure of NCW reveals that women share with men the ‘Australian talent for bureaucracy.’¹²⁶ Although it was and is an umbrella organisation of affiliated women’s groups, NCW immediately established its own Standing Committees which reported to the Council Executive who made the final decision on a particular issue which had usually been brought to the Council by one of the affiliated groups.

Therefore, NCW had the dominant characteristics of a bureaucracy: division of labour with a well-defined authority hierarchy, and qualified experts on its standing committees. Because NCW is an umbrella organisation, it is the number of institutions which affiliate with a peak body which is one test of success. In this respect NCW is comparable with the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and the Australian Chamber of Commerce. As the number of affiliated women’s organisations reveal, the halcyon years of the South Australian Branch of NCW were between 1920 and the 1960s, the period of this research. NCW began with 23 affiliated women’s organisations in 1920, had 42 affiliates and representatives of 30 other groups in 1936, rose to a high of 123 affiliates in 1950, but this had dropped to 46 in 2001.¹²⁷

It was as representatives of affiliated organisations that the Education Department women became involved with NCW. On the first Executive in 1920, the treasurer, Phebe Watson, is recorded as a representative of the Teachers’ Association, and the committee member, Dr Gertrude Halley, came from the League of Loyal Women.¹²⁸ Adelaide Miethke ‘came into the National Council of Women in 1934 as a delegate for the Girl Guides.’¹²⁹ She was the NCW State president from 1936 to 1940. After 10 years as NCW treasurer, Phebe Watson was its secretary from 1937 to 1942.¹³⁰

Because of their long-serving leadership roles on the NCW Executive and as Convenors of the Standing Committees, the Education Department women were in a position to

¹²⁶ Davies, *Australian Democracy*, p. 1.

¹²⁷ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, pp. 109, 110; Prest et al. (eds), *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History*, p. 373.

¹²⁸ Pitt, *The History of the National Council of Women in South Australia: 1902–1980*.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 56a.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

influence the direction of the South Australian Branch of NCW between 1920 and 1961.¹³¹ The power of NCW and the Education Department women within it is revealed in the establishment of the South Australian Film and Television Council in 1951. May Mills, who was a long serving Convenor of NCW's Standing Committee on Cinema and later a member of the new Council thus recounted the background and rationale to its establishment:

I recommended to the National Council of Women that the matter be put out and become a public body rather than just one upon which women would sit and discuss matters ... So we sponsored, from the National Council of Women, our South Australian Film and Television Council in November 1951.¹³²

May Mills, the teacher, was very much aware of the educational and social role of film and television. Through her membership of NCW, she was able to establish a more broadly based South Australian Film and Television Council which represented the interests of all groups involved with this media. This is one example of a single woman successfully working towards the establishment of a new institution.

When the Director of Education appointed Adelaide Miethke to design and direct the school children's Pageant of Empire for the State's centenary of white settlement in 1936, he was acknowledging her work both inside and outside the Education Department. At that time, Inspector Adelaide Miethke was, with Lady Bonython, one of the two women on the State Executive Centenary Committee, and president of the Women's Centenary Council of South Australia. No doubt, Adelaide Miethke held these positions because she was then the State president of NCW, whose executive members dominated the Women's Centenary Council.¹³³

South Australia's *Official Souvenir Programme* identified, without any explanatory details, a Congress, the pageant 'Heritage', and a Floral Festival as the major women's

¹³¹ This is in accord with Henry Mintzberg's theories of organisational power and leadership.

¹³² The University of Adelaide Library: Barr Smith Library: Radio interview with May Mills [sound recording].

¹³³ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, p. 110.

contributions to the centenary.¹³⁴ There is no acknowledgment of the organising role of the Women's Centenary Council (WCC) in these and many other centenary functions. From reports in the *Advertiser*, South Australians learned that the topic for Centenary Congress was Child Welfare. Furthermore, the Women's Centenary Council had coordinated the annual conferences of the National Council of Women, the Australian Federation of Women Voters and the Kindergarten Union. The Council also published *A Book of South Australia: Women in the First Hundred Years*, and the energetic Phebe Watson was one of the five editors.¹³⁵ The WCC pageant, 'Heritage', produced and devised by Heather Gell and Ellinor Walker, involved 500 performers. To fund these projects and the lasting memorials of the centenary, the WCC raised £6,250.¹³⁶

The memorials of the 1936 centenary, which the Women's Centenary Council finally supported, illustrate the negotiations between men and women which characterised this generation of women. For Adelaide women, £1,000 was given to the Adelaide City Council for the Pioneer Women's Garden of Remembrance at the rear of Government House. The Victorian sculptor Ola Cohn carved the simple classic figure of the pioneer woman and Elsie Cornish designed the original native garden. But the major centenary memorial which the Council and Adelaide Miethke and Phebe Watson in particular planned was the establishment of a Flying Nursing Sisters' Base at Port Augusta as 'a tribute to the early women settlers ... and be helpful to the natives from whom we had wrested their country.'¹³⁷ The Council sought advice from the Reverend John Flynn, founder of the Australian Aerial Medical Services. He convinced the Council subcommittee, including Adelaide Miethke and Phebe Watson, 'that the Flying Doctor should come first and the sisters could form an auxiliary development of the greater scheme.'¹³⁸ Therefore, as their major tribute to women, the 1936 Women's Centenary

¹³⁴ See extract in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.6.

¹³⁵ Brown et al. (eds), *A Book of South Australia: Women in the First Hundred Years*. The annotated title and contents pages in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC4.7 (Figures 6–10), underline the contribution of single women to this publication.

¹³⁶ Page (ed.), *Greater Than Their Knowing: A Glimpse of South Australian Women 1836–1986*, p. 124.

¹³⁷ Pioneer Women's Memorial Trust: Miethke, A., *The Pioneer Garden of Remembrance: Letter to Mrs Zelling*, Pioneer Women's Memorial Trust, Adelaide, 1961.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

Council gave £5,000 'to build the house and to put in the necessary transceivers and equipment'¹³⁹ for the Royal Flying Doctor Service Base in Alice Springs.

The decision of the 1936 Women's Centenary Council to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Alice Springs rather than their original project for a Flying Nursing Sisters' Base at Port Augusta can be read in a number of ways. In Adelaide Miethke's retrospective account in 1961, the Council had underestimated the difficulties of their original project. She and Phebe Watson agreed to defer to the specialist knowledge of the Reverend John Flynn who needed the funds from the Women's Centenary Council before he could establish the Royal Flying Doctor Service at Alice Springs, a location that had once been part of South Australia. Furthermore, he stressed that male doctors were needed ahead of female nurses. This may be read as professional women deferring to another more knowledgeable professional. The contrary position is that this decision is an example of women, even well-informed women, being co-opted into supporting masculine preferences and projects.

South Australia did acknowledge the work of these single women in their lifetimes. Lydia Longmore, Adelaide Miethke, Phebe Watson, Constance Davey, May Mills, Veta Macghey and Ruth Gibson were awarded imperial honours, the Order of British Empire and for Ruth Gibson also a Member of the British Empire. It is reasonable to assume that their voluntary executive roles in organisations such as the National Council of Women, the Women Teachers' Guild, the South Australian Public Teachers' Union and the Girl Guides raised their public profile outside their employing institution, the Education Department. In this they demonstrate Mark Lyons' point about membership of voluntary and not-for-profit organisations: that 'any material benefit gained by a member is proportionate to their use of the organisation'.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Pioneer Women's Memorial Trust: Dolling, C. E., Talk by Mrs C. E. Dolling, Chairman of the Pioneer Women's Memorial Trust, for the Country Women's Association Monthly Club Luncheon at C.W.A. Headquarters, Pioneer Women's Memorial Trust, Kent Town, SA, presented 18 Oct. 1965.

¹⁴⁰ Lyons, *Third Sector: The Contribution of Nonprofit and Cooperative Enterprise in Australia*, p. 5.

4.6 Conclusion

Some single women in the Education Department of South Australia between 1911 and 1961 successfully applied for the new positions which became available in the Education Department. When the employing institution itself establishes new structures such as infant and central schools which increase the work opportunities available to women, then single women in particular take advantage of them.¹⁴¹ The greatest institutional achievement of these women was their success in changing some of the structures of the Education Department. The voluntary work of Lydia Longmore and her colleagues forced the Department to establish a Correspondence School for students in remote areas. The voluntary work of Veta Macghey and May Mills, along with all the other teachers who voluntarily supervised school sports, finally saw Physical Education integrated into the curriculum of all Education Department schools.

The power of the employing institution to both open and close senior appointments to women is demonstrated in the establishment and post-1961 disestablishment of the separate infant schools and girls' technical high schools between 1920 and 1973. These changes, arising in part from a renewed emphasis on equality of opportunity, meant that fewer women were promoted to senior positions within the Education Department in the period immediately after the passing of the 1973 *Education Act*. The staffing of the Education Department in this period revealed that despite the fact that teaching was a feminised profession, there was a vertical and horizontal division of labour which promoted men over women and encouraged the dominant masculine and bureaucratic culture within the Department. However, the growth of a distinctive sub-culture among infant school teachers and headmistresses is an example of what women workers can achieve when they are a critical mass with active senior women in charge.

As they took advantage of the opportunities available to them in the Education Department, it is still necessary to acknowledge that the senior women discussed in this chapter stretched rather than broke through the institutional boundaries limiting women in the paid labour force. Lydia Longmore and her colleagues achieved their personal work objectives but they remained role models for single women, not for married women seeking full participation in the paid labour market. The public statements of Adelaide

¹⁴¹ Reiger, *The Disenchantment of the Home: Modernizing the Australian Family, 1880–1940*.

Miethke in particular are one example of the way in which these women paid lip-service to the dominant ideology of the role of women in society, irrespective of its irrelevance to their own lives.

Another group of single women teachers was the Sisters of St Joseph. They contributed to the development of Catholic primary education in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. Their work, achievements and institutional controls are examined in the following chapter.

5 ‘THE PARADOX OF RELIGIOUS OBEDIENCE’:¹ THE SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH AND THE GROWTH OF CATHOLIC PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 1911–1961

5.1 Introduction

In August 2002, the *Sunday Age* reporter congratulated the first woman to be appointed Director of Catholic Education in the archdiocese of Melbourne. Susan Pascoe, the new director, immediately acknowledged the work of her predecessors:

The Mercy nuns, and Charity nuns at St. Vincent’s (hospital) have run massive enterprises, and have run them competently for years.²

The reporter’s comment is but one example of the limited wider knowledge of the work, power and institutional activities of Catholic nuns in twentieth century Australia.

Therefore it is appropriate that this second chapter on the work of a group of single women teachers is a study of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart³ in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. To set the context, the chapter begins with the nineteenth century developments in South Australia, the Catholic Church’s arguments for the education of Catholic children in Catholic schools and the foundation of the Sisters of St Joseph in 1866. This is because the religious formation and pedagogic practice of the Sisters of St Joseph remained almost unchanged from the foundation of the Institute until the 1950s.⁴

¹ Northey, H., *Living the Truth: The Dominican Sisters in South Australia 1868–1958*, Flinders University of South Australia, Adelaide, 1999, p. 2.

² Cervini, E., ‘A first for Catholic women’, *The Sunday Age*, 11 Aug. 2002, p. 10.

³ Also known as the Brown Josephites from the colour of their habits.

⁴ Fogarty, Brother R., *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950*, 2 vols, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1959, p. 296.

There are two strands in the twentieth century examination of the work of the Sisters of St Joseph. The first locates Catholic primary education in South Australia within the wider context of Catholic education in Australia, and, in particular, the external institutions with which the nuns had to negotiate to achieve their objectives. Developments in other States, for example the 1908 *Registration of Teachers and Schools Act* in Victoria, affected the teacher education of the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia. The second strand concentrates upon institutional influences on the Sisters of St Joseph teaching in Catholic primary schools. This is done through a case study of the teaching career of one of the nuns, Sister Mel Moroney (1896–1991), interspersed with the accounts of old scholars and other nuns. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the work of the Sisters of St Joseph.

Mary MacKillop (now known as Blessed Mary MacKillop) and Father Julian Tenison Woods co-founded the Sisters of St Joseph with three members at Penola in the South-East of South Australia in 1866. This chapter concentrates upon the organisational structure and culture of the Sisters of St Joseph as it enabled them to fulfil their mission to provide elementary education for poor Catholic children. I shall argue that the pedagogic and religious formation of the nuns was a significant element in their successful work as primary school teachers and this formation was an integral part of the Josephite culture. However, these were not the only factors which contributed to the significance of the Sisters of St Joseph in Catholic primary education in South Australia during this period. The administrative structure of the Catholic Church, State Governments and the small, scattered population of South Australian Catholics also had their parts. These factors will be integrated into the evaluation of the work of the Sisters of St Joseph.

For a study of the influence of institutions on the work of single women there are advantages in comparing and contrasting the work of women teachers employed in the Education Department and the Josephite nuns teaching in parish primary schools. As shown in Chapter 4, women teachers dominated the staffing numbers of the Education Department but there were very few women in senior positions in the bureaucratic government department with its strong masculine culture. In contrast, the Sisters of St Joseph were members of a religious congregation established by women and where women were in charge at all levels. However, when the Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph is studied as an organisation, it must be acknowledged that their work, achievements and

responsibilities were relatively invisible under the patriarchal umbrella of the Catholic Church. The Sisters of St Joseph and the women teachers of the Education Department were alike in that they had to negotiate with powerful, bureaucratic and masculine organisations.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Catholic education system, that ‘for over a century [has] educated 20 per cent of Australian children’,⁵ is an integral part of the not-for-profit sector of the economy. This is another aspect of the work of teaching nuns, their contribution to the non-profit sector of the economy, which justifies their inclusion in any study of the work of single women. Perhaps for too long, the work of teaching nuns has been considered solely in terms of their religious vocation.⁶ Hilary Carey notes that in the period of this research Australian nuns had ‘a passport to the independent world of work and social welfare.’⁷

5.2 The Historical Context

For its contribution to the 1936 centenary of white settlement in South Australia, the Catholic Church organised the Australian Catholic Education Congress.⁸ No doubt the irony of holding this congress in the first Australian colony to withdraw government assistance to all religious institutions in 1851⁹ was not lost on those attending and reading about the congress. The 1851 *Education Act* is another example of South Australia foreshadowing the ‘Free, Secular and Compulsory’ *Education Acts* in all the Australian colonies between 1872 and 1895. This 1851 Act was not secular in the sense of the late nineteenth century Acts, but the teaching of denominational doctrines was forbidden.

⁵ Lyons, *Third Sector: The Contribution of Nonprofit and Cooperative Enterprise in Australia*, p. 100.

⁶ e.g. O’Donoghue, T. A., *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922–1965*, Peter Lang, New York, 2001, p. 7; Ware, ‘The effects of fertility, family organization, sex structure of the labour market, and technology on the position of women’.

⁷ Carey, H., *Believing in Australia: A Cultural History of Religions*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1996, p. 138.

⁸ Killian, A. (ed.), *The Australian Catholic Education Congress*, The Advocate Press, Melbourne, 1937.

⁹ Thiele, *Grains of Mustard Seed*, p. 1.

For Catholics, there is an indissoluble link between education and religion.¹⁰ With the development of State education systems in the nineteenth century, successive Popes, for example, Pius IX, Leo XIII and Pius XI, wrote encyclicals which reiterated the right of and necessity for Catholic children to be educated in Catholic schools.¹¹ In 1869 the Melbourne Synod ‘issued a decree on Catholic education comprising a set of statements stressing its necessity and obligations.’¹² At the 1936 Australian Education Congress in Adelaide, Dr Matthew Beovich, then Director of Catholic Education in Melbourne, but later Archbishop of Adelaide from 1939 until 1971, explicated the following extract from Pope Pius XI’s encyclical in his paper, ‘Religious education: Its place in the Catholic schools’:

But it is truly a Catholic school in which the whole teaching and organisation of the school, its teachers, syllabus, its text-books on all subjects must be under the direction and maternal supervision of the Church.¹³

Daily lessons in the Catholic faith were not sufficient. Teachers had to be practising Catholics whose lives would be an ever-present example to children. Religion had to be integrated with all the secular subjects, science and languages as well as history. A Josephite old scholar, Matthew Abraham, recalled the ritual integration of religious and secular learning in the early 1960s:

Before we wrote anything on any page of our exercise books, we had to first write the initials “J.M.J.” on the top left hand side of each page. This stood for Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and was designed to bless our scrawling.¹⁴

Once the Australian Catholic bishops decided to establish their own schools in the late nineteenth century, they recognised immediately that they needed religious persons to staff

¹⁰ e.g. Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950*; O’Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922–1965*.

¹¹ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950*.

¹² MacGinley, *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*, p. 162.

¹³ Beovich, M., ‘Religious education: Its place in the Catholic schools’, in *Australian Catholic Education Congress*, ed. A. Killian, The Advocate Press, Melbourne, 1937, pp. 317–22, p. 318.

¹⁴ Abraham, M., ‘Pangs of nostalgia over Kingswood country’, *Eastern Courier*, 2 Apr. 2003, p. 21.

the schools, and that the majority of the religious would be nuns, life-long single women. Even in colonies like Victoria, with a larger and wealthier Catholic population than South Australia, Catholics could not afford to build and equip the schools as well as pay the salaries for lay staff. As Ronald Fogarty noted in his comparison with the Catholic education system in the United States, the financial burden for Australian Catholics was greater, because the Australian bishops decided to concentrate on the establishment of 'primary parochial schools' rather than secondary schools and universities.¹⁵ In the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century few Australian students undertook secondary and tertiary education.¹⁶

A little-noted fact of this ecclesiastical decision was that the Australian bishops had to go cap-in-hand to the religious orders, and nuns in particular, to provide the staff for the parish schools. Ronald Fogarty¹⁷ and Mary Rosa MacGuinley¹⁸ have charted the arrival of religious orders in Australia and their involvement in education, but there are few acknowledgments of the power of the Superiors of these religious orders to accede to the bishops' requests for staff.¹⁹ Stephanie Burley is one historian to highlight the safeguards and conditions under which the Dominican nuns agreed to come to Adelaide.²⁰ Similarly, Mother Mary MacKillop withdrew all the Sisters of St Joseph from Queensland between 1877 and 1880 because the Bishop, James Quinn, refused to acknowledge that the sisters were responsible to her and not to him.²¹ To ask Mother Superiors for nuns to staff Catholic schools must have been difficult for many Australian bishops with their

¹⁵ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950*, p. 310.

¹⁶ Until World War II, Australian universities educated 0.2 per cent of the population. Davison et al. (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, p. 657.

¹⁷ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950*.

¹⁸ MacGuinley, *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*.

¹⁹ McLay, A., 'The feminisation of structures in religious orders', in *The Force of the Feminine: Women, Men and the Church*, ed. M. A. Franklin, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1986, pp. 149–63.

²⁰ Burley, S., 'The silent Sisterhood(s): Catholic nuns, their public work and influence for social change in Australia, in particular South Australia 1880–1930', in *Citizenship, Women and Social Justice: International Historical Perspectives*, eds J. Damousi & K. Ellinghaus, Dept of History, University of Melbourne and Australian Network for Research in Women's History, Parkville, Vic., 1999, pp. 275–89, p. 279.

²¹ Foale, M. T., RSJ, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*, St Joseph's Generalate, Sydney, 1989, pp. 133–6.

preference for ‘autocratic episcopal control’.²² But then again, the bishops could and did use the religious arguments of duty and missionary activity.²³

The South Australian context is important because it was the State where the Catholic population differed significantly from the Australian norm. While the percentage of Catholics in Australia grew from 22.46% in 1911 to 24.93% in 1961,²⁴ the percentage change in South Australia during the same period was from 14.1% to 18.9%.²⁵ In accordance with their voluntarist principles and their belief in the separation of Church and State, South Australian legislators, ‘the pious dissenters’, had abolished State aid to all religious institutions in the *Education Act 1851*. This Act impacted heavily on the small and relatively poor Catholic population, of whom their Bishop Francis Murphy had written in 1847: ‘There are exactly twelve Catholics who are middle class merchants; all the rest are labourers.’²⁶ While Bishop Geoghegan in his Pastoral Letter of 1860 urged South Australian Catholics to establish their own schools, there was not enough money to pay adequate salaries to lay teachers. Indeed, the poverty of Catholics in South Australia was such that the immigrant priests, nuns and brothers coming to the missionary field of Australia, and all of whom worked only for their keep, tended to bypass the State.²⁷ Until 1866 and the establishment of the Sisters of St Joseph at Penola in the South-East, there were no nuns in South Australia.

One of the few priests who attempted to fulfil Bishop Geoghegan’s injunction to establish Catholic schools was Father Tenison Woods, parish priest at Penola between 1857 and 1867. There he met the governess and school teacher, Mary MacKillop. Both envisaged establishing a ‘new Catholic religious order ... to provide Catholic education for the children of poor families, especially those living in country districts, and to care for

²² O’Farrell, P., *The Catholic Church and Community: An Australian History*, 3rd rev. edn, University of New South Wales Press, Kensington, NSW, 1992, p. 174.

²³ MacGinley, *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*.

²⁴ Carey, *Believing in Australia: A Cultural History of Religions*, pp. 199, 204.

²⁵ Hilliard, D. & Hunt, A. D., ‘Religion’, in *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History*, ed. E. Richards, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, pp. 194–234, p. 230.

²⁶ Quoted in Foale, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*, p. 2.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

orphans and other destitute persons for whom no other provision was being made.’²⁸ They co-founded their institute, the Sisters of St Joseph, with three members at Penola on 19 March 1866. In this respect, Mary MacKillop saw the need for an institution to educate poor Catholic children and she acted accordingly. Because Mary MacKillop believed strongly in the importance of Catholic education, she did not have the personal career ambitions which Kerreen Reiger has suggested was the impetus for some women to enter the labour force.²⁹

In the Catholic response to the 1851 *Education Act*, Bishop Shiel appointed Father Julian Tenison Woods as the first Director of Catholic Education in South Australia in 1867 – yet another Australian first. Father Woods immediately announced that the Sisters of St Joseph would be the ‘backbone’ of the South Australian Catholic education system with certified teachers, school boards and a Council of Catholic Education.³⁰ Marie Foale has charted the significant growth of Catholic schools between 1866 and 1871:

In 1866 there were twenty-three [schools], all under lay management, while in May 1871 their number had grown to sixty-five, and more than half were being run by the Sisters of St. Joseph.³¹

To be an official organisation in the Catholic Church, the Sisters of St Joseph had to be recognised by the Pope. Therefore in March 1873 Mary MacKillop went to Rome to seek Papal approval for the new Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph through the ‘Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (which dealt with Australian Church affairs)’.³² However, Mary MacKillop had a difficult task. She was seeking official recognition of her Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph after the Bishop of Adelaide, Lawrence Sheil, had excommunicated her in September 1871, although he had lifted his excommunication in February 1872, just before his death in March 1872. Paul Gardiner³³ and Marie Foale³⁴

²⁸ Ibid., p. 1.

²⁹ Reiger, *The Disenchantment of the Home: Modernizing the Australian Family, 1880–1940*, p. 216.

³⁰ Foale, M. T., ‘Julian Edmund Tenison Woods: Director of Catholic Education’, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol. 66, no. 3, 1989, pp. 309–19, pp. 316–7.

³¹ Ibid., p. 317.

³² Gardiner, *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop: The Authorised Biography*, p. 126.

³³ Ibid.

have researched and written the full story of the ‘Adelaide Crisis,’ the religious issues, the people and power plays involved.

In an organisational analysis, Mary MacKillop was seeking to confirm ‘the issues of central government, [and] Julian’s and her own Franciscan³⁵ concept of poverty’.³⁶ Central government means that nuns are responsible to their Provincial and through her to the Pope in Rome. This curtails the power and authority of local bishops over the work of nuns in their dioceses. The Roman Congregation approved central government:

Attention is drawn to the fact that while the Sisters should respect bishops and priests, their vow of obedience relates to their religious superior.³⁷

In her close analysis of the foundation of the Josephites, Marie Foale saw the nuns as ‘little more than pawns in an episcopal power game and Rome’s move to make them independent of the local bishops was an attempt to check those bishops’ power.’³⁸ However, as her submissions in Rome reveal, Mary MacKillop argued strongly for central government as the ‘single most important means of preserving unity among her sisters’.³⁹ An excellent administrator, Mary MacKillop knew that to succeed her institute had to be structured with central government and with the approval of the dominant Catholic organisation in the person of the Pope. This she achieved.

The practice of central government in the Sisters of St Joseph was and is as follows. A General Chapter is held every six years. The members of the Chapter are elected representatives from each of the provinces which during the period of this research were State-based. The Chapter elects the Mother Superior, now called Congregational Leader.⁴⁰

³⁴ Foale, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*.

³⁵ Poverty as practised by St Francis of Assisi.

³⁶ MacGinley, *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*, p. 171.

³⁷ Gardiner, *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop: The Authorised Biography*, p. 156.

³⁸ Foale, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*, p. 189.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

⁴⁰ Henderson, A., *Mary MacKillop’s Sisters: A Life Unveiled*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 1997, p. 196.

Between 1910 and 1961, Mother Superiors served two terms of six years.⁴¹ State Provincials were elected from State chapters and generally they served two terms of three years. The absolute authority of the Mother Superior and below her the State Provincials over the work and location of the nuns is one example of how often women, in their own organisations, adopted or adapted the dominant masculine institutional practices of centralisation and hierarchy. Joan Acker has named this ‘a gendered logic of organization’ which face all ‘women’s and feminist organizations’.⁴² For the Sisters of St Joseph, they had the example and strong encouragement of the Catholic Church with its centuries of hierarchy and bureaucracy.

In the long tradition of religious houses electing their superiors, the Mother Superior, the State Provincials and the governing Chapter members of the Josephites were elected, not appointed like the Director General of Education, School Inspectors and Heads of primary and secondary schools. This participatory democracy stands in stark contrast when promotion according to seniority was the norm in secular institutions. With an insider’s knowledge, the Sister of Mercy, Anne McLay, stressed that, particularly in the period 1911 to 1962, democracy ended with the election⁴³ and the convent hierarchy was as concerned with control as was a State Director of Education.

In relation to Mary MacKillop’s second request for the Sisters of St Joseph to live a life of poverty, the Roman Congregation noted that the ideals of central government and poverty are ‘mutually exclusive’.⁴⁴ To be an approved religious congregation, the Sisters of St Joseph had to own some property or control some money. The institutional Catholic Church with its centuries of experience knew that a large congregation of nuns could not exist without some property or control of some funds. Therefore, the Church shaped the structure of the order of the Sisters of St Joseph and their future work. The Sisters of St

⁴¹ Burford, K. E., RSJ, *Unfurrowed Field: A Josephite Story, NSW 1872–1972*, St Joseph’s Convent, Sydney, 1991, pp. 279–80. The exceptions were the two Superiors who died in office and an extension for Mother Cyril Elkis during World War II when the General Chapter was postponed.

⁴² Acker, ‘Feminist goals and organizing processes’, pp. 138, 139.

⁴³ McLay, ‘The feminisation of structures in religious orders’, p. 152.

⁴⁴ Foale, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*, p. 130.

Joseph approved their rewritten Constitution in accord with the Congregation's recommendations at the first General Chapter in Adelaide in 1875.

In religious terms, the 'Adelaide Crisis' and the 1875 Constitution of the Sisters of St Joseph are examples of the 'paradox of religious obedience.'⁴⁵ The letters of Mary MacKillop reveal that she believed that in doing God's will, her excommunication was one of the trials she had to undergo.⁴⁶ But it is also possible to read Mary MacKillop's actions as those of a woman circumventing the patriarchal Australian hierarchy to achieve her objectives, an institution of religious women responsible to their Superior. Because she believed so strongly in the central government of her Institute, Mary MacKillop agreed to abandon the practice of Franciscan poverty.⁴⁷ To achieve her educational objectives, Mary MacKillop had to have an efficient organisation with funds to support it. However, as the twentieth century history of the Sisters of St Joseph will reveal, the Franciscan concept of poverty was one of the strongest elements in the Josephite culture and it was a source of strength to the teaching nuns working in difficult conditions.

Mary MacKillop and Father Tenison Woods founded the Sisters of St Joseph to educate poor Catholic children, especially those living in country areas, where contact with priests and attendance at Mass was limited. Their success in this aim was immediately apparent to the Dominican Mother Mary Rose Columba who had arrived in Adelaide in 1883:

The Sisters of St. Joseph have all the poor Schools, the Sisters of Mercy a Middle School, and the Dominican Second Order the young ladies School. The Sisters of St. Joseph are of native growth ... They do much good here and 'up country' where they go in twos and threes, and keep up religion where there is no priest.⁴⁸

These comments of Mother Mary Rose Columba stress the two educational responsibilities of nuns and the Sisters of St Joseph in particular – the religious and secular education of their students. Mary MacKillop herself was a qualified and experienced teacher who had

⁴⁵ Northey, *Living the Truth: The Dominican Sisters in South Australia 1868–1958*, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Gardiner, *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop: The Authorised Biography*.

⁴⁷ This caused a breakdown in her relationship with Father Julian Tenison Woods which was never healed.

⁴⁸ Brownlow, W. R., *Memoir of Mother Mary Rose Columba Adams O.P.*, Burns & Oates, London, 1895, p. 236.

passed the examination to teach at a denominational school in Portland, Victoria in 1863.⁴⁹ Aware that many of the prospective Josephites would be young, with a limited education, and have to teach in small country schools with only one or two other nuns for support and guidance,⁵⁰ Mary MacKillop prepared a detailed elementary curriculum for primary school children in 1868.⁵¹ This was a visionary development in South Australia where even part-time compulsory attendance at elementary school was not required until the passing of the 1875 *Education Act*.⁵²

The original syllabus and time-table of Mary MacKillop (reproduced in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC5.1) stressed the 3 Rs of reading, writing and arithmetic within the religious atmosphere described earlier by Matthew Abraham. In his authoritative study of Catholic education in Australia, Ronald Fogarty accentuated the strengths of this curriculum for the nineteenth century and its weaknesses for the twentieth century:

Judged by modern standards, the first Sisters of St. Joseph were not exceptionally well versed in theory of pedagogy; in the practice of it, however, their own experience and natural talent combined to make them a competent body of teachers ...

Little was left to chance or individual taste. Uniformity of method and organization of class work was enjoined in the *Directory*, wherein were outlined all the practices to be followed. In it theory was eschewed and the emphasis was entirely on the practical ...

This type of organization, simple but over-centralized when judged by present-day standards, was well suited to the needs of the times and a distinct advance on contemporary practice.⁵³

A rigid primary school syllabus without major changes over long periods was not unique to the Sisters of St Joseph. In her history of State schooling in South Australia, Pavla Miller noted that the 1945 primary school course replaced ‘the old, solidly bound book of

⁴⁹ Gardiner, *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop: The Authorised Biography*, p. 48.

⁵⁰ This was one of the valid criticisms levelled at the Sisters of St Joseph in the 1860s and 1870s.

⁵¹ See the Appendix to this chapter, section AC5.1.

⁵² *Education Act 1875 (S.A.)*.

⁵³ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950*, pp. 293, 294.

prescribed course content ... which had been in existence virtually without alteration for over twenty years.’⁵⁴ Until the establishment of St Joseph’s Training School in North Sydney in 1880, novice nuns worked as pupil teachers alongside the Josephite nuns who were experienced teachers. This pupil teacher training system was also the only one available to prospective teachers in the South Australian Education Department until the establishment of Adelaide Teachers College in 1876.

5.3 Catholic Primary Education in Australia and South Australia, 1911–1961

In the history of Catholicism in Australia, the period 1911–1961 falls between the death of Mary MacKillop in 1909 and the start of the Second Vatican Council in 1962. 1911 to 1945 was a period of gradual consolidation in the Australian Catholic education system. But post-World War II migration strained the system to breaking point. Lay Catholics, with the support of the Archbishop, Eris O’Brien of Canberra-Goulburn, made the most dramatic statement, when they closed for one week the Catholic schools in Goulburn, New South Wales, in July 1962 and marched 2,000 students for enrolment in the State schools.⁵⁵

The extent to which Catholic primary education in South Australia mirrored, on a smaller scale, developments in the State primary education system is outlined in Table 20 below. In both systems, there was a comparable growth in the number of students and schools between 1911 and 1933. The decline in the 1947 student numbers was caused by the lower birth rate during the Great Depression and World War II. The 1954 and 1961 statistics reveal the impact of post-war migrants, many of whom were Catholics from Malta and Italy. ‘Other schools’ and ‘other students’ refer to the for-profit and other denominational schools and their students.

The first important point about the South Australian Catholic education system between 1911 and 1961 is that it was not a system in the organisational theory sense. It cannot be compared with either the centralised State education systems of the period, or the Catholic

⁵⁴ Miller, *Long Division: State Schooling in South Australian Society*, p. 222.

⁵⁵ Campion, E., *Australian Catholics*, Viking, Melbourne, 1987, p. 173.

TABLE 20
The Context of Catholic Primary Education in South Australia,
1911–1961

Census Year	E.D. Primary Students	Catholic Primary Students	Other Primary Students	E.D. Primary Schools	Catholic Primary Schools	Other Primary Schools
1911	53,494	5,772	6,355	717	56	124
1921	76,702	6,910	4,387	961	61	70
1933	80,215	7,503	2,508	1,050	76	69
1947	64,476	6,621	2,423	681	67	33
1954	105,755	13,074	2,454	606	89	28
1961	138,650	16,750	2,801	603	103	27

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia, 1911–1961.*

education system which Father Julian Tenison Woods had implemented during his short tenure as Director of Catholic Education in South Australia, 1867–1871. Between 1911 and 1961, while the parish priest was responsible for the building and funding of a parish primary school, it was the bishop who invited a religious order to staff the parish school and was also guarantor for bank loans.⁵⁶ These parochial schools were a diocesan responsibility, although financial responsibility remained with the parish.⁵⁷ In terms of current theories of educational administration, there was no Catholic education ‘system’ with centralised co-ordination for school and curriculum development, and no machinery to avoid unnecessary duplication of services.⁵⁸

In Catholic education duplication arises when there are, in the same geographic area, parish schools and the independent schools established and owned by religious orders of

⁵⁶ The Sisters of St Joseph were not the only nuns teaching in parish primary schools. In South Australia, the Sisters of Mercy, Dominican nuns and the Good Samaritan Sisters as well as other orders also staffed the parish primary schools.

⁵⁷ O’Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922–1965*, p. 27.

⁵⁸ Bourke, J. E., ‘Roman Catholic schools’, in *Influences in Australian Education*, ed. D. A. Jecks, Carroll’s, Perth, 1974, pp. 245–66, p. 261.

nuns, priests and brothers with both offering primary education. For example, in the eastern suburbs of Adelaide, Loreto Convent educated girls from Years R to 12 and boys from Years R to 3 while Rostrevor College taught boys from Years 4 to 12. These independent Catholic schools, with no financial support from parishes, existed alongside the Josephite parish schools in Norwood, Ellangowan, Hectorville, Dulwich and Tranmere.⁵⁹ The administrative structure of the Catholic Church and the independence of the religious orders caused this duplication. In the Catholic Church, dioceses are the major administrative unit with further subdivision into parishes. In 1887, South Australia was divided into two independent dioceses, that of Adelaide and Port Augusta (now known as the Port Pirie diocese).⁶⁰

The statistics in the *Australasian Catholic Directory* provide a more detailed picture of the contribution of the Sisters of St Joseph in the development of Catholic primary education in South Australia between 1911 and 1961.⁶¹ Table 21 below demonstrates that the Sisters of St Joseph were the largest order of teaching nuns in the State. This is another example of the difference between South Australia and the other Australian States. The research of Thomas O'Donoghue⁶² has shown that the Sisters of Mercy were the largest group of teaching nuns in Australia and they staffed most of the parish primary schools in the eastern States of Australia and in Western Australia.⁶³

⁵⁹ Mary MacKillop Centre: Josephite Foundations 1866–[present], Mary MacKillop Centre, Kensington, SA, 1999.

⁶⁰ The Archdiocese of Adelaide extends from Mount Gambier to the 25th degree of south latitude and all north of 25th latitude is the Port Pirie diocese.

⁶¹ Strict comparison of the statistics in the *Statistical Register of South Australia*, 1911–1961 and in the *Australasian Catholic Directory*, 1911–1961 is not possible. The statistics in the *Australasian Catholic Directory* do not separate out primary and secondary students in the schools conducted by the religious orders, or even in the parish primary schools, some of which, until 1961, offered two or three years of secondary education. This is yet another example of the way in which aggregated statistical results are structured by the questions asked and editors' interpretation of what is important. In the *Australasian Catholic Directory* the total number of students taught by the various religious orders is the important issue while the compilers of the *Statistical Register of South Australia* concentrated upon separating out primary and secondary students.

⁶² O'Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922–1965*, p. 24.

⁶³ While all the major orders of nuns and some religious brothers educated primary school children, most South Australian Catholic secondary students were taught in fee-paying schools operated independently by the religious orders, for example at the Dominican Convent Cabra, Loreto Convent, or Christian and Marist Brothers Colleges.

TABLE 21
Major Teaching Orders of Nuns and their Schools in South Australia,
1911–1961

Census Year	Order of Nuns	Number of Nuns	Number of Schools
1911	Sisters of St Joseph	157	25
	Sisters of Mercy	67	6
	Dominican Nuns	93	6
	Good Samaritan Nuns	14	2
1921	Sisters of St Joseph	184	29
	Sisters of Mercy	90	9
	Dominican Nuns	104	6
	Good Samaritan Nuns	16	3
1933	Sisters of St Joseph	244	40
	Sisters of Mercy	113	10
	Dominican Nuns	128	6
	Good Samaritan Nuns	19	3
1947	Sisters of St Joseph	237	43
	Sisters of Mercy	125	10
	Dominican Nuns	145	6
	Good Samaritan Nuns	31	4
1954	Sisters of St Joseph	242	45
	Sisters of Mercy	139	11
	Dominican Nuns	160	11
	Good Samaritan Nuns	28	4
1961	Sisters of St Joseph	257	54
	Sisters of Mercy	164	18
	Dominican Nuns	167	22
	Good Samaritan Nuns	37	6

Source: *Australasian Catholic Directory*, 1911–1961.

In South Australia, apart from a handful of schools, which offered two or three years of secondary education, the Sisters of St Joseph taught in the parish primary schools. The independence of the Sisters of St Joseph enabled the State Provincial to respond both to

changes in the Catholic population and to the growth of neighbouring schools established by other orders of nuns. For example, the Sisters of Mercy and the Dominican nuns both had schools in inner city Adelaide. As the number of poor Catholic students in the area decreased, the Sisters of St Joseph closed their two schools in the city of Adelaide. Their Pirie Street school ran from 1875 until 1936 and the Russell Street one between 1877 and 1880 and then from 1882 to 1965. As Mary MacKillop had done in the nineteenth century, so too in the twentieth century the Sisters of St Joseph handed over the school at Glenelg, which they had run from 1869, to the Dominican nuns in 1904.⁶⁴

Similarly, when the Catholic population decreased in other parts of South Australia, the Sisters of St Joseph closed their schools. This was most evident in the Port Pirie diocese where people gradually moved out of the marginal farming areas. Thus the Pekina school existed from 1878 to 1948 and the Quorn school from 1883 to 1958. Nevertheless, as a proportion of nuns available, the South Australian Provincial directed more of them to country areas where they were the majority of teachers in Catholic schools until 1961. Thus, while the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia increased from 157 in 1911 to 257 in 1961, the number of Josephite nuns in the diocese of Port Pirie was 32 in 1911 and 47 in 1961 where they had nine schools in 1911 and fifteen in 1961.⁶⁵ Table 22 below provides the trend data to support the above particular examples.

The 1936 Catholic Education Congress in Adelaide provided a rare insight into the economic contribution of all nuns to the growth and development of Australian Catholic education. In his comprehensive 1935 survey, Brother Urban Corrigan detailed the financial implications of the parish school system:

Not only does the parish build and maintain the school, but it builds a home for the nuns and brothers who teach their children, and provides them with a modest livelihood.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Mary MacKillop Centre: Josephite Foundations 1866–[present].

⁶⁵ *Australasian Catholic Directory*, 1911, 1961.

⁶⁶ Corrigan, U., 'The achievements of the Catholic people of Australia in the field of education', in *Australian Catholic Education Congress*, ed. A. Killian, The Advocate Press, Melbourne, 1937, pp. 269–98, p. 273.

TABLE 22
Contribution of the Sisters of St Joseph to the Development of Rural
Catholic Education in South Australia, 1911–1961

Census Year	Catholic Primary Schools in S.A.	Parish Primary Schools in S.A.	Josephite Primary Schools in S.A.	Josephite Primary Schools in Adelaide Archdiocese	Josephite Primary Schools in Port Pirie Diocese
1911	56	49	25	17	9
1921	61	54	29	18	11
1933	76	60	40	29	11
1947	67	67	43	30	13
1954	89	77	45	32	13
1961	103	95	52	37	15

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia, 1911–1961; Australasian Catholic Directory, 1911–1961.*⁶⁷

However, when some parishes had to choose between a house for the parish priest or a convent for Sisters of St Joseph, generally, the house was given to the parish priest. This occurred in the inner Adelaide suburb of Hectorville, between 1934 and 1956 when the convent was used as a presbytery for the parish priest.⁶⁸ Therefore, the nuns went back to the larger convents at Kensington, Woodville and Alberton and travelled out daily to the schools. One old scholar recalled their long days.

The Sisters had to come from Kensington Convent each day. For most of my time there they were driven daily to and from the school by Mr. Ireland in a large black saloon, a Buick, which had seats facing each other in the rear. Because of schedule involving other schools the Sisters did not leave till about 5 pm, so they had a long day.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Footnote 60 gives the location of the Adelaide and Port Pirie dioceses.

⁶⁸ Grudnoff, N. & Phillis, S., *A Catholic School Remembers – The Hectorville Story*, printed by Salisbury Education Centre, Salisbury, SA, 1985.

⁶⁹ Modystack, B., *Fifty Years: From Keswick to Plympton*, 1988, p. 17.

The Catholic Church also provided a direct administrative link between the parochial primary schools and the South Australian Education Department. From 1941,⁷⁰ there was a parish priest who was also Inspector of Schools, and the first Director of Catholic Education since Father Tenison Woods was appointed in 1940.⁷¹ Under the *Education Act 1915*, all Catholic schools had to be registered and the Catholic Inspector of Schools presented an annual report to the State Director General of Education. From 1948 until 1957, Father James Gleeson, later the Archbishop of Adelaide from 1971 to 1985, was an inspector and then Director of Catholic Education in South Australia. Fully sympathetic to the ‘impossible, even inhuman’ situation of the ‘teaching religious sisters and brothers,’ he also refers very tactfully to the role of the parish priest:

All was not ‘easy sailing’. On one mission from the Archbishop, I was told by a parish priest that certain school improvements would happen only ‘over his dead body’.⁷²

Another distinctive characteristic of Catholic parish primary schools was that a significant number of them were church schools, until there were sufficient funds to build either a separate school or a separate church; i.e. they were schools during the week and churches on Sundays. In his history of the Kingswood parish, David Hilliard noted student involvement in the preparation for Sunday Mass:

Every Friday afternoon the schoolroom was prepared for Sunday Mass, and the older boys had the heavy job of arranging the seats. The floor was swept, inkwells were removed from the school desks and emptied (to be refilled by the ‘ink monitors’ on Monday morning). Kneelers were brought from under the choir platform and the desk-tops that were attached to the backs of the few rows of church pews were lowered.⁷³

Church schools where the altar was merely curtained off from the classrooms certainly ensured that students were always aware of their religious education.

⁷⁰ MacGinley, *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*, p. 283.

⁷¹ Press, M. M., *Colour and Shadow: South Australian Catholics 1906–1962*, Archdiocese of Adelaide, Adelaide, 1991, p. 103.

⁷² Gleeson, J. W., ‘The Church in Adelaide during my years as a priest and bishop’, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol. 65, no. 3, 1988, pp. 292–302, p. 297.

⁷³ Hilliard, D., *Catholics in Kingswood: The Catholic Church in the Mitcham District 1869–1994*, Kingswood Catholic Parish Pastoral Council, Kingswood, SA, 1994.

Brother Corrigan also calculated, with a general comment, the average costs of the ‘modest livelihood’ given the teaching nuns and brothers:

For 1935, ... the average costs of the Brothers was £130 ; the nuns £42/6/-. Only people with a special vocation would do it; only people vowed to poverty could do it; only the Catholic Faith could sustain it.⁷⁴

Brother Corrigan’s figures on average costs are an Australian average. This was at a time when the minimum State Living Wage in South Australia was £85/8/- for men and £42/9/- for women.⁷⁵ In the 1933 Public School Teachers Case, the Industrial Court of South Australia awarded a minimum salary of £150 per annum for qualified male primary teachers and £110⁷⁶ per annum for qualified female primary teachers. The above reality stands in stark contrast to the Commonwealth Statistician’s decision for the 1947 Census:

In the matter of occupational status practically all religious and social welfare workers were classified in census tabulations as employee on wage or salary.⁷⁷

Once the Commonwealth Statistician did not separately identify unpaid workers in the employee occupational status data after the 1933 Census, nuns had to be recorded as employees on a wage or salary.

The contribution of the Sisters of St Joseph to Brother Corrigan’s lower average cost for nuns arose from their organisational structure. When Mary MacKillop and Father Tenison Woods founded the Sisters of St Joseph in 1866, they decided that there would be only ‘one class of membership’.⁷⁸ In the judgement of Janice Tranter, ‘[they] were at the touchstone of social change ... where growing egalitarianism favoured this concept.’⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Corrigan, ‘The achievements of the Catholic people of Australia in the field of education’, p. 278.

⁷⁵ *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 73.

⁷⁶ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 13, p. 114.

⁷⁷ *Australian Census*, 1947, p. 199.

⁷⁸ MacGinley, *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*, p. 324.

⁷⁹ Tranter, J., ‘The Irish dimension of an Australian religious sisterhood: The Sisters of St Joseph’, in *Religion and Identity*, vol. 5, ed. P. O’Sullivan, The Irish World Wide, Leicester University Press, Leicester, 1996, pp. 234–55, p. 239.

Older orders such as the Loreto Sisters, the Dominicans, and the Sisters of Mercy had the 'division of Choir and Lay Sisters' wherein the Choir Sisters did the teaching and the Lay Sisters the household tasks.⁸⁰ The practical effect of one class of membership was that the Sisters of St Joseph had both teaching and household responsibilities as Matthew Abraham recalled:

Back then it was called St. Joseph's Convent School, because the main school building was next door to the convent and the nuns in heavy brown habits were our only teachers. They kept chooks and grew their own vegetables. And I remember, vividly, an elderly nun, dressed in her full head to toe brown garments, chopping wood in the convent's back yard, sweat dripping from her face encased in white linen, rosary beads swinging from the leather belt around her waist.⁸¹

I too remember one of the nuns preparing lunch in the kitchen off the classroom.⁸² In financial terms, the Sisters of St Joseph were cheaper for parishes who did not have to support both Choir and Lay Sisters with their consequent division of labour. The one class of membership was a more efficient use of human resources when the nuns lived in small groups of three or four. The dual responsibilities of the Sisters of St Joseph in small communities may be compared with those of the mothers today in full-time paid work. For example, Sr Mel Moroney was at Pekina for the school years 1934 to the end of 1937. In this period, between three to five nuns had 41 students from Years 1 to 9, taught music to their own and other students in the district, and fed and housed the eleven boarding students living with them in the convent.⁸³ This was in days of no refrigeration or washing machines.

Another feature of the Josephite organisational culture was their tolerance of non-fee paying students, often at great cost to the nuns. At Kingswood, the weekly school fees were sixpence per week for infants and a shilling per week in the upper grades, which were

⁸⁰ MacGinley, *A Dynamic of Hope: Institutes of Women Religious in Australia*, p. 325: 'In the course of the 1950s, lay sisters were progressively absorbed in the various congregations into the one category of choir sisters. In most cases, this was not achieved without some initial misgiving on both sides in view of the adjustments and expectations involved.'

⁸¹ Abraham, 'Pangs of nostalgia over Kingswood country'.

⁸² I was a primary and secondary school student in Josephite schools between 1945 and 1956.

⁸³ *Australasian Catholic Directory*, 1934–37.

collected thus: ‘If anyone has school money would you bring it along now please.’⁸⁴ Students too were aware of the poverty of the Sisters of St Joseph, especially during the Depression years:

They must have endured severe hardships and often would have to eat very sparingly. I can recall that their well-kept and spotless brown habits carried frequent signs of careful repairs.⁸⁵

In the history of the Berri Catholic community, M. K. Johnson noted the alternatives to school fees:

School fees in those days were, quite simply, whatever you could afford. If cash was a bit hard to come by, then fruit, vegetables, eggs and other produce was always readily accepted as full payment.⁸⁶

When the first School Board was appointed at St Joseph’s, Hectorville, in 1965, members learnt that ‘over 40% were not paying fees.’⁸⁷

By 1961, when there were too few nuns for the rapidly increasing number of students in Catholic parish schools, the payment of even small school fees had become an economic necessity for the continued existence of the schools. Fees from music teaching⁸⁸ were often the only source of regular income in some Josephite convents.⁸⁹ Although the original 1867 Rule of the Sisters of St Joseph had prohibited the teaching of music, because of its connotations with social standing, the General Chapter of 1889 ‘decided that instrumental music could be taught by the sisters where it was considered necessary and advisable ... Music money being seen as a source of income’⁹⁰ for the order.

⁸⁴ Hilliard, *Catholics in Kingswood: The Catholic Church in the Mitcham District 1869–1994*.

⁸⁵ Modystack, *Fifty Years: From Keswick to Plympton*, p. 17.

⁸⁶ Johnson, M. K., *Our Lady of the River: Historical Recollections 1920–1986*, Berri Catholic Jubilee Committee, Berri, SA, 1986.

⁸⁷ Grudnoff & Phillis, *A Catholic School Remembers – The Hectorville Story*, p. 48.

⁸⁸ As I remember, music fees were about £2 per term in the late 1940s when I started music lessons.

⁸⁹ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950*, p. 298.

⁹⁰ Burford, *Unfurrowed Field: A Josephite Story, NSW 1872–1972*, p. 109.

Furthermore, the Sisters of St Joseph did not conduct separate schools for the poor and the students whose parents could pay full fees as did the Sisters of Mercy⁹¹ and the Dominican nuns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Mary MacKillop faced this problem in 1867 when the grandson of the Governor of South Australia, Sir Dominic Daly, attended her school at St Francis Xavier's Hall, but she held to her principles and refused to agree to special arrangements for the boy.⁹² In her recollections of school days at St Catherine of Sienna in North Adelaide, Mary Conroy, born in 1913, made it quite clear that this was the parish school, alongside the fee-paying St Dominic's Priory, both of which were conducted by the Dominican nuns:

Our school was started out, I think, as a parish school ...

What were the differences then between those two groups; the students at St. Dominic's and the ones at St. Catherine's?

Well they were sort of better off than what we were.⁹³

Students attending Josephite primary schools between 1911 and 1961 were aware that there were other Catholic schools where the fees were higher but within their own schools there was no distinction between students from richer and poorer families.

In February 1995, Eoin Cameron MP spoke in the House of Representatives about his primary education with the Sisters of St Joseph. This loving tribute, reprinted in full in the Appendix to this chapter (section AC5.2), paints a vivid picture of the role of the school in the local community. In this respect, parish schools, between 1911 and 1961, helped to create 'social capital' among the Catholic community.⁹⁴ To have a Catholic school in the small country town of Nangwarry,⁹⁵ the Catholics had to build the school. This is also an

⁹¹ Gale (ed.), *Women and Education at St Aloysius College Adelaide 1880–2000*.

⁹² Gardiner, *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop: The Authorised Biography*, p. 66.

⁹³ Adelaide City Council Archives: OH 53, Interview with Miss Mary (Molly) Conry, Resident [sound recording], pp. 29, 30.

⁹⁴ Clark, E. E. & Ramsay, W., 'Catholic schools, Catholic communities and social capital', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol. 66, no. 3, 1989, pp. 333–44.

⁹⁵ Closed in 2003.

example of Henry Mintzberg's external and internal influences upon an organisation. Parents as well as nuns and clergy were essential to the growth of Catholic education in Australia. Indeed, fund raising for the school was as much a part of a Catholic child's education during this period as the 3Rs: in the words of Sabine Willis, 'Women, Faith and Fetes'.⁹⁶ When the *Lotteries and Gaming Act 1966* was passed in South Australia, many Catholics were surprised to learn that their raffles and chocolate wheels had been technically illegal. Fund raising was also necessary when the Sisters of St Joseph accepted students who could not even pay the small fees.

In his study of Catholic education in Australia between 1922 and 1965, Thomas O'Donoghue questioned what was distinctive about 'Catholic primary schools [which] adopted the various syllabi prescribed for State schools, with their emphasis on the three-Rs.'⁹⁷ He identified their authoritarian framework, the emphasis on religious instruction, their promotion of separate gender roles and the strong Irish influence. As both a primary and secondary student in Josephite schools in the 1940s and 1950s, I have to agree that they were authoritarian and emphasised religious instruction. However, we were more likely to learn about the Eureka Stockade and the reasons for the 1949 coal miners strike in New South Wales than Irish history. Authoritarianism and separate gender roles were equally strong in the State schools when I started teaching in them in the 1960s. At least Catholic schools offered a public role for life-long single women, even if it was in the context of a religious vocation. Students knew well the ability of the nuns to manage their schools, especially when there was the occasional visit of an inspector from the State Education Department.

The South Australian Government, with its policy of first external and then internal examinations for students to move from primary to secondary education, structured the work of the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. This is an example of Henry Mintzberg's external influences upon the primary teaching work of the Sisters of St Joseph. Thomas O'Donoghue noted that, in all States, Catholic schools adopted the Education Department primary school syllabus. This was necessary in South

⁹⁶ Willis, S. (ed.), *Women, Faith and Fetes: Essays in the History of Women and the Church in Australia*, Dove Communications, Melbourne, 1977.

⁹⁷ O'Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922–1965*, p. 2.

Australia where first the Qualifying Certificate and then the Progress Certificate at the end of Year 7 dominated elementary education for much of the period. Under the 1915 *Education Act*,⁹⁸ all students had to pass the compulsory Qualifying Certificate at the end of Year 7, the final year of primary education. The ‘internally assessed’ Progress Certificate replaced the ‘externally-examined’ Qualifying Certificate in 1944.⁹⁹ Students could not progress to secondary education until they had passed the Qualifying/Progress Certificate. If they had not successfully completed the Year 7 Certificate, they could not leave school until they were 14 years of age. It was 1954 before the South Australian Education Department acknowledged the impact of the Progress Certificate on non-English speaking students:

Progress Allowances for Children of New Australians

There are children of New Australian parentage in Grade VII, who, through lack of knowledge of the English language, are unable to qualify for the Progress Certificate.

The Hon. the Minister of Education has approved that where such a child has shown exceptional ability and the power to cope with secondary work and will be 14 years of age on or before the day on which the secondary school opens he or she is to be admitted to a secondary school and is to receive the Progress Allowances on production of a certificate signed by the head of the primary school and endorsed by the District Inspector.¹⁰⁰

For the Sisters of St Joseph, teaching non-English speaking migrant children was as much part of their work as it was for the Education Department teachers. The history of St Joseph’s, Hectorville, records that Sr Pius, ‘the head teacher ... from 1927 to 1932, offered English classes to those [adults] who were able to avail themselves of the opportunity.’¹⁰¹ Sr Pius taught only Italian speaking migrants, but the post-war migration brought children from many non-English speaking countries, as Eoin Cameron recalled:

There was a total of 87 children at the school I attended, and virtually the only English speakers were the Cameron kids ... In fact, seventeen different languages were spoken at

⁹⁸ *Education Act 1915* (SA).

⁹⁹ Miller, *Long Division: State Schooling in South Australian Society*, p. 222.

¹⁰⁰ *The Education Gazette*, 15 Mar. 1954, p. 82.

¹⁰¹ Grudnoff & Phillis, *A Catholic School Remembers – The Hectorville Story*, p. 25.

the school. And not one of those kids started at the school with English as a first language.¹⁰²

Two nuns, one with class Years 1 to 3 and the other with class Years 4 to 7, taught these 87 children with their predominantly non-English speaking backgrounds. This was work from which even today's most experienced English-as-a-second-language teachers with specialist resources would recoil. Eoin Cameron attributed the achievements of many Nangwarry students to his teachers:

It is a credit to those women that so many of those children left the school with scholarships. They were absolutely brilliant teachers.¹⁰³

Former Josephite students, both Anglo-Celtic and those of non-English speaking background, have few memories of any difficulties facing non-English speaking students. Guiliana Frigo thus recounts her experiences:

When I first arrived in Australia, I attended St. Joseph's at Tranmere. There I sat in front of an Italian speaking girl who would translate Sister's questions and tell me what to say. As a result, my father, who could speak English, decided to send me to St. Joseph's at Norwood. No one there could speak Italian. Within six months, I was fluent in English even if sometimes it was too idiomatic. The English language problem which I remember was when I had to tell the class about my family. I proudly informed them that my father went to the pub. Sister made it very clear that you did not talk about such matters and anyway a pub was called an hotel.¹⁰⁴

When I was in Year 7 at St Joseph's, Norwood, four Maltese children arrived. The eldest, a 13-year-old girl, was seated at the back of the Year 6/7 class with an Adelaide Primer and students who had finished their work helped her with 'A for Apple'. Even at that age, I considered that the Grade 1 Primer was an unsuitable text for a 13-year-old girl. Irrespective of fluency in English, the Sisters of St Joseph tended to place these students in classes with students of the same chronological age.

¹⁰² Appendix to this chapter, section AC5.2.

¹⁰³ Appendix to this chapter, section AC5.2.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Guiliana Frigo, 2003.

In the post-World War II years, the Sisters of St Joseph faced the same problems as their Education Department colleagues – teaching non-English speaking students without appropriate materials or adequate teacher preparation. But large classes with students from multicultural backgrounds and a wide range of schools of different sizes were characteristic of all Australian systems of education – the State, the Catholic and the Independent, especially in the late 1940s and 1950s. The education of migrant children was embroiled in Commonwealth/State relations because migration was a Commonwealth responsibility and education a State responsibility. It was not until after the passing of the Commonwealth *Immigration (Education) Act* in 1970 that ‘special language classes for migrant children, training for teachers in English as a second language, the provision of language laboratories and educational materials’¹⁰⁵ were available in all Australian schools. What observers have noted about the classroom and curriculum management of the Sisters of St Joseph is that it was highly structured with the more advanced students helping the younger and/or less able students. The monitorial system was alive and well in Josephite schools in the first half of the twentieth century.

The State, with its responsibilities for the registration of schools and teachers, cannot be ignored in any account of the work of the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. Josephite primary schools were first registered under the conditions of the *Education Act 1875* and their registration continued after the passing of the *Education Act 1915*. In relation to the registration of qualified teachers, which did not happen in South Australia until after the passing of the *Education Act 1972*, it was Victorian and New South Wales legislation which affected the Sisters of St Joseph. In 1908, the Victorian Parliament passed the *Registration of Teachers and Schools Act*.¹⁰⁶ Because teacher training occurred during the Novitiate years, and the Novitiate for the whole of Australia was located in Sydney, the Sisters of St Joseph had to have their Training School in North Sydney ‘approved and registered’ for those nuns who would teach in Victoria. Kathleen Burford has identified the Australasia-wide implications of the Victorian legislation:

¹⁰⁵ Jordens, A.-M., *Communicating with Migrants: The Development of Language Teaching and of Translating and Interpreting Services in Australia 1945–75*, Administration, Compliance and Governability Program, Working Paper no. 12, ed. P. Hanley, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, 1991, p. 25.

¹⁰⁶ Burford, *Unfurrowed Field: A Josephite Story, NSW 1872–1972*, p. 95.

In effect, this meant that Josephite trainees destined for teaching in primary schools in other States of Australia and New Zealand all received the same training, qualification and registration.¹⁰⁷

Anne McLay has argued that the achievements of nuns have been ‘largely unsung by both civil and ecclesiastical society, for these religious women somehow do not really belong to the official institutions of “state” or “church”.’¹⁰⁸ I consider that these achievements have been unrecognised because they occurred within religious institutions established by women for life-long single women and children. As part of their religious formation the nuns were socialised by their vow of obedience to render their institutions almost invisible under the umbrella of a patriarchal Catholic Church. Australians and academic researchers do not appear to have recognised that, between 1911 and 1961, nuns established and developed institutions delivering health, education and welfare services comparable with those available from Government departments. Furthermore, this work was done without any Government funding and limited assistance from the institutional Catholic Church but great support from the parents of students.

At the National Eucharistic Congress held in Melbourne in 1934, Archbishop James Duhig gave a rare public and ecclesiastical acknowledgment of the contribution of women, and nuns in particular, to the growth of the Catholic Church in Australia:

Our hospitals and most of our other charitable institutions are carried on by women, while women form more than 80% of the teachers in our Catholic schools. Indeed were it not for the nuns our schools would be few and our Catholic educational system would be most seriously hampered. In the carrying on of parish activities women are always in the forefront of the workers – indeed they are often the only workers. As far as I am aware, no parish debt has ever yet been paid off without their assistance.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

¹⁰⁸ McLay, ‘The feminisation of structures in religious orders’, p. 150.

¹⁰⁹ Duhig, J., ‘Catholic action for women’, in *The National Eucharistic Congress*, eds R. J. M. Murphy & R. F. Moynihan, The Advocate Press, Melbourne, 1936, pp. 127–30.

5.4 Teaching in a Josephite Primary School Between 1911 and 1961

The Apostolate Record of Sr Mel Moroney (1896–1991), reproduced in the Appendix to this chapter (section AC5.3.2), offers a glimpse into the daily world of a Josephite nun between 1911 and 1961, as well as a linking thread to explain how the Sisters of St Joseph managed to staff so many parish schools in South Australia. On 27 August 1916, Mary Moroney left her home in County Clare, Ireland, to come to Adelaide to train as a nurse and to stay with her elderly aunts Mary (1855–1939) and Bridget Roche (1862–1948). In this respect, Mary was the fourth link ‘of family-based emigration and chain migration’¹¹⁰ between County Clare and South Australia. When Mary Moroney arrived in Adelaide, the Misses Roche were still working and living at the Parkside Lunatic Asylum (now the Glenside Hospital).¹¹¹ No doubt, the then unexpected length of World War I and the associated shortage of nursing staff is one explanation of why Mary and Bridget Roche were still working, although Mary was older than the traditional retirement age for women.

According to family tradition, Mary and Bridget Roche did not want their niece to live in a boarding house. They therefore arranged for Mary Moroney to live at The Providence, West Terrace, Adelaide, which Mary MacKillop and Father Tenison Woods had opened in 1868 to cater for, among others, ‘young females newly arrived in the colony, who have no home until they procure a situation’.¹¹² A few months’ nursing convinced Mary Moroney that this was not her life’s work and in March 1917 she entered the Sisters of St Joseph as a Postulant, did her Novitiate and was professed as Sr Mel Moroney in July 1919.¹¹³ As a single woman, Irish emigrant, Sr Mel was part of the Josephite tradition. Of the 127 women who joined the Sisters of St Joseph between 1866 and 1871, 81 were born in Ireland and immigrated to South Australia either alone or with their families.¹¹⁴ When Mary MacKillop visited Ireland in 1874, she recruited fifteen postulants who returned with

¹¹⁰ Richards, ‘The peopling of South Australia, 1836–1986’, p. 221.

¹¹¹ *South Australian Parliamentary Papers*.

¹¹² *Southern Cross*, 20 Feb. 1869.

¹¹³ See the Appendix to this chapter, sections AC5.3.1, AC5.3.2, AC5.3.3.

¹¹⁴ Foale, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*, pp. 202–6.

her to Australia.¹¹⁵ Between 1910 and 1925, Fr Edward O'Carroll visited Ireland three times and 'recruited candidates for the Sydney novitiate.'¹¹⁶

But Sr Mel Moroney was destined to play a more direct role in the recruitment of Irish women into the Sisters of St Joseph. At the Tenth General Chapter in 1925, the Sisters re-elected Mother Lawrence O'Brien as Superior-General and authorised her to open a Juniorate (in modern terms a secondary school) in Ireland. By this time, the Sisters of St Joseph recognised that they needed more nuns to fulfil their mission of educating poor Catholic children than could be drawn from the single women in the Australian Catholic population. Mother Lawrence O'Brien (1853–1945) who was born Veronica O'Brien in County Clare, Ireland, had emigrated with her parents to Gawler in South Australia and entered the Sisters of St Joseph in 1869 and was the elected Superior-General of the Sisters of St Joseph from 1918 to 1931.¹¹⁷ As Superior-General, Mother Lawrence O'Brien had Australia-wide responsibilities, far greater than those of a State Director of Education. In 1926, she went to Ireland and purchased Newmarket Manor, County Cork. Between 1927 and 1973, 178 Irish women went from Newmarket Convent to join the Sisters of St Joseph in Australia.¹¹⁸

In 1927, Sr Mel Moroney was one of the four nuns sent to open St Joseph's Convent, Newmarket.¹¹⁹ The anonymous obituary on Sr Mel Moroney's death in 1991 noted that 'she was chosen by Mother Laurence O'Brien as the junior member of the first community at Newmarket, Ireland. Mel could hold her own counsel and I doubt if anyone ever knew what she thought of that destination.'¹²⁰ As would be expected, her family of origin had their opinions. Her sisters and cousins in Ireland at the time believed that she had been sent to translate the broad Australian accents of the two Australian-born nuns in the group. Mother Lawrence had been transferred from Adelaide to Sydney in 1910 before Sr Mel

¹¹⁵ Gardiner, *An Extraordinary Australian: Mary MacKillop: The Authorised Biography*, p. 169.

¹¹⁶ Tranter, 'The Irish dimension of an Australian religious sisterhood: The Sisters of St Joseph', p. 248.

¹¹⁷ Foale, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*, p. 40.

¹¹⁸ Tranter, 'The Irish dimension of an Australian religious sisterhood: The Sisters of St Joseph', p. 254.

¹¹⁹ Burford, *Unfurrowed Field: A Josephite Story, NSW 1872–1972*, pp. 118, 231.

¹²⁰ Appendix to this chapter, section AC5.3.1.

Moroney entered the Sisters of St Joseph. It is quite possible that the Misses Roche knew Mother Lawrence well since she was of their age and they had Australian-born relatives in the Sisters of St Joseph. Furthermore, Sr Mel Moroney had immigrated to Australia when there was a fall in Irish emigration to Australia. A recent emigrant who had taught in the Adelaide suburbs of Kingswood and Hindmarsh and in the mid-north town of Peterborough, she was able to give first-hand reports of Josephite life in Australia.

Mother Lawrence O'Brien's decision to open a convent and directly recruit Irish women for the Sisters of St Joseph was part of long-established tradition of the Catholic Church in Australia.¹²¹ For the Irish, Australia was a missionary country and emigration from Ireland for adventure, economic and religious reasons, has been part of Irish history since Brendan the Navigator.¹²² In her retirement, Sr Mel Moroney spoke of her original desire to be a missionary in China, comparable with the oral histories of the Irish Josephite nuns recorded by Janice Tranter and Anne Henderson.¹²³ Furthermore, the Sisters of St Joseph did not require prospective members to bring a dowry,¹²⁴ an issue important enough to be mentioned by the Irish Josephite, Sr Eileen Lenihan: 'I felt indignant that my parents would have to pay for anybody to take me.'¹²⁵ Compared with their numbers in the Sisters of Mercy and the Dominicans, the Irish-born Sisters of St Joseph were only a minority group. Nevertheless, for this research, the important fact is that the continuous trickle of Irish recruits to the Sisters of St Joseph enabled the order to expand further into rural Australia, even if some students caught the Irish accent.

The institutional power of the State Provincials and Australian Mother Superior of the Sisters of St Joseph is most clearly seen in the appointment of nuns to particular schools. No matter what the preferences of the individual nuns, parish priests or bishops, the authority to determine the destination of a nun remained firmly in the hands of the Mother

¹²¹ Tranter, 'The Irish dimension of an Australian religious sisterhood: The Sisters of St Joseph'.

¹²² Sixth century Irish priest and explorer.

¹²³ Tranter, 'The Irish dimension of an Australian religious sisterhood: The Sisters of St Joseph'; Henderson, *Mary MacKillop's Sisters: A Life Unveiled*.

¹²⁴ '[Dowry] consists of a definite sum of money or its equivalent paid by a postulant to a religious community in which she wishes to make a religious profession.' *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1967, p. 1028.

¹²⁵ Henderson, *Mary MacKillop's Sisters: A Life Unveiled*, p. 67.

Provincial. As Sr Elizabeth Ward recalled, ‘Every single year the ritual was that you had to pack everything you owned because you might get a change.’¹²⁶ Apart from the two years that she spent in Newmarket, Ireland, the Apostolate Record of Sr Mel Moroney¹²⁷ is a fairly typical record for a healthy Josephite nun who was a primary school teacher. She taught full-time from 1919 until the end of 1973 in 18 Josephite schools in South Australia. Four of these schools, Peterborough, Pekina, Port Augusta and Renmark were in the northern South Australian diocese of Port Pirie. On average, she was transferred/given a new destination every three or four years. She retired to house duties when she was seventy-five years old. Working beyond the traditional retirement age was not uncommon for Sisters of St Joseph even in more recent times. For example, Sr Patricia White (1914–2003) taught full-time from 1936 until 1985.¹²⁸

In small communities and with the demanding teaching and household responsibilities described earlier, personal idiosyncrasies can be irritating. State Provincials had to consider such factors when they decided where individual nuns should be sent. Not all nuns had Sr Mel Moroney’s ‘perfectionist attitude’ and her commitment to Franciscan poverty such that she even darned her handkerchiefs. Although Mary MacKillop had to agree that the Sisters of St Joseph had to own property, the culture of living according to the ideals of Franciscan poverty remained very strong throughout the early twentieth century. Kathleen Burford used the following extract from the Josephite ‘diary letters’ to illustrate the issues of living in a small community:

The hardest deprivation I had to endure was not the shortage of food or the lack of privacy, but rather that of companionship; it only happened in a couple of places and only for a year or two, but this was the aspect of community life I felt so keenly. In all other places we were able to make our own fun and share the hardship together.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 91.

¹²⁷ See Appendix to this chapter, section AC5.3.2.

¹²⁸ Mead, C., ‘In footsteps of Mary MacKillop’, *The Advertiser*, 3 Jan. 2004, p. 68.

¹²⁹ Burford, *Unfurrowed Field: A Josephite Story, NSW 1872–1972*, p. 141.

The influence of the religious vow¹³⁰ of obedience can also be discerned in the teaching record of Sr Mel Moroney. She accepted the authority of the Provincial to transfer her between schools and the power of the Education Department to highlight the importance of the Qualifying/Progress Certificate at the end of primary education. Therefore, when she was the Principal of a school, she expected her students to acknowledge her authority. For thirty-six years of her fifty-three-year teaching career, Sr Mel Moroney taught Year 7 students in mixed classes with students in Years 5 to 7. Given the dominance of the Qualifying/Progress Certificate at the end of Year 7, and her own belief in the importance of successfully completing Year 7, it is to be expected that the Sisters of St Joseph acknowledged Sr Mel Moroney's teaching record:

A strict teacher she inculcated her own standards of excellence; and everywhere her past students spoke of her sense of justice. They liked her because they always knew where they stood.¹³¹

Strict teachers, while respected, are not universally beloved, as fellow secondary school students assured me.¹³² Some, like Mary Matthew, whom Sr Mel Moroney had taught at Kingswood in 1919, remembered her fondly and always kept in contact with her.¹³³ Her nieces and nephews were pleased that she had not taught them and sympathised with her great nieces when they were in her classes. Family did not mean special treatment.¹³⁴ However, Sr Mel Moroney was as strict with herself as she was with her students. She never wavered in her commitment to Franciscan poverty in her own life and she always encouraged students to do their best work.

¹³⁰ In the Catholic Church, priests, nuns and brothers take the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

¹³¹ Appendix to this chapter, section AC5.3.1.

¹³² In his history of Pekina, John Mannion included the apocryphal? story of 'Raymond Daly [who] went to live with his aunt and uncle to escape the dreaded Sister Mel.' Mannion, J., *No Place Like Pekina – A Story of Survival*, Pekina 125 Committee, Burra, SA, 1999, p. 91.

¹³³ State Library of South Australia: OH 1/32, Interview with Mary Margaret Matthew [sound recording].

¹³⁴ Personal knowledge: Sr Mel Moroney was my mother's sister.

5.5 Conclusion

This examination of the work of the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia between 1911 and 1961 has emphasised the institutional factors which structured their teaching in parish primary schools. As an institution, the centralised structure of the Sisters of St Joseph and their independence from local bishops enabled them to respond quickly and as they saw fit to the changing educational needs of Catholic primary school children. The teacher training first developed by Mary MacKillop prepared the Sisters of St Joseph for teaching in small rural schools and with a small community of nuns. Although the Sisters of St Joseph were required to own property, the Franciscan culture of poverty was very much part of their institutional culture and no doubt helped the nuns to survive the privations of the Great Depression and the inadequate school fees. It is equally important to acknowledge that until after 1961, the majority of Australian children did not complete twelve years of schooling. Therefore, the mission of the Sisters of St Joseph to teach primary school students suited the economic and social conditions in South Australia between 1911 and 1961.

This chapter demonstrated the ability of life-long single women to establish and govern large institutions. Mary MacKillop and her successors established an Australia-wide institution with responsibilities comparable with those of the South Australian Director of Education. This largely unrecognised achievement required patient negotiation with a range of institutions, the Catholic hierarchy, other religious orders of nuns, State Governments and their instrumentalities. The organisational structure of the Sisters of St Joseph contributed much to their success. The examination of a large group of single women working in a feminised profession highlighted two significant institutional factors. First, when women are the acknowledged leaders at all levels within an institution, they do not shrink from exercising their authority. Second, women understand the importance of organisational culture to achieving their work objectives. The Mother Superior and State Provincials of the Sisters of St Joseph used the pedagogic and religious formation during Novitiate years to inculcate in prospective nuns the ability and enthusiasm to achieve the Josephite mission of educating poor Australian Catholic children.

This examination has also identified the need for further analysis of the concept of 'work'. The Sisters of St Joseph did not work for an income or to further their careers. They taught in difficult conditions because they believed in the importance of Catholic education for

poor Catholic children. In this they illustrate the strength of Hilary Carey's statement: 'Until the recent past, religion had a central place in the lives of many, if not most, Australian women.'¹³⁵ Nevertheless, for the majority of single women in the labour force, work brought them income for some degree of independent living. Therefore, the following chapter will examine the significant decisions of the South Australian Industrial Court which determined the wages and working conditions of single women employees in the paid workforce.

¹³⁵ Carey, *Believing in Australia: A Cultural History of Religions*, p. 111.

6 SINGLE WOMEN AND THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL COURT

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines a third institution structuring the work of single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961: the South Australian Industrial Court, now called the Industrial Relations Court and Commission of South Australia. Chapter 4 highlighted how single women holding senior appointments in the South Australian Education Department used their ‘social capital’ to achieve their work objectives. Chapter 5 studied the work of single women within a woman’s organisation, the Institute of the Sisters of St Joseph, which was established by single women, for single women to educate poor Catholic primary school children. This chapter considers the extent to which difference/equality arguments disadvantaged single women in the South Australian Industrial Court and in the paid workforce.

Throughout the twentieth century, the State industrial court, not the Federal one, determined the work opportunities, wages and working conditions for the majority of Australian women in the paid workforce.¹ This was particularly so in South Australia where the Commonwealth departments were small and Commonwealth Awards covered few employees in private firms. Even as late as 1956, of the 43,936 South Australian Crown employees, only 17,912 were employed under Commonwealth Awards and even fewer were women, 546 out of a total of 8,324.² The chapter concentrates on two groups of women whose cases in the South Australian Industrial Court illustrate the ‘complex mingling of ideologies’³ which they had to negotiate. For women in working class occupations, the Printing Trades Case⁴ and the subsequent Women’s Living Wage Cases were the most significant. For professional women, the Public School Teachers Cases of

¹ Hunter, R., ‘Representing gender in legal analysis: A case/book study in labour law’, *Melbourne University Law Review*, vol. 18, no. 2, 1991, pp. 305–28, p. 307.

² State Records of South Australia: GRG 112/2/20, Papers of the 1956–57 living wage enquiry.

³ Bennett, ‘The construction of skill: Craft unions, women workers and the Conciliation and Arbitration Court’, p. 125.

⁴ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, pp. 215–304.

1925, 1933 and 1943⁵ were the important ones during the period 1911 to 1961. The analysis will concentrate on the Equal Pay submissions in the above cases to highlight the issues which affected the participation of single women in the paid workforce.

To locate the individual cases in their industrial, economic and social context, the chapter begins with an overview of Australian industrial relations between 1911 and 1961. The unique nature of these relations and the complex inter-relationships between Federal and State industrial courts and legislatures are highlighted. Australian feminists⁶ have stressed the importance of women's relationship with the State. The fact that State and Federal Governments appear in industrial courts as employers as well as community representatives highlights the fact that neither 'women' nor the 'state' are 'unitary [and] monolithic.'⁷ The Living Wage and the Public Teachers Cases are analysed within the context of the personal stories of single women who were most affected by the decisions of the South Australian Industrial Court.

6.2 Industrial Relations in Australia, 1911–1961

For overseas scholars,⁸ the distinctive feature of industrial relations in Australia is the legislated conciliation and arbitration role of the State to mediate the relations between employers and employees. In this period, and in particular from a South Australian perspective, the first and most important Act was the Commonwealth *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904*. Section 51, Part 35 of the Australian Constitution gave the Federal Parliament the power to legislate 'conciliation and arbitration for the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes extending beyond the limits of any one State.'⁹ This section of the Australian Constitution demonstrates the dual role of the State, with

⁵ Ibid., vols. 8, 12, 18.

⁶ e.g. Magarey, S. & Sheridan, S., 'Local, global, regional: Women's studies in Australia', *Feminist Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1, 2002, pp. 129–52, p. 140; Grimshaw, P. et al., *Creating a Nation*, Penguin, Ringwood, Vic., 1994, p. 304; Franzway et al., *Staking a Claim: Feminism, Bureaucracy and the State*.

⁷ Watson, S., 'Femocratic feminisms', in *Gender and Bureaucracy*, eds A. Witz & M. Savage, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1992, pp. 186–204, p. 186.

⁸ e.g. Wikander et al. (eds), *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, the United States, and Australia, 1880–1920*.

⁹ *Year Book, Australia*, p. 124.

parliament both enacting the relevant legislation and providing for the establishment of government industrial courts to implement the legislation. William Jethro Brown, the first president of the South Australian Industrial Court, stressed this dual role of the State in his 1920 paper:

The term “Industrial Law” may be used in the wide sense to include both the legislation which provides the machinery, and also the principles which such machinery from time to time formulates.¹⁰

South Australian legislation and its lawyer/politicians were in the forefront of the development of Australia’s unique system of industrial legislation. The origins of both the Commonwealth *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904* and the South Australian *Industrial Arbitration Act 1912* were in the Industrial Unions Bill which the South Australian Member of Parliament, George Cameron Kingston, presented to the colonial Parliament in 1890. This Bill was never enacted in South Australia.¹¹ The Attorney General, who presented the 1904 Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Bill to the Senate, was Sir Josiah Symon KC. He was one of South Australia’s leading lawyers, an enthusiastic advocate for Federation, and himself the father of three life-long single daughters. When he was unable to establish a women’s residential college for the University of Adelaide, Sir Josiah Symon provided the funds for the Women’s Union building, the Lady Symon Building, at the University of Adelaide, and ‘insisted that it be managed by university women.’¹²

Because Australia is a Federation, the relationships between State and Commonwealth legislation and instrumentalities, and interstate economic and social developments are complex and never ignored, especially in industrial relations. President William Jethro Brown (1868–1930), the first president of the South Australian Industrial Court, spelt out these complex relationships for women in the workforce in his 1918 Printing Trades Case judgement. In its 1907 Harvester Judgement, and the 1912 Mildura Fruitpicker’s

¹⁰ Brown, Mr President, ‘The judicial regulation of industrial conditions’, in *Australia: Economic and Political Studies*, ed. M. Atkinson, Macmillan & Co., Melbourne, 1920, pp. 194–232, p. 196.

¹¹ Mitchell, ‘State systems of conciliation and arbitration: The legal origins of the Australasian model’.

¹² Wright, D., ‘Symon, Sir Josiah Henry’, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 6, ed. B. Nairn, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1976, pp. 156–8, p. 157.

judgement, the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Court (now called the Australian Industrial Relations Commission) cemented into Australian industrial relations until 1969 the concepts of a family wage for the working man and a living wage for working women assumed to be without dependants.¹³ These are the judgements which Edna Ryan and Anne Conlon described as ‘Judge Higgins’ Albatross.’¹⁴ The family wage for men and living wage for women should also be considered in the wider context of the ‘classic rationalisation’¹⁵ of Australia’s system of industrial relations. In a 1915 article for the *Harvard Law Review*, Justice Higgins claimed the following strengths for industrial courts:

Reason is to displace force; the might of the State is to enforce peace between industrial combatants as well as between other combatants; and all in the interests of the public.¹⁶

Given the above *non sequitur* with reason replacing force, but the State enforcing peace, it is necessary to examine further the relationship between wages for women and ‘the interests of the public.’

In 1918 President Brown of the South Australian Industrial Court provided the clearest and most detailed exposition of this relationship. In his justification of the Living Wage for Women in accord with the Mildura Fruitpickers’ Judgement of Justice Higgins in 1912, Jethro Brown started with the eight factors which underlay the three principles which guided his judgment. On the assumption that Brown listed the factors in order of importance, he began with the rights of women ‘(a) to freedom in the choice of a career, and (b) to a fair wage’. Yet this right was immediately qualified in the following sentence when Jethro Brown said that ‘neither right can be justly interpreted without reference to the

¹³ Australian feminist historians have written extensively on this topic. For example, Ryan & Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work 1788–1974*; Scutt, J. A., ‘Inequality before the law: Gender, arbitration and wages’, in *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation*, eds K. Saunders & R. Evans, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Sydney, 1992, pp. 266–86; Heagney, *Are Women Taking Men’s Jobs?*; Heagney, *Arbitration at the Cross Roads*.

¹⁴ Ryan & Conlon, *Gentle Invaders: Australian Women at Work 1788–1974*, p. 86.

¹⁵ Creighton, B., ‘One hundred years of the conciliation and arbitration power: a province lost?’, *Melbourne University Law Review*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2000, pp. 839–65, p. 839.

¹⁶ Higgins, H. B., ‘A new province for law and order: Industrial peace through minimum wage and arbitration’, *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 29, 1915, pp. 13–39, p. 14.

good of the community'.¹⁷ Despite his strong first statement on the rights of women to careers and fair wages, President Brown was immediately foreshadowing that the perceived community good would guide his judgement.

Given the above qualification, it is to be expected that President Brown would cite as his second factor the traditional organisation of society wherein 'man is, or should be, the bread-winner,' [and] 'should be recognised by Industrial Courts as a ground for differentiation in wages between men and women.'¹⁸ This is the application of the domestic ideology, the role of women in Australian society, to industrial relations. Such a King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid approach seems anachronistic in a State which in 1884 had passed the *Married Women's Property Act*. The minor qualifications, which President Brown admitted, were the responsibilities of industrial courts to ensure fair wages for women and the right of parliament to legislate 'State endowment of motherhood'.¹⁹ In this separation of State responsibilities, Jethro Brown did not acknowledge the inconsistency between an industrial court awarding a family wage for men, and the parliament's responsibility for what is now known as parenting allowances and family allowances. 'Women activists' themselves accepted this separation of State responsibilities in the early twentieth century when they 'developed a platform of three interdependent planks, equal pay, motherhood endowment and child endowment'.²⁰ They fought for equal pay through the industrial courts and lobbied parliaments for parenting and family allowances.

President Brown's third factor that an Industrial Court deals 'with types or classes rather than individuals'²¹ struck directly at life-long single women workers with family and/or personal responsibilities. Indeed, he described these women as 'exceptional'²² and seems not to have considered their housing and retirement needs because they did not constitute a

¹⁷ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 40.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 40.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 41.

²⁰ Lake, M., '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*, no. 63, Nov. 1992, pp. 1–24, p. 4.

²¹ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 41.

²² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 39.

class.²³ As this chapter seeks to demonstrate, the South Australian Industrial Court only recognised two classes, female and male. ‘The comparative efficiency of women and men varies in different occupations’²⁴ is a bald statement of the fourth factor. The ensuing discussion acknowledged the invaluable work of women during World War I, their efficiency and tolerance of routine work, but noted their supposed physiological limitations and the dominant employer attitudes. However, President Brown’s conclusion is a damning indictment of women’s participation in the paid workforce with no acknowledgment of the educational, industrial and legal barriers (examined in earlier chapters) which they faced:

In the case of men, their occupation is their life’s vocation; in the case of women, their occupation (beyond the domestic sphere) is, in most cases, transitory.²⁵

At a time when single women dominated the female labour force, President Brown refused to consider them as a class because most of them would be life-cycle members of the labour force – another example of illogical arguments based on domestic ideology.

President Brown’s fifth and sixth factors placed working women and their wages in competition with both South Australia’s economic growth and all industries in the State:

I feel justified in assuming that every loyal citizen of South Australia will agree that the Industrial Court of this State should keep steadily in view the object of conserving the industries of this State ...

Closely allied with the question of the conservation of industry, is the question of how to regulate industry so as to secure the maximum production at the minimum costs of production.²⁶

²³ The relatively high percentage of life-long single women in the South Australian population between 1911 and 1961 was examined in Chapter 1.

²⁴ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 41.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 42.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 44.

Economic conditions have affected women employees as much as ideologies and institutional practices.²⁷ In South Australia, droughts preceded the 1890s and 1930s Depressions, further reducing work opportunities for all employees.²⁸ Furthermore, South Australia's industrial growth during this period was closely related to the production of consumer goods and services such as food and clothing, which were tied to agricultural production. The later and slower growth of light industry in South Australia compared with New South Wales and Victoria meant fewer paid work opportunities for women in this State.²⁹

In his exposition of these factors, Jethro Brown stressed the difference between a living wage and the margins for skill, a distinction which male-dominated unions used for their own advantage.³⁰ 1911 to 1961 was a time when paid employment was subject to fluctuating demand for labour and contested interpretations of the skills required.³¹ Feminist researchers, for example Raelene Frances,³² Laura Bennett,³³ and Belinda Probert,³⁴ have demonstrated how these distinctions have contributed to the gendered division of labour in Australia. With his identification of these factors, Jethro Brown placed on women workers more than on men a greater financial burden for the economic and industrial efficiency of South Australia. While the Australian Commonwealth, and the other Australian States generally, set the female minimum wage at 54% of the male minimum wage, in South Australia it was between 44% and 56% until 1951 when all the States adopted the Commonwealth minimum of 75%.³⁵

²⁷ Sinclair, 'Women at work in Melbourne and Adelaide since 1871'; Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia'; Hunter, 'Some factors which determine the distribution of the female work force'.

²⁸ Howell, 'Recent writing on the social and economic history of South Australia to 1936'.

²⁹ Hunter, 'The employment of women in Australia', p. 95.

³⁰ The margins for skill awarded to teachers is discussed later in this chapter.

³¹ Short, C., 'Equal pay – what happened?', *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1986, pp. 315–35.

³² Frances, R., 'Marginal matters: Gender, skill, unions and the Commonwealth Arbitration Court – a case study of the Australian Printing Industry, 1925–1937', *Labour History*, no. 61, Nov. 1991, pp. 17–29.

³³ Bennett, 'The construction of skill: Craft unions, women workers and the Conciliation and Arbitration Court'.

³⁴ Probert, B., 'Award restructuring and clerical work: Skills, training and careers in a feminised occupation', *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 34, no. 3, 1992, pp. 436–54.

³⁵ MacKenzie, *Women in Australia*, pp. 172–3. See also Table 2 in Chapter 1.

The seventh factor which President Brown considered was the ‘prevention of unemployment either of men or women.’³⁶ With a lawyer’s concern for delineating areas of responsibility, he stressed that ‘the Legislature or the Administration’ was primarily responsible for the management of unemployment but that the industrial court should not add to the problem. Therefore, his example of the industrial court’s proper role was to rule against equal pay for equal work in case women would replace men when both were doing the same work and the women were receiving lower wages. This was the argument which Muriel Heagney (1885–1974) rebutted effectively, but to no avail, in her 1935 publication, *Are Women Taking Men’s Jobs?*³⁷

The final factor for Jethro Brown was that ‘the good of the community is the supreme factor in the formulation of principles by an Industrial Court.’³⁸ His discussion here returned to the first factor, and spelt out the claim of one of the ‘unrepresented’ parties:

The rate of wage must include the claims of the ‘industrial mother’³⁹ which, however inadequately recognised in the past, are not less deserving of recognition than the claim of the unskilled woman worker.⁴⁰

When President Brown named as his first factor the rights of women to work and a fair wage, he also stressed the rights of women ‘to support when married’.⁴¹ It is these married women, presumably with children, whom he described as ‘*the “industrial mother,” who has to keep the family going out of the husband’s wages.*’ [sic]⁴²

For life-long single women, indeed all women employees, the rights of the ‘industrial mother’ were an insuperable obstacle to their claims for equal pay between 1911 and 1961. Again ignoring the inconsistency in his arguments, Jethro Brown argued that it was for

³⁶ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 46.

³⁷ Heagney, *Are Women Taking Men’s Jobs?*

³⁸ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 46.

³⁹ See the discussion in the following paragraph.

⁴⁰ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 47.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 40.

⁴² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 55.

Parliament to legislate to support mothers and children and the right of industrial courts to uphold the existing social order based on the family wage for men. The Australian history of equal pay for women reveals a slow step-by-step process as Jethro Brown recommended. The Commonwealth Parliament legislated maternity allowances for mothers in 1912, child endowment from 1943 onwards, and limited equal pay for equal work in 1969.⁴³ The more complex issue of equal pay for work of equal value was not recognised until 2002 when:

The NSW Industrial Relations Commission ruled the librarians had been underpaid because work in the largely “feminised” sector was historically undervalued.⁴⁴

Given these factors, the examples to support them, and his view that ‘the factors must be viewed collectively’,⁴⁵ President Brown’s principles are a foregone conclusion:

1. All women workers are entitled to a living wage and to a reasonable addition to that wage by way of marginal differences.
2. The living wage for men must include the claims of the ‘industrial mother,’ and the home over which she presides.
3. In fixing the primary minimum wage for women in an ‘ambiguous occupation,’ regard must be paid to the question whether it is necessary in the interests of male workers and the community, to prevent men from being competed out of employment by cheap female labour.⁴⁶

For Jethro Brown, ‘marginal differences’ were the margins allowed for additional skills required in a particular occupation; the ‘industrial mother’ was the employee’s wife at home rearing children for the workforce; and his example of an ‘ambiguous occupation’ was fruitpicking.

When these principles are read in the light of Jethro Brown’s discussion of relevant factors, two important conclusions can be drawn. First, for Justice Higgins and President Brown,

⁴³ Davison et al. (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, p. 118.

⁴⁴ Gough, K., ‘Women to seek pay rise flow-on’, *The Australian*, 1 Apr. 2002, p. 11.

⁴⁵ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 47.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 54.

single women's rights to equal pay and indeed paid work in some industries, could and would be overridden by the synonymous statements 'the interest of the public' / 'the good of the community as a whole'. Second, 'in the interest of the public' encompassed the domestic ideology, competition between male and female workers, the economic growth of South Australia and its industries, and the need for congruence between the decisions of State and Federal industrial courts. Therefore, single women could expect a long struggle in the South Australian Industrial Court if they intended to work through it to achieve their employment objectives.

Michael Roe has noted that President Brown's 'arguments sound High Tory in retrospect.'⁴⁷ Certainly the opening affirmation of the rights of women to careers and fair wages was immediately circumscribed by the caveat of community good, and President Brown's analysis ensured that the good of the community would always take precedence over the women's right to work. From today's perspective, an important aspect of President Brown's analysis of the rights of women was the unacknowledged assumption that for women, paid employment and marriage are alternatives, not conjoint activities: 'that freedom in the choice of careers includes freedom to marry, and a right to support when married.'⁴⁸ Even Catherine Helen Spence in her 1878 statement seemed to be saying that paid employment and marriage were alternatives for women:

As in the case of our domestic servants, as a general rule when the middle-class woman of the future consents to marry she must choose not between destitution and marriage but between the modest competence she can earn and the modest competence her lover offers.⁴⁹

President Brown had argued that, for the 'good of the community', a 'modest competence' would be the best that women employees could expect.

The South Australian Industrial Court set wages and working conditions for South Australian women employees between 1911 and 1961. However, the Great Depression

⁴⁷ Roe, M., *William Jethro Brown: An Australian Progressive 1868–1930*, University of Tasmania Occasional Paper 7, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 1977, p. 36.

⁴⁸ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 40.

⁴⁹ Spence, *Catherine Helen Spence*, p. 544.

and World War II revealed that, in times of national crises, Federal and State Parliaments and the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission could and did override the power of the South Australian Industrial Court. During the Great Depression, complementary State and Federal Parliamentary legislation reduced the wages, salaries and pensions for all government workers and pensioners. The South Australian *Financial Emergency Act 1931*⁵⁰ reduced Government salaries and pensions by 20% for members of parliament and teachers⁵¹ and 16.66% for Government pensioners. The wages and salaries of single men and women were further cut in the 1931 amendment to the South Australian *Taxation Act*. This Act increased the income tax for an ‘unmarried person of the age of twenty-one years or upward.’⁵² This ‘Bachelor Tax’ impacted heavily on low-paid women workers as Margaret Murray (1858–1936),⁵³ a woman of independent means, noted in her Christmas Letters of 1931:

We even have a bachelor and spinster tax which hits George and myself ... I even have to pay a tax for being an old maid, not necessarily old, for one of my maids who is only 21 and has to pay £1 a year the same as I do. She resents it very much.⁵⁴

Under these conditions, it was little wonder that single women teachers such as Veta Macghey (1897–1970) were committed unionists.

However, the Great Depression did not improve the relations between female and male members of the same union.⁵⁵ In an apposite comment on women taking men’s jobs during this time, Doris Crowley (1910–) recalled her experiences at General Motors-Holdens where she considered that the unions did not help workers and women workers in particular.

⁵⁰ *Financial Emergency Act 1931* (SA).

⁵¹ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 68.

⁵² *Taxation Act 1931* (SA).

⁵³ Margaret Murray lived with her unmarried brother Sir George Murray (1863–1942), a Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor of South Australia and Chancellor of the University of Adelaide.

⁵⁴ State Library of South Australia: Murray, Sir G., PRG 259, Sir George Murray, ‘Papers of Sir George John Robert Murray ... and members of the Murray family’ (summary), 1863–1942.

⁵⁵ Male-female relations in the teachers’ unions are discussed later in this chapter.

[Women] were doing a lot of work that should've been done by the men ... I shouldn't say this either I suppose, but the union was more on the boss's side than the worker's side because we complained about some of the work we had to do; it was a big strain ... The men, of course, were complaining because they were getting put off and the girls were given this work to do ... Our answer when we complained to the union about it was – to say that it hurts ya and don't work. Well, if we didn't work what would happen to us? We'd get the sack.⁵⁶

To improve their working conditions, women had joined unions but not all were willing to follow a union line of going on strike during difficult economic times. Women commentators have highlighted the fact that the arbitration and conciliation system contributed both to the gendered division of labour and in significant cases ensured that male-dominated unions worked with both employers and the industrial courts to disadvantage women in the workforce. The women critics include active unionists such as Muriel Heagney, feminist historians⁵⁷ and overseas commentators.⁵⁸ Despite its unique character and significant achievements in the twentieth century, the Australian conciliation and arbitration system has always had its detractors as well as supporters, including South Australians.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Adelaide City Council Archives: OH 50, Interview with Miss Doris Crowley, Resident [sound recording].

⁵⁷ Pocock (ed.), *Strife: Sex and Politics in Labour Unions*; Deacon, 'The employment of women in the Commonwealth public service: The creation and reproduction of a dual labour market'; Deacon, *Managing Gender: The State, the New Middle Class and Women Workers 1830–1930*; Kirkby, D. (ed.), *Sex Power and Justice: Historical Perspectives of Law in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995; Frances, R., *The Politics of Work: Gender and Labour in Victoria 1880–1939*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993; Frances et al., 'Women and wage labour in Australia and Canada, 1880–1980'.

⁵⁸ Ackermann, *Australia From a Woman's Point of View*; Wikander et al. (eds), *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, the United States, and Australia, 1880–1920*.

⁵⁹ It is notable that the strongest advocates for the system have been industrial court judges and lawyers: to wit Jethro Brown. Elton Mayo, best known for Hawthorne Investigations at the Western Electric Company in the United States where his reports and conclusions ignored the fact that this was the Great Depression and the company had banned unions in the plant, was particularly critical in a 1920 paper:

Political class-division does not, however, show itself only in Australian public affairs. In a more subtle form it appears as a Court of Industrial Arbitration... So far as arbitration encourages the mutual discussion of difficulties by masters and men, the effect is excellent... [Arbitration] must be held to have widened the social chasm separating masters and men and to have countenanced the notion of the "class-war". In effect, arbitration recognises and legalises social disintegration. (Mayo, E., 'The Australian political consciousness', in *Australia: Economic and Political Studies*, ed. M. Atkinson, Macmillan & Co., Melbourne, 1920, pp. 127–44, pp. 140, 141.)

6.3 The Women's Living Wage Cases

The first attempt by women employees in South Australia to achieve equal pay in the South Australian Industrial Court began in 1917. The following analysis concentrates upon women's working conditions, the roles of unions and the advocates for the employees and the employers, and the changing economic and social conditions reflected in the Women's Living Wage Cases between 1917 and 1961. The long-term impact of the first judgement of President Jethro Brown is highlighted.

In 1916, the Printing Industry Employees Union of Australia (South Australia) formed a Women and Girls Section. The notice calling the first meeting emphasised the necessity of union membership if women's wages were to be increased:

For too long Unions have neglected to cater for women, and consequently they have not received the remuneration for their work which they should have done, the tendency being to give women workers about one-third of the wages paid to men.⁶⁰

Linda Reid, born 1891, vividly described the wages and working conditions for women in printing and cardboard box making before and during World War I: the situation which drove the unions to recruit women:

Well, I used to make packets – all kinds of packets – you know, anything that had – like your flour packets and boxes – we used to make boxes for chocolates – everything – and we were on piecework. And you know we would work like anything and some of them would be there ten or twelve years and they would get 10/- a week ... terrible. And we really had to work in those days – we weren't allowed to talk. Oh, we used to get paste on

To what extent his sister, Dr Helen Mayo, shared his views is unknown, but she and the Mothers' and Babies' Health Association which she founded have been criticised for ignoring the 'broad social and economic determinants of health and did not question the efficacy of education.' (Raftery, 'Saving South Australia's babies: The Mothers' and Babies' Health Association', p. 278.) In his ambivalent analyses of industrial relations in South Australia, John Wanna stressed the role of the State in both the court and economic development, the moderation of the unions and the extent to which South Australia's economy was peripheral to the rest of Australia. (Wanna, J., 'A paradigm of consent: Explanations of working class moderation in South Australia', *Labour History*, no. 53, Nov. 1987, pp. 54–72; Wanna, J., 'The state and industrial relations in South Australia', in *The State as Developer: Public Enterprise in South Australia*, ed. K. Sheridan, Royal Australian Institute of Public Administration in assoc. with Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, pp. 130–51.)

⁶⁰ Churchett, J., *One Hundred Years of the Printing Union in South Australia*, Printing and Kindred Industries Union, South Australian Branch, Adelaide, 1974, p. 8.

us – we always had an apron – and we used to get sore fingers – in fact I’ve got a bit that’s hard there from just going ...⁶¹

For women in unskilled factory occupations, piece-work and casual employment were the best that they could expect.

One of the earliest and most important cases for women employees heard in the newly constituted South Australian Industrial Relations Court was the Printing Trades Case 1917 and 1918. The Printing Industry Employees Union (South Australian Branch) went to the Court to determine minimum award rates in the printing industry, but the advocates for both the employees and employers referred to a Living Wage for Women. The Living Wage was not the same as the Minimum Wage. The latter applied to an Award in a particular industry. South Australia’s Living Wages for Males and Females were this State’s equivalent of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Court’s Basic Wage for male unskilled workers in the Harvester Judgement of 1907.⁶² Therefore, South Australia was the first Australian State to establish a Living/Basic Wage for women. The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission did not determine a Basic Wage for Women (at 75% of the male rate) until 1951.⁶³

President Brown was able to declare a Living Wage for Women because of the provisions of the South Australian *Industrial Arbitration Act 1912*. In reply to the employers’ argument that, in New South Wales, the Arbitration Court was not bound to declare a living wage for women, President Brown noted that:

The South Australian Industrial Arbitration Act of 1912, however (section 22), expressly stipulates that the Court shall not award less than a living wage ... [and] there is no discrimination as to sex.⁶⁴

⁶¹ State Library of South Australia: OH 25/37, Interview with Sarah Lyndon ‘Linda’ Reid [typescript].

⁶² Macintyre, S. & Mitchell, R. (eds), *Foundations of Arbitration: The Origins and Effects of State Compulsory Arbitration 1890–1914*, Australian Studies in Labour Relations, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1989, p. 62. Mr Justice Higgins first used the term ‘basic wage’ as a shorthand phrase for the male breadwinner wage in 1911 and it quickly became common parlance.

⁶³ *Commonwealth Arbitration Reports*, 1951.

⁶⁴ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 48.

But this legislative protection available to South Australian women employees, while it gave them access to the Industrial Court, did not give them wage justice. As Table 2 in Chapter 1 revealed, South Australian women employees were not even ‘two thirds of a man’⁶⁵ until 1951. Generally, the other States followed Commonwealth practice between 1919 and 1950. In the 1919 Commonwealth Clothing Case, Mr Justice Higgins had set the minimum rate for women at 54% of the male minimum, a percentage which South Australian women employees did not reach until after World War II.⁶⁶

Although the Printing Union went to the South Australian Industrial Court for a judgement on the minimum award wage, their advocate, Sir Josiah Symon, argued that women should receive equal pay with men because ‘the wage for men was a personal and not a family wage.’⁶⁷ In the vanguard of his sophisticated submission, Sir Josiah Symon used two principles from Mr Justice Higgins’ 1915 article in the *Harvard Law Review*:

The principle of the living wage has been applied to women, but with a difference, as women are not usually legally responsible for the maintenance of a family. A woman or girl with a comfortable home cannot be left to underbid in wages other women or girls who are less fortunate.

But in an occupation in which men as well as women are employed, the minimum is based on a man’s cost of living. If the occupation is that of a blacksmith, the minimum is a man’s minimum; if the occupation is that of a milliner, the minimum is a woman’s minimum; if the occupation is that of fruitpicking, as both men and women are employed, the minimum must be a man’s minimum.⁶⁸

While the examples which Justice Higgins used to explicate his principles implicitly embody the gendered division of labour, Sir Josiah Symon concentrated on the fact that both single and married men receive a family wage and therefore wages are not related to conjugal condition. It was this sophisticated argument which impelled President Brown to

⁶⁵ Ryan, E., *Two Thirds of a Man: Women and Arbitration in New South Wales 1902–1908*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1984.

⁶⁶ *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 73.

⁶⁷ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 33.

⁶⁸ Higgins, ‘A new province for law and order: Industrial peace through minimum wage and arbitration’, p. 20.

invoke the dominant social, psychological and legal discourses of his time, discussed earlier. Sir Josiah Symon's argument that the male wage is a personal wage is an important example of the way in which the advocates for women workers tried to negotiate around the domestic ideology to improve their wages and work opportunities.

From the twenty-first century perspective of equal pay for work of equal value, it is significant that the first South Australian claim for equal pay should come from the Printing Union. At first glance, it would appear that the work of clerks or teachers, where many men and women are employed in the same occupation, and which could be considered 'ambiguous occupations', would be more amenable to the claims of equal pay. In Victoria, for example, the Federated Clerks' Union brought that State's first claim for equal pay in 1913.⁶⁹ However, President Brown's judgement marked the first step in what would be South Australian women's long march towards equal pay.

As foreshadowed earlier in this chapter, President Brown rejected Sir Josiah Symon's submission for equal pay for men and women. It is worth emphasising that both President Brown and Sir Josiah Symon accepted without question that the majority of women employees were and would be single women. On the premise that 'it is only necessary to take the family living wage as a basis, and argue backwards to the living wage for single women',⁷⁰ Jethro Brown set both male and female living wages, which in 1921 were £3.19.0 for men and £1.15.0 for women.⁷¹ Brown, the scholar who 'upheld feminist ideals' theoretically, had 'failed to solve the fearfully difficult issue of payment for women',⁷² at least where he believed community needs intervened. He did order a uniform rate for male and female proof readers,⁷³ because, like the women police in the police force, female proof readers were a very small group within the printing industry and their equal pay did not advantage the majority of working women. In a significant attempt to

⁶⁹ Nolan, M., 'Sex or class?: The politics of the first equal pay campaign in Victoria', *Labour History*, no. 61, Nov. 1991, pp. 101–12.

⁷⁰ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 3, p. 29.

⁷¹ *South Australian Year Book*, 1986, p. 73.

⁷² Roe, *William Jethro Brown: An Australian Progressive 1868–1930*, pp. 36, 42.

⁷³ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 2, p. 70.

prevent employers from using women rather than men as Readers' Assistants, Jethro Brown restricted the number of female employees:

In no case must the number of persons employed at female rates of wage by any employer exceed the number of persons employed at the male rates of wage.⁷⁴

Because it was the first case to set a living wage for both men and women, the Printing Trades Case of 1917 and 1918 was a learning experience for all interested parties. Women employees had to join the relevant union because the union was the only official organisation that the industrial court recognised as representing employee interests, as President Brown noted in the case of male and female proof readers:

With regards to this question I may say in the first place that I was not asked to differentiate, and although I have the power to differentiate I am reluctant to use that power unless asked to do so.⁷⁵

Because the Printing Union had not asked for equal pay for male and female proof readers, President Brown did not rule on this issue. The implications of Jethro Brown's observation were not lost on women teachers whose cases are examined later in this chapter.

To determine the living wage for women, the South Australian Industrial Court heard detailed evidence on the cost of living for a single woman. The problems created therein meant that President Brown had to revisit his September 1918 judgement in the Printing Trades Case in the Women's Living Wage (Cardboard Box Makers) Case in August 1919.⁷⁶ This latter case marks the first appearance of women as witnesses and assessors in the South Australian Industrial Court. In earlier cases, women had provided written evidence, but now women were to assist both employers and employees and be interrogated witnesses subject to the masculine culture and adversarial approach of an industrial court.

⁷⁴ Ibid., vol. 2, p. 71.

⁷⁵ Ibid., vol. 2, p. 70.

⁷⁶ Ibid., vol. 3, p. 11.

President Brown asked for the appointment of women assessors to assist him in analysing cost of living budgets submitted as evidence. Miss Ethel E. Mitchell, an active member of the Australian Labor Party, was the assessor representing employees.⁷⁷ Miss Muriel Farr was the assessor whom the employers appointed.⁷⁸ Among the witnesses was Phebe Watson, who was later to become the first president of the Women Teachers' Guild. She appeared on behalf of employees because she was responsible for the board and lodging of student teachers. Superintendents of the YWCA and Girls Friendly Society hostels were also called to give evidence on the cost of board and lodging.

In his judgement, Jethro Brown included the nine budgets which women had submitted, his detailed decisions, and the arguments of the employee and employer representatives. Both the submissions and the judgement reveal the intermingled class, gender and knowledge issues involved in the determination of the Living Wage for Women. Under the general heading 'Sundries', President Brown rejected the women employees' claims for 'saving for marriage', 'sickness and unemployment', and 'saving for holidays',⁷⁹ thus presuming that women employees were life-cycle workers in the labour force who would later marry and be supported by their husbands.⁸⁰ The sundries allowed reveal a definite masculine bias:

As the living wage for a man makes *some* allowance for tobacco, the living wage for women should include *some* allowance for sweets. Tobacco may be less injurious than sweets, but the claim for this sundry seems justifiable ... I make allowance for tram and train fares, union fees, lodge fees, church collection, stamps and stationery, sweets, insurance and amusements.⁸¹

Aware that the South Australian Living Wage for Women of £1.10.0 per week compared unfavorably with the £1.15.0 per week which Mr Justice Higgins had awarded in Melbourne, President Brown justified his decision thus:

⁷⁷ Bell, C. (ed.), *Making History: A History of the Australian Labor Party (S.A. Branch) 1891–1991*, The Herald, Adelaide, 1991, p. 39.

⁷⁸ Muriel Farr, who wrote about women's work in a 1913 issue of *Lone Hand*, may have been one of the daughters of the Anglican Reverend George and Julia Farr.

⁷⁹ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 3, p. 25.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 32.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 39.

Board and residence is evidently less expensive here than in Melbourne. I ought to add, Mr. Justice Higgins assumes that a separate room should be regarded as so indispensable as to be implicit in the bedrock or living wage. The evidence tendered in this Court was unfavorable to the assumption.⁸²

In regard to their clothing submissions, women employees who appeared as witnesses were interrogated in a fairly hostile manner on the relationship between their domestic skills, their presumed future role in life, and their employment, to wit:

Mr. Melbourne said, in effect, that to insist upon women making their own clothes would involve an encroachment on their leisure quite incompatible with the maintenance of that health and efficiency so essential to their normal work. On the other hand, Mr. Parsons argued that it was appalling that women should go into the witness box and confess to having done no sewing since they had left school. He asked, “What sort of mothers are we training?”⁸³

The adversarial nature of the industrial court placed single women against each other as well as emphasizing their class and ideological differences. In the 1931 Living Wage Case for Women, President Kelly admitted that even the YWCA and Girls Friendly Society hostels were too expensive for women on the living wage: ‘the accommodation afforded was inappropriate for the type of female employee for whom this Board has always declared the living wage.’⁸⁴ The employers’ advocate thus reviewed the evidence of the expert witnesses:

Miss Hanretty, the first witness called by the Associated Unions on this occasion, obviously is not of the type, nor does she resemble the type in any way. Her salary has not been reduced in the 12 months as unfortunately the salaries and wages of most people have. Her salary she told the Board is substantially above the living wage ... I think the Board should place a good deal of reliance upon the evidence of Miss Burchell on this, and other aspects of costs, in connection with Board and Lodging, as well as clothing. She is an independent witness. She is not personally interested, but had only a desire to see that

⁸² Ibid., vol. 3, p. 40.

⁸³ Ibid., vol. 3, p. 37.

⁸⁴ Ibid., vol. 9, p. 568.

the employees or the girls receive something near sufficient to provide them with reasonable comfort ... Miss Burchell referred to the effect or the possible effect of girls who might be underpaid and not be able to get suitable clothing ... One could hardly imagine an employer selecting a shabbily dressed girl if she had to go into a draper shop in preference to one who was better attired.⁸⁵

Elizabeth Rose Hanretty (1881–1967) was a political activist who became an organizer for the Australian Labor Party in 1914 and its assistant secretary from 1917 to 1956.⁸⁶ Miss Burchell was the superintendent of the Girls Friendly Society Lodge. While Misses Hanretty and Burchell were experienced in the industrial court, the court records reveal ‘that there are many employees who have suffered victimisation, as a result of giving evidence in certain enquiries before the Industrial Court.’⁸⁷ To achieve their work objectives, women employees and their female advocates had to learn how to deal with the adversarial nature of industrial court proceedings.

The 1931 Living Wage Case for Women reduced their wages from £1.15.0 per week to £1.11.6 per week. When wardsmaids from the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Misses Johnson and Lawrence, submitted that part of their wages were used to support out-of-work family members, their claims were based upon their family responsibilities and that they were saving State funds:

Miss Johnson points out that she has two brothers out of work and that she has to contribute as much as she can spare, with a result that a reduction in the living wage, if her wages are reduced as no doubt they would be, the position is that possibly one of her brothers would be thrown upon the State for relief. Miss Lawrence says she keeps a married sister and points out that she cannot do that if her wages are reduced. Not only that but her evidence shows that the majority of the girls at the hospital are in the same position and I think that we know from our own knowledge that the majority of girls today are contributing at home, pay rents and assisting their more unfortunate relatives who are out of work.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ State Records of South Australia: GRG 112/2/5, Papers of the 1931 living wage enquiry (females).

⁸⁶ Bell (ed.), *Making History: A History of the Australian Labor Party (S.A. Branch) 1891–1991*, p. 39.

⁸⁷ State Records of South Australia: GRG 112/2/5, Papers of the 1931 living wage enquiry (females).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

This evidence is one more example of the unrecognised contribution of single women to their families of origin.⁸⁹ Since the South Australian Industrial Court always stressed the claims of the 'industrial mother', it set single women against married women when it refused to acknowledge the roles and responsibilities of single women to their families of origin, especially during the Great Depression.

Changing social conditions are also revealed in the Living Wage for Women cases. For example, in the 1956/57 case, Miss Kathleen Mavis Jarrad, a 'railway porteress', appeared as a witness for cross-examination on her budget.⁹⁰ By this time more women employees like Kathleen Jarrad were living in flats because they wanted their independence. Nevertheless, the employers' advocate was still suggesting that boarding would be cheaper. Because budgets were so detailed, Kathleen Jarrad was closely questioned on how many pounds of potatoes she bought each week, why she bought nylon instead of lisle stockings, why she bought a new overcoat every two years. The employers' advocates never seemed to realise that working women on the living wage could not afford to purchase the more expensive clothes and household linen which would last longer. It is also important to highlight the omissions from Kathleen Jarrad's budget. As a woman, even though she worked in the South Australian Railways, Kathleen Jarrad was not compelled to contribute to the State Superannuation Fund and she obviously did not do so. From her interrogation, it is clear that she borrowed her reading material from the Railways Institute Library, rarely went to social functions, did not smoke, replaced broken crockery from her amusements budget and had a number of medical and pharmaceutical bills.⁹¹

The Printing Trades Case and a selection of later Women's Living Wage Cases have been examined in detail. This is because they are the cornerstone on which the South Australian Industrial Court built its later judgements on women's wages and working conditions, whether those women employees be in manufacturing or clerical industries or professional occupations.

⁸⁹ Allen, *Single Women/Family Ties: Life Histories of Older Women*.

⁹⁰ Kathleen Jarrad's submitted budget is in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC6.1 (Tables 26–28).

⁹¹ Kathleen Jarrad's submitted budget is in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC6.1 (Tables 26–28).

6.4 Women's Sideways Approach to Equal Pay and Broadening Their Work Opportunities in the South Australian Industrial Court

Despite the 'albatross' of the Printing Trades judgement, South Australian women unionists did not cease to work for equal pay in particular industries and awards. The most significant of these are examined below. The entry point for limited equal pay came from President Brown's judgement in favour of female readers' assistants in 1918 and his concession that equal pay was allowable in 'ambiguous occupations'.

The Shop Assistants and Warehouse Employee's Federation of Australia, South Australian Branch,⁹² may be proud of the fact that female shop assistants in closely defined areas were the first and largest group of women employees to receive equal pay, from 1924 onwards. In dismissing the employers' appeal against equal pay in 1961, the Full Court of the South Australian Industrial Court summarised this history of equal pay for female shop assistants:

... determinations of the Shop Board and of Shop Board No.1 and Shop Board No.2 ... prescribed that female shop assistants employed in the following occupations should be paid the same rates as those payable to male shop assistants: –

Part I – Female assistants employed selling in the woollen, cotton or silk dress materials, manchester, men's clothing or mercery departments.

Part II – Female assistants employed in connection with the sale of grocery, tea, dairy produce, cereals, patent medicines, and confectionery (other than in confectionery shops) other than those selling confectionery lines, patent medicines, and/or biscuits at counters, exclusively devoted to the sale of such goods.

Part IV [sic] – Female assistants employed in the sale of any gardening requisites of a weight exceeding 25lb.; or seeds, plants or garden manures in quantities exceeding 25lb.in weight.

For all other female shop assistants, rates of pay were prescribed which were less than the amounts awarded to males.⁹³

⁹² Now known as the Shop Distributive & Allied Employees Association.

⁹³ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 30, pp. 14–5.

A close reading of the above statement reveals that some of the female shop assistants receiving equal pay were handling heavy weights. For example, bolts of material were at least 25 pounds in weight. This judgement from the South Australian Industrial Court in 1924 also raises the vexed issue of the relationship between industrial court decisions in particular industries, occupational health and safety legislation, and equal pay for women.⁹⁴ Basically female shop assistants had to be doing the same physical work as male shop assistants to achieve equal pay.

Between 1911 and 1961, equal pay campaigns in a range of industries were not the only strategies women employees used to broaden their work opportunities. It is equally important to trace the movement of women into formerly all-male occupations. In 1941, the South Australian Industrial Court decision ensured that there would be a gendered division of labour in the hairdressing industry.⁹⁵ In dismissing appeals from both employers and employees on wage rates for women's hairdressing, Mr President Morgan included his table which demonstrated that between 1911 and 1941 the percentage of women employees had increased from 0% in 1911 to 77% in 1941.⁹⁶ With these figures and reference to earlier judgements on the payment of women's wages for women's work, President Morgan concluded that 'in the last twenty years or so, the dressing of women's hair in South Australia has become very largely an industry for women.'⁹⁷ He therefore ruled against equal pay for men and women engaged in women's hairdressing. His judgement not only referred to community interests but it also actively encouraged men to leave women's hairdressing. This is an example of an industrial court decision supporting women moving into a formerly all-male occupation whilst at the same time further encouraging the gendered division of labour into men and women's work:

The chairman could not properly come to the conclusion that it was desirable, in the interests of all parties and the community, that men should be retained in the industry of

⁹⁴ Williams, C., 'Women and occupational health and safety: From narratives of danger to invisibility', *Labour History*, no. 73, Nov. 1997, pp. 30–52; Hunter, 'Some factors which determine the distribution of the female work force'; Harvie et al., 'Protective legislation and women's labour market participation'.

⁹⁵ Cutcher, L., "'Not so clear cut': The link between skill recognition and higher wages', *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 43, no. 1, Mar. 2001, pp. 79–91.

⁹⁶ Morgan's data is reproduced in Table 29 in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC6.2.

⁹⁷ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 17, p. 191.

women's hairdressing, and I see no reason why the ordinary rule should not apply to the fixation of the men's and women's wages for the same sort of work.⁹⁸

Women in the paid labour market had to fight simultaneously to widen their work opportunities and at the same time prevent the industrial court from devaluing their traditional skills when they were competing against male workers. One of the strongest examples of the linkage between living wages for men and women and the devaluation of women's traditional skills is in the Women's Garments, Headwear and Whitework Board Case of 1935. Then President Kelly determined the following wages for adult male and female cutters in the group 'Order Dress' for women:

Adult Male Cutters, namely males employed marking or cutting out garments ... £4.16.9 per week

Adult Female Cutters, namely females employed marking or cutting out costume coats, overcoats, topcoats, cloaks, as are made of tweed, twill, worsted or similar materials ... £4.4.9 per week⁹⁹

The higher living wage for men meant that although the judgement related to 'Order Dress' for women men received more money despite the fact that adult male and female cutters would be involved in the same work. The judgement is also an example of the way in which awards are couched in general terms for male workers and limited to specific areas for women employees.

The South Australian Industrial Court's responsibility for wage fixation means that its reports also record when women were first allowed to work in particular industries. The relevant judgements in small industries highlight the fact that women's employment in these fields required the support of employers and the perceived community interest against the opposition of the relevant union. These were the factors which influenced Mr President Pellew to deny the union claim for the 'prohibition of female labour' in the Fish, Crayfish and Poultry Case of 1961 as discussed Chapter 2 In the Wine and Spirit Industry Case of 1948, President Morgan revoked the proscription of female labour which had been

⁹⁸ Ibid., vol. 17, p. 192.

⁹⁹ Ibid., vol. 14, p. 91.

in place since 1921, employers having sought unsuccessfully to employ women in 1935, 1940 and 1947.¹⁰⁰

The Federated Liquor and Allied Trades Employees' Union of Australia, South Australian Branch, objected to women employees on the following grounds according to President Morgan:

I think that the objections raised by the Union to the employment of women in the limited types of work claimed in this matter fall into the following heads –

1. That the presence of females in wineries and distilleries would be bad for the females (a) because they would tend to drink intoxicants to a deleterious degree and (b) because their moral character might be adversely affected.
2. That the presence of females in these work places would have a deleterious effect on the morals of male employees.
3. That if females were employed there would be a tendency for male employees to be required to perform more arduous tasks for a greater part of their time.
4. That some of the operations specified in the employers' claim are unsuitable for performance by females; this claim was not made to all operations.
5. That no proper amenities are supplied for females at the various wineries and distilleries.¹⁰¹

The union objections need to be read as a whole to show how ability to perform a particular task came a very bad last when the interests of male unionists were threatened. The dominance of temperance and moral arguments in a State that had a 6pm closing of hotel bars between 1915 and 1967 was hardly surprising. However, these arguments were strongly intertwined with the presumed physical as well as moral weaknesses of women. The reality that women could and would compete with men for work in some occupations was the unspoken argument of the unionists in this case.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., vol. 23.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., vol. 23.

6.5 Women Teachers and the South Australian Industrial Court

The period between the death of the Director General of Education, Alfred Williams, in 1913 and the appointment of William McCoy in 1919 was a period of ‘hamstrung hopes’¹⁰² for the Education Department and its teachers. This was particularly so for women teachers as discussed in Chapter 3. When, in 1924,¹⁰³ the South Australian Parliament passed the necessary legislation to enable public servants to appear in the South Australian Industrial Court, the South Australian Public Teachers’ Union (SAPTU) immediately sought industrial registration as a recognised union. President William Jethro Brown, who himself had been a pupil-teacher at the Moonta Mines State School in the 1880s, heard the 1925 Public School Teachers Case. The Public Service Commissioner appeared for the Government in opposition to the SAPTU claim. In the opening to his judgement, Jethro Brown noted that the Commissioner ‘also represents the community’,¹⁰⁴ a forewarning of what would happen to the women teachers’ claim for ‘four-fifths of the salary of male teachers of equal rank.’¹⁰⁵

The 1925 Public School Teachers Case is important for many reasons, not least because in his judgement President Brown spelt out the relationship between the living wage, professional salaries and marginal differences. In granting a commencing salary of £235 per annum to a Class VII male head teacher, aged 21 or more, Jethro Brown explained how he calculated the amount:

I propose that the salary be £235 per annum. This is on the assumption that a marginal difference of approximately 1s.5d. per day, now generally conceded to clerks, is not intrinsically unreasonable in the case of teachers. Since there are 303 working days in the year, £215.17s.9d. equals the living wage, and adding 1s.5d. a day for 303 days working we get an amount which may be put down approximately at £235 which I propose to award.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Thiele, *Grains of Mustard Seed*, p. 108.

¹⁰³ Between 1896 and 1925, SAPTU had to negotiate with the Minister and Director of Education re salaries and working conditions. Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*.

¹⁰⁴ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 7, p. 147.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 143.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 160.

President Brown awarded a salary range of £170–£230 per annum for male assistants in all schools and £120–£150 for female assistants.¹⁰⁷ Both male and female teachers were granted the same ‘marginal difference of 1s.5d. per day.’ Jethro Brown was able to do this because he had decreed the following principle in the Furniture Board Case in 1923:

If the females were doing the same class of work as the males they must, of course, be awarded the same nominal margins for skill irrespective of the basic wage ... Males and females are in this respect economically, legally, and morally on an equal footing.¹⁰⁸

The economic implication for women teachers of this calculation was that their wages were based on the lower Living Wage for Women.

Unlike their more militant colleagues in the Printing and Shop Assistants Unions, SAPTU did not apply for equal pay for women teachers in 1925. The arguments, which the union used to support the women teachers’ claim for four-fifths of the male salary, read today as a mixture of special pleading for women, tentative equal pay claims and a clear recognition of the importance of interstate comparisons:

1. Women are especially fitted for the work of teaching.
2. They are not in competition with men.
3. They can, and do, teach all grades from the lowest to the highest.
4. They are better fitted than men for teaching the lower grades.
5. Equal qualifications are demanded of men and women.
6. Equal demands are made upon them, save that women are required to teach needlework.
7. Women achieve equal success with men, as is proved by the results of the Qualifying and University examinations.
8. In New South Wales the four-fifths ratio is in vogue right to the top; in Victoria it obtains except in the very highest positions; in Queensland the average is over four-fifths; in England it is at least four-fifths.
9. The adoption of this ratio would not make a great difference to the proportion already existing in South Australia.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 221.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 257.

SAPTU would have been well aware that the Public Service Commissioner rejected the claim on the ground that it was 'contrary to all precedent according to the industrial law of this State,'¹¹⁰ and referred to the Printing Trades Case of 1918. Between 1918 and 1961, the Printing Trades Case, and in particular Jethro Brown's principle of setting wages for women in 'ambiguous occupations' to prevent male unemployment, was the lodestone on which all later decisions of the South Australian Industrial Court was based.

The reluctance with which President Jethro Brown ruled legally, but unjustly, against the pay claim for women teachers may be explained in part by his own experiences as a pupil teacher in country South Australia:

It is with considerable reluctance that I feel impelled to reject the application. My main difficulty has been to harmonize the present claim with the precedents of the Court and the declarations of the Board of Industry. It was conceded in Court that women teachers were, to take the type, not actually or prospectively supporters of a family. It was conceded that male workers were. I suggested that parties should negotiate amongst themselves with the object of securing justice to the women teachers.¹¹¹

Since the Education Department regulation of 1915, all women teachers were single women. Therefore, in their first attempt to achieve wage justice in the South Australian Industrial Court, women teachers were defeated on a number of grounds: legal precedent, the strength of the domestic ideology, and the employment practices of the Education Department. In practical terms, Inspectors Lydia Longmore and Adelaide Miethke, with responsibilities equal to, if not greater than that of their male colleagues, had a maximum salary of £600 per annum while the maximum salary of male inspectors was £700 per annum.

After the increase in teachers' salaries in 1925, the Great Depression brought salary reductions for all teachers in 1930, 1931, 1933 and 1935. The 1930 salary cut was negotiated between SAPTU and the State Government with a joint application to the South

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 171.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 172.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 161.

Australian Industrial Court.¹¹² The 1931 reductions in teachers' salaries, also jointly negotiated through the Court,¹¹³ flowed from the *Financial Emergency Act 1931* discussed earlier in this chapter. The 1933 and 1935 salary reductions were the result of the Public School Teachers Cases in the same years.

In the 1933 Public Teachers Case, Inspector Adelaide Miethke appeared as a witness for women teachers. There President Kelly admitted that 'women teachers have a special function to fulfil', but he rejected their claim for four-fifths of the male salary and did 'not attach conclusive importance to "interstate" comparisons'.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless President Kelly's decision to award male marginal rates for women teachers is an example of the South Australian Industrial Court's practice for all women in 'ambiguous occupations' where it was considered that women did not compete with men for employment.¹¹⁵ The 1933 award of male marginal rates to women teachers is an instance of the strength of legal precedent. Classification marks, a mixture of formal qualifications, and the skill marks awarded by inspectors, were the margins for skill which the South Australian Industrial Court recognised for women teachers.

However, this South Australian practice was questioned in 1951 when the Commonwealth Arbitration and Conciliation Commission ruled that the Basic Wage for Women should be 75% of the male basic wage. Immediately South Australian employers argued that the 75% rule should also apply to 100% margins formerly granted to women in South Australia. In the Clerks (Marginal Rates) Case of 1951, the Full Bench of the South Australian Industrial Court gave women employees a one-step-forward, one-step-backward judgement. This occurred because the court agreed that the Women's Living Wage should be 75% of the male living wage but women, for example women teachers, could only receive 75% of marginal rates:

The Full Court adhered to its view, formed in the light of the adoption of the Commonwealth basic wages as the State living wages, that the basis of the Court's

¹¹² Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 64.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 68–9.

¹¹⁴ *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 13, p. 85.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 13, p. 8.

principle of equal margins for the sexes had been undermined. The Full Court's ... direction ... was that the single Judge dealing with the application for variation of the award should *prima facie* not fix for the adult female clerk the same margin as is prescribed for the ungraded adult male clerk, but should fix for her seventy-five per centum of the margin fixed for the male.¹¹⁶

The only all-women union in South Australia between 1911 and 1961 was the Women Teachers' Guild which existed between 1937 and 1950. The history, achievements and different interpretations of the Women Teachers' Guild have been recorded in the research of B. K. Hyams,¹¹⁷ Kay Whitehead¹¹⁸ and Adrian Vicary.¹¹⁹ Here it is relevant to highlight the importance of the South Australian Industrial Court in the establishment and achievements of the Women Teachers' Guild. In a 1944 recruitment pamphlet, the Women Teachers' Guild explained their foundation in 1937, and tied it to their experiences in the 1933 and 1935 Public School Teachers Cases:

In the 1935 Award, women suffered severely, some even receiving reductions.¹²⁰

This was an argument which the 1937–38 president of SAPTU, Mr H. M. Lushey, had strongly rejected in a 1937 circular sent to women members. After detailing all the benefits of SAPTU membership for women teachers, Mr Lushey then stressed the role of the South Australian Industrial Court and the weakness of a small union in an arbitration court:

The Union did not make the Award. It was made by the Court, after hearing both sides ... Surely no woman believes that 600 women can have as much weight as 2,400 men and women combined when matters are present for consideration and adjustment.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 25, p. 32.

¹¹⁷ Hyams, 'The battle of the sexes in teachers' organizations: A South Australian episode 1937–1950'.

¹¹⁸ Whitehead, "'Many industrial troubles are due to the presence of female labour': The Women Teachers' Guild in South Australia, 1937–42'.

¹¹⁹ Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*.

¹²⁰ See the pamphlet in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC6.5 (Figure 13).

¹²¹ State Library of South Australia: PRG 26, May Mills, 'Private papers of Miss May Mills' (summary). The circular is in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC6.3 (Figure 11).

The circular carefully ignored the fact that women teachers were not represented on the SAPTU Salaries Committee which had prepared the employees' case in the South Australian Industrial Court.

The first full participation of women employees in the South Australian Industrial Court occurred in 1943 when the Women Teachers' Guild appeared as a registered union with SAPTU in the Public School Teachers Cases of 1943 and 1944. The extent to which their youth and single status disadvantaged women teachers is most clearly revealed in the 1943 Case. For example, both unions argued that, in comparison with male teachers, women teachers were in an 'anomalous position' because there were fewer promotion positions available to them. In his judgement, President Morgan, while admitting the anomaly, used the single status and relative youth of the majority of women teachers to rule against the submission in an amazing circular argument:

There is however, an important distinction between men and women in considering the question of promotion, ... which is that a woman must upon her marriage leave the Service, whilst a man, of course, in fact does not do so ... In 1933, there were 519 women teachers under 30 years of age in the Service, ten years later only 152 of these individuals were still in the employment of the Department ... It will be apparent that by the time a woman teacher reaches the point at which promotions are of importance to her, the ranks of women teachers in competition have become greatly thinned. In spite of this the details which have been placed before me indicate that there are proportionately fewer higher positions available to the woman teacher than there are for men of the same age. This could not, in my opinion, make the whole scale for women teachers anomalous, as the large number of women teachers never reach the age of thirty as teachers.¹²²

President Morgan's judgement not only highlighted the interaction between the institutional practice of non-appointment of married women and the domestic ideology, it also involved the bureaucratic practice of promotion through seniority and years of service. The unions' and single women teachers' support of the seniority rule for promotion was demonstrated in 1941 when they protested to the Education Department at the appointment of the 38-year-old Ruth Gibson to replace the retiring first Inspector of Girls Schools,

¹²² *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 28, p. 149.

Adelaide Miethke. Not only was Ruth Gibson under 40 years, she was a chief assistant, not a headmistress.

Dissatisfied with President Morgan's judgement in 1943, the unions returned again to the South Australian Industrial Court in 1944. Whilst still rejecting the unions' claim that women teachers be awarded four-fifths of the male rate, President Morgan did agree that there were anomalies for women teachers. He therefore made the following judgement:

The Court found that the amount included for "nominal variation of the living wage" in each of the existing rates for women had become so insufficient as to make the whole of those rates anomalous; that the existing rates for senior mistresses in the School of Arts and Crafts and women chief assistants with II.A certificates in Primary Schools were anomalous on additional grounds.¹²³

The Women Teachers' Guild claimed full credit for this improvement in the wages of women teachers and even quoted President Morgan's support for the Guild in their 1944 recruiting pamphlet:

**ANY FINANCIAL ADVANTAGE YOU NOW ENJOY HAS COME TO YOU
THROUGH THE GUILD.**

1. ... The case resulted in Mr. President Morgan's awarding –
 - (a) A **£29 rise for all women over 21**, and other amounts for those below. ... [bold in original]
 - (b) £20 extra for Women Chief Assistants.
 - (c) The restoration of re-engaged teachers' salaries, certificates, and skill marks.
 - (d) A correction of an anomaly in the School of Arts.
 - (e) A regulation giving secondary rates to domestic arts, dressmaking, and millinery teachers with IIB subjects and a 31 skill mark.
2. The Guild – its first act – gained a £15 rise for the lowest paid of the outback teachers.
3. The Guild gained allowances for girl Junior Teachers equal to those of boys.¹²⁴

¹²³ Ibid., vol. 28, p. 153.

¹²⁴ State Library of South Australia: PRG 26, May Mills, 'Private papers of Miss May Mills' (summary). The full pamphlet is in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC6.4 (Figure 12).

The above achievements of the Women Teachers' Guild reveal that its Executive concentrated their efforts on improving the wages of female teachers clustered at the lower levels and in the small schools of the Education Department. At the time, these women teachers had no voice in the South Australian Public Teachers' Union. The success of the Women Teachers' Guild meant women were more powerful in the new South Australian Institute of Teachers after the amalgamation of the Women Teachers' Guild and the South Australian Public Teachers' Union in 1951.¹²⁵

In the wider South Australian industrial scene, the Women Teachers' Guild and SAPTU were unique in that they were unions of employees for one organisation, the South Australian Education Department. Furthermore, the Women Teachers' Guild members were predominantly primary school teachers as well as single women. It does not seem possible that women employees in other industry groups could have achieved the same success as the Women Teachers' Guild. For example, the Federated Clerks, the Bank Clerks and the Shop Assistants unions represented employees who worked in many organisations, large and small, and where women employees were not the majority of employees, as were the women teachers. I would argue that women clerks and shop assistants would not have had any of the slight improvement in their industrial conditions if they had been represented in the South Australian Industrial Court by women-only unions. To take a case to the industrial court would have been too expensive for a small union.

6.6 Conclusion

In 1954, after a lifetime of working for equal pay and women's rights, the doughty Muriel Heagney (1885–1974) trenchantly argued for change in Australia's system of industrial relations. To support her argument against compulsory legal arbitration, she closed with a quotation from John Stuart Mill's essay on the 'Subjection of Women':

The concessions of the privileged to the unprivileged are seldom brought about by any better motive than the power of the unprivileged to extort them.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ The lists of life members and presidents/vice-presidents in the Appendix to this chapter illustrate this point (section AC6.7 (Figures 14–15) and section AC6.8 (Figures 16–20)). For a list of presidents of the Women Teachers' Guild, see the Appendix section AC6.6.

¹²⁶ Heagney, *Arbitration at the Cross Roads*, p. 103.

It is appropriate that Muriel Heagney, a single woman, and an excerpt from Mill's famous essay supporting women's rights should close this examination of the South Australian Industrial Court between 1911 and 1961, and, in particular, its role and the effect on single women in the paid workforce. This examination has sought to show where, in its judgements, the South Australian Industrial Court 'unprivileged' and then denied the value of women's work.

The analysis of the relationship between the work of single women and the South Australian Industrial Court has highlighted two major issues. First, the dominant role of the Court in the achievement of single women employee's paid work objectives and second, the willingness of unionised women employees to go to the Court and use a range of strategies to achieve their objectives. It is yet another example of the way in which women 'looked to the state to improve women's status and conditions.'¹²⁷

This chapter has sought to demonstrate that some women employees, and single women in particular, did not shirk their industrial responsibilities. They joined the relevant unions, stood for leadership positions within the union,¹²⁸ established the Women Teachers' Guild, prepared employee submissions to the South Australian Industrial Court, and appeared in the Court as witnesses and as assessors for both employers and employees. This meant that women were subject to the masculine culture and adversarial approach of the relevant union and the industrial court where class differences could be used to divide women.

Specialist female shop assistants, female proof readers and some grades of clerks gained equal pay with their male colleagues. At the same time, the Women's Garments Case of 1935 revealed that women lost to men control over their traditional skills and were paid lower wages accordingly. When women feminised a formerly all-male occupation such as ladies hairdressing, the South Australian Industrial Court awarded female not male wages against the submission of the employees. Where women moved into formerly male occupations in small numbers, for example in the Crayfish and Wine and Brandy Cases, they did so with the support of employers and against the unions. South Australian women

¹²⁷ Grimshaw et al., *Creating a Nation*, p. 304.

¹²⁸ See the list of presidents and vice-presidents of SAPTU and SAIT in the Appendix to this chapter, section AC6.8 (Figures 16–20).

in 'ambiguous occupations', which had margins for skill, did have one advantage on their interstate colleagues between 1923 and 1951. They were awarded the 100% male margins for skill.

This examination has highlighted the unbreakable linkages between the Living Wage for Women, and the wages of all women employees, be they in unskilled, semi-skilled or professional occupations. The Public School Teachers Cases clearly established that teachers' salaries were based on the States' living wages for men and women. Women teachers received the male margins for skill, but their wages were lower because they started from the lower Living Wage for Women. The second important factor arising from this study is that in all their judgements, the presidents of the South Australian Industrial Court stressed the need for and importance of congruence between State and Federal industrial court decisions. This was all the more significant in South Australia, a State whose industrial and economic development lagged behind that of the eastern States. Justice Higgins 'albatross' of the Mildura Fruitpickers judgement in 1912 held back women in the South Australian Industrial Court between 1911 and 1961.

CONCLUSION: SINGLE WOMEN: ‘UNDISCOVERED TREASURES’ OR ‘ACHIEVING WOMEN’?¹

This research started as a search for an adult reply to my childish question: ‘Why are older single women called “undiscovered treasures?”’ I was unimpressed with the answer that they had never married. From a child’s perspective, single women were the busiest and most involved people in the family and in the neighbourhood. Many were in paid work. Most were closely linked to and influential in their families of origin while they were active participants in a number of voluntary organisations.

Nevertheless, the literature and popular magazines revealed that the spinster stereotype implicit in the old fashioned phrase ‘undiscovered treasures’ was still alive and well in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In a comment probably intended to highlight the economic conditions for Labor Party women and not their marital status, Anne Levy placed Elizabeth Hanretty (1881–1967) in context:

She never married, which was typical of the few achieving women of her time, and indeed much later (in any field of activity), and so had no husband or children to divert her attention (some notable women did have a raft of servants to help them, but that was unlikely for members of the ALP!).²

For all its overtones of the spinster stereotype, this evaluation also points to one of the findings in this research. That is, that to be recognised for their achievements, women have to work in public institutions, as the Jubilee 150 plaques on North Terrace, Adelaide attest.³ Yet there still seems to be a lingering belief that work outside of home and family should not be central in a woman’s life. Thus in October 2003 the *Washington Post* withdrew a satirical comic strip which linked the single status of Dr Condoleeza Rice with her work as National Security Advisor to President George Bush:

¹ Levy, A., ‘History of women in the South Australian ALP’, in *Making History: A History of the Australian Labor Party (S.A. Branch) 1891–1991*, ed. C. Bell, The Herald, Adelaide, 1991, pp. 38–42, p. 39.

² *Ibid.*, p. 39.

³ Healey (ed.), *S.A.’s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques*, p. vii. ‘In 1986, South Australia’s sesquicentenary year, the Jubilee 150 Board decided to honour a selection of men and women who have made significant contributions to the State’s progress. Bronze plaques... feature the names, dates and occupations of 169 eminent South Australians, many of whom gained national or international recognition for their work.’

Maybe if there was a man in the world who Condoleeza truly loved, she wouldn't be so hell-bent to destroy the planet.⁴

For newspapers, their views on life-long single women had changed little between those of the editors of the *Argus*⁵ in 1913 and the *Washington Post* in 2003. Only the laws on 'political correctness' had changed.

The continuing strength of the spinster stereotype is one reason for the allusive title of this research. "'Ourselves alone'?" proved an apposite name for this study of the work of single women in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. The political associations of this title⁶ remind the reader how often single women had to negotiate with parliament and government instrumentalities to achieve their work objectives. For example, Mary Tenison Woods, the first woman to graduate in law from the University of Adelaide, had to have the law amended in order to practise as a public notary, and the South Australian Government had to amend its own laws before women police could be appointed.

The question mark after the title is to focus on the dualism dominant in Western thought and, in particular, the stereotype of single women as lonely, isolated individuals in a society where couples and families are the norm. The group of life-long single women studied in this research may have been atypical, but they were actively involved in a wide range of organisations: family, educational, work, social and religious. This account of their lives investigated how well successful single women understood the practices of 'social capital' and organisational culture in the achievement of their personal work objectives. For example, Dr Constance Davey was one woman who had to and did use all the organisations available to her.

"'Ourselves alone'?" also led into the sub-title of this thesis. Since the single women and their work were so heterogeneous, this study concentrated upon the role of institutions in their work. The overview in Chapter 3 examined the many institutions affecting the work of single women. It also stressed that as a group, single women were distinguished by their

⁴ Allen-Mills, T., 'Rice falls into the rumour mill', *The Australian*, 27 Oct. 2003, p. 14.

⁵ See Introduction. 'Spinsters are, without doubt indispensable, but only to convert into wives.'

⁶ English translation of 'Sinn Fein', an Irish political party.

heterogeneity of socio-economic class, religion and income and that the same was true for their work. For the study of the work of single women in particular institutions as Jane Humphries⁷ recommended, three groups were examined in detail. These were the senior single women in the South Australian Education Department, the Sisters of St Joseph teaching in parish primary schools, and a small group of women unionists, employees and employer representatives who negotiated the barriers of legislation, employment practices and the decisions of the South Australian Industrial Court. The investigation sought to demonstrate that these women used the institutions of the period to widen their own work opportunities without effectively challenging the authority and power of the institutions.

Now it is time to re-visit the three themes of this investigation: the heterogeneity of single women and their work; the extent of single women's collusion and contest with the dominant ideologies; and the power of institutions. The first question is whether or not the work of life-long single women was a suitable topic for investigation. As noted in the Introduction to this thesis, the work of life-long single women is a complex and little-studied issue. Life-long single women were found in every occupation, in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors of the economy, and they were employees, employers, self-employed and of independent means.

The evidence uncovered by this research demonstrates that it has been a valuable study of an unacknowledged minority group at a time when they were the majority of female employees. It is interesting to speculate on what life-long single women could and would have achieved if they had had the benefit of J. Hajnal's research, which established that they were a significant minority group of 10% or more at various times in Western European and Australian history.⁸ For example, between 1911 and 1961 single women concentrated upon achieving the male model of paid work in full-time, permanent employment. This was impossible for married women with children at that time. The twenty-first century growth in contract, part-time and casual employment reveals how much this characteristic of paid work has disappeared.

⁷ Humphries, 'Women and paid work'.

⁸ Hajnal, 'European marriage patterns in perspective'; Watkins, 'Spinsters'; McDonald, *Marriage in Australia: Age at First Marriage and Proportions Marrying, 1860–1971*.

This research revealed that single women were a minority among the female employers and self-employed for most of the twentieth century. However, the disaggregation of the South Australian labour force statistics and the personal work histories examined in the thesis chapters point to the need for further research into women working in the same occupation but with different occupational status. For example, some female lawyers, doctors, teachers and nurses moved from the status of employee to self-employed or employer, while some self-employed single women had to become employees when their small businesses became unprofitable.⁹ Only a detailed study would establish the relative contribution of women employers, self-employed or employees to the participation of women in a particular occupation.

The close examination of the work of single women in this research revealed that the gap between the general and specific dictionary definitions of 'work' is narrower than first appears. According to the *Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary* the general definition of 'work' is 'the expenditure of energy ... to a purpose' while the specific definition is 'employment, especially the opportunity of earning money by labour'.¹⁰ This research began as a study of the paid work of single women, but the evidence partially redirected my investigation into the consideration of the relationship between paid and voluntary work and the extent to which voluntary work needs institutional structures. Ellinor Walker was one single woman who clearly recognised the three strands in her work: the paid, voluntary and recreational, and her life revealed how often she integrated them.¹¹ For women employees such as teachers and nurses, executive membership of their unions (for teachers) and professional associations (for nurses) was a voluntary activity closely related to their paid work. The history of Meals on Wheels Incorporated revealed that Doris Taylor knew she had to establish a formal organisation to achieve her goal of providing meals for sick and elderly people in their own homes. From this study, I would argue that single women were the most successful in widening the paid employment opportunities for all women when they worked in a voluntary capacity, for example through the National Council of Women, or as union representatives or employee advocates in the South Australian Industrial Court.

⁹ For example, the lawyers, Dame Roma Mitchell and Beryl Linn; Doctor Phoebe Chapple; the teacher Jewell Baker, the nurse Dorothy Selth and in reverse the dressmaker Hazele Thornton.

¹⁰ Turner (ed.), *The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, p. 1317.

¹¹ See Chapter 1.

As I have investigated the institutional controls on the work of single women, I have been struck by the different and changing institutional interpretations of the term 'work'. For example, the Commonwealth Statistician first broke the nexus between work and income in the 1933 Census, and has never included a question on voluntary work in the Australian Census.¹² This raises the issue of whether or not it is the definition of 'work' rather than the particular definition of 'women's work' which has created the world-wide problems for women in the workforce. There seems to be a need for more research into the nature of work in relation to paid, unpaid, voluntary and recreational work. This investigation into the work of the Sisters of St Joseph¹³ and that of Margaret Davey, a woman of independent means, has also raised questions about the purpose of work. Further investigation should reveal how much work is done to discharge social responsibilities or as part of a religious vocation rather than for income for self and/or family.

The second thread in the warp of this thesis is the extent to which single women both contested and colluded with the dominant ideologies between 1911 and 1961. The decisions of the South Australian Industrial Court revealed that single women in the paid workforce had to contest a 'complex mingling of ideologies'.¹⁴ There single women's demand for equal pay for equal work competed with the needs of the 'industrial mother', the economic position of South Australia in relation to the other States, and the determination of male unionists to preserve their dominant position. What proved to be most interesting in this analysis was that the single women studied divided according to their occupational status. Perhaps for economic reasons, single women employers were more likely to contest the dominant domestic ideology on the employment of married women in the paid workforce than were the single women employees. Nevertheless, employees were still willing to go to the South Australian Industrial Court to achieve their work objectives, especially equal pay. In their public statements, some life-long single women, such as Adelaide Miethke, always supported the domestic ideology on the role of women in society. Yet other single women acknowledged the weaknesses of the domestic ideology, especially as it affected their own work. For example, there is a wry aside of Dr

¹² As discussed in Chapter 2.

¹³ As discussed in Chapter 5.

¹⁴ Bennett, 'The construction of skill: Craft unions, women workers and the Conciliation and Arbitration Court'.

Helen Mayo when she was criticised for starting the School for Mothers: ‘we had seen mother instinct at work’.¹⁵

The third theme of this research is an analysis of the power of institutions, in particular, their ability to incorporate within their structures, organisational cultures and work practices the dominant ideologies of the period. The major South Australian employers supported the domestic ideology when they did not offer permanent employment to married women. But this was not the only influential ideology. Equally important in the judgements of the South Australian Industrial Court were the distinctions between men and women’s work and the Court’s contribution to the gendered division of labour shown in the Hairdressers Board Case of 1942 and the Women’s Garments, Headwear and Whiteboard Case of 1935. World War II, the establishment of the Women’s Employment Board and the compulsory recruitment of women into the munitions factories was an example of how quickly the Commonwealth Government ignored the domestic ideology and the gendered division of labour when the security of Australia was threatened. Therefore, the analysis of the South Australian Female Labour Force statistics has sought to demonstrate that a most significant power of institutions lay in their ability to have their definitions of ‘single women’, ‘women’s work’ and ‘work’ accepted as the norm.

When the heterogeneity of single women’s work is read in the light of theories of organizational structure and culture, a number of significant issues become apparent. Within most work institutions of this period, there were too few single women in senior positions where they could successfully contest the dominant masculine cultures. Certainly the Infant Mistresses and infant teachers of the South Australian Education Department did establish an alternative subculture, but this was short-lived when the Education Department abolished separate infant schools in 1971. When the employer ban on the permanent appointment of married women is considered as part of the organisational structure of an institution – and this is not unreasonable – then single women did not effect any change. Indeed, some single women actively supported this institutional practice, as the reports of the Women Teachers’ Guild demonstrate.

¹⁵ Mayo, ‘The place of women in the medical profession’, p. 20.

Except in a few small areas and for a short time, such as in the infant and girls' technical schools of the Education Department, single women were never a critical mass who could initiate long-term institutional change. From the perspective of the twenty-first century, single women, despite the heterogeneity of their work, had limited success in widening the work opportunities available to all women. Most of them worked in feminine occupations, service industries or with women and children at a time when primary and secondary industries were the engines of the State economy. In their defence, life-long single women seemed to be well aware that they were a minority group, and as such constrained by the need to conform to the dominant model of male paid work, that is full-time, permanent employment.

The power of institutions resides in their ability to institute structural adjustments in response to changes in the environment and ideologies. For example, the opening and closing of infant and technical schools in the South Australian Education Department was an institutional response to the changed attitude to the doctrine of separate spheres for infant and primary school students and for academic and technical secondary students. The role of single women in initiating and supporting these institutional changes needs further investigation. But the time period of this research only foreshadowed the late twentieth century concerted attacks on the gendered division of labour. However, the role of Veta Macghey in the establishment of the Women Teachers' Guild in 1937 and her support for reunification in the new South Australian Institute of Teachers in 1951 reveal that some life-long single women were aware of the need for institutional change at appropriate times.

1911 to 1961 covers the floruit years of the single women referred to in the text. Thus, Dr Gertrude Halley was appointed the first Chief Medical Officer in the South Australian Education Department in 1913 and Veta Macghey retired as the first Headmistress of Adelaide Girls' High School in 1958. As teachers and nurses, older work colleagues in any institution, or aunts and great aunts of the second wave feminists, life-long single women link first and second wave feminists in South Australia. For example, Ellinor Walker, from the League of Women Voters, who had met Catherine Helen Spence in 1909, spoke to the Women's Studies students at Flinders University in 1974.¹⁶ These women

¹⁶ Lake, *Getting Equal: The History of Australian Feminism*, p. 11.

may be rejected mentors for second wave feminists, but the links may be closer than formerly recognised.

This research has shown that the life-long single women studied had to and did test the boundaries of institutional control over women's work in South Australia between 1911 and 1961. Their achievements were small but they did provide a model for the next generation when population changes hastened the weakening of the dominant ideologies affecting women's participation in the paid labour force. To be successful in achieving their personal work objectives, life-long single women could not be and were not *ourselves alone*. As never married women, they took the road 'less traveled'¹⁷ but it was lined with institutional controls with which they both contested and colluded.

¹⁷ Frost, Robert, *The Road Not Taken*.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 2

FIGURE 5

AC2.1 Females Engaged in Industry, Australia, Censuses, 1901 to 1961

FEMALES ENGAGED IN INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA, CENSUSES, 1901 TO 1961										
Census	Numbers of the Population		Numbers Engaged in Industry (in Work Force irrespective of age)			Percentage				
	Females Aged 15-64 Years		Total Persons (Males and Females)	Total Females	Married Females	4 on 1	4 on 3	2 on 1	5 on 2	
	Total	Married								(1)
1901 ..	1,074,227	(a) 545,701	1,614,760	330,240	(b)	30.7	20.5	50.8	(b)	
1911 ..	1,355,239	(a) 701,910	1,922,320	385,641	(b)	28.5	20.1	51.8	(b)	
1921 ..	1,706,028	(a) 958,277	2,237,235	455,230	(b)	26.7	20.3	56.2	(b)	
1933 ..	2,153,134	(a) 1,219,518	2,743,805	599,068	(a) 66,000	27.8	21.8	56.6	5.4	
1947 ..	2,522,876	(a) 1,645,751	3,196,431	717,162	(a) 141,637	28.4	22.4	65.2	8.6	
1954 ..	2,776,000	{ (a) 1,963,095 (c) 1,904,282 }	3,702,022	845,402	{ (a) 289,932 (c) 258,246 }	30.5	22.8	{ (a) 70.7 (c) 68.6 }	{ (a) 14.8 (c) 13.6 }	
1961 ..	3,135,038	{ (a) 2,235,421 (c) 2,166,181 }	4,225,096	1,059,169	{ (a) 444,681 (c) 405,532 }	33.8	25.1	{ (a) 71.3 (c) 69.1 }	{ (a) 19.9 (c) 18.7 }	

(a) Includes females married but permanently separated, legally or otherwise. (b) Not available. (c) Excludes females married but permanently separated, legally or otherwise.

NOTE.—The figures for married females, (5) above, for Censuses prior to 1961 include an allowance for the number of women whose conjugal condition was not stated, and differ therefore from those in subsequent tables. At the 1961 Census, not stated conjugal condition was allocated to an appropriate conjugal condition prior to tabulation.

Source: *Australian Census*, 1961, vol. 8, p. 260.

TABLE 23**AC2.2 Single Women in the South Australian Labour Force, 1911–1961**

Female Labour Force Statistics	1911	1921	1933	1947	1954	1961
Total Female Labour Force	33,958	38,462	49,129	56,176	68,182	89,222
Total Single Women in Labour Force	28,012	32,228	40,972	41,417	37,651	44,231
Total Women Employees	25,733	31,312	37,169	49,378	59,437	75,447
Single Women Employees	23,664	28,244	33,015	38,808	35,449	40,828
Total Women Employers	1,427	790	1,910	1,915	2,441	4,081
Single Women Employers	425	241	430	379	281	260
Total Women Self-Employed	3,217	4,288	3,779	3,270	4,521	5,850
Single Women Self-Employed	1,817	2,007	1,811	1,092	903	712
Total Women Unemployed	419	1,348	5,924	1,090	765	3,210
Single Women Unemployed	383	1,204	5,410	857	531	2,165

Note: Table 23 does not include unpaid helpers who have been included in the official labour force statistics.

Source: *Australian Census, 1911–1961.*

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 4

TABLE 24

AC4.1 Growth in Education Department (E.D.) Schools, Teachers and Students, 1911–1921

Year	E.D. Schools	Total Students	Total Teachers	Total Population
1911	737	55,294	1,407	408,558
1912	768	57,414	1,584	
1913	812	58,656	1,750	
1914	836	60,729	1,858	
1915	844	62,600	1,959	
1916	851	66,982	2,090	
1917	870	70,959	2,188	
1918	891	73,502	2,300	
1919	924	75,681	2,289	
1920	971	75,991	2,293	
1921	1,083	79,769	2,123	495,160

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia, 1921–22.*

TABLE 25

AC4.2 Gender Differences in Junior Teachers for Selected Years, 1934–1960

Selected Year	Males	Females
1934	49	35
1938	23	76
1944	23	76
1950	9	32
1954	2	23
1960	6	41

Source: McGuire, A., 'Pupil teachers and junior teachers in South Australian schools 1873–1965: An historical and humanistic sociological analysis', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 1999, pp. 159, 190.

AC4.3 Administrative Decisions of William McCoy which Affected Women Teachers

AC4.3.1 Establishment of Separate Infant Departments

When the attendance exceeds 500 children, the school becomes unwieldy and the head master is unable to give adequate attention to all the grades. The lowest classes usually receive the least attention, and retardation often results. In order to overcome this problem of retardation and to secure higher efficiency in the lowest grades, separate Infant Departments were established in such schools, and placed in charge of women who have acquired special qualifications for dealing with young children. Their duties comprise most of the duties of a head master, and deal specially with all matters connection with the organization, discipline, and methods of instruction employed in their department. The work is largely based on Freobelian and Montessorian principles; it is remarkable for its freshness, and for the absence of old-fashioned formal methods; music and movement play an important part in the day's work, and an atmosphere of love and joy pervades the school. Twenty-two such departments are now in existence.¹

AC4.3.2 Memorandum to the Honorable The Minister of Education

The Infant Department is a portion of the school, e.g. – the Gilles Street Infant Department is a portion of the Gilles Street Public School. The duties of the mistress comprise all the duties of the head teacher of the school, excepting any questions arising under Regulation IX (use of school buildings etc.) The Infant Mistress is entirely responsible for the organization, government, and methods of instruction indicated under headings “d”, “e” and “f” of Regulation XX. She conducts her own terminal examinations and she is held responsible for all records, including the admission register as specified under XXVII.

All correspondence from her staff passes through her hands and is endorsed by the head master. The head master is not permitted to interfere with the staffing, playground duties etc., as prescribed by the infant mistress, but the infant mistress is required to confer with him upon all those matters that make for the general welfare of the school.

¹ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1921, p. 22.

All Returns from the Infant Department are made on separate sheets.

The head master is entirely responsible for the custody of the buildings, and their proper cleaning. He is in entire charge of any school function when the school appears as a whole before the public, e.g. – Empire Day, School Concerts etc. The head master is the final authority to determine whether a new scholar is fitted for admission to the primary school or not.

When in doubt Head Masters and Head Mistresses are instructed to confer on those matters which it is difficult to lay down definite rules which will differentiate between the duties of the head master and headmistress, and if a satisfactory conclusion cannot be arrived at; the matter is specifically referred to the Inspector, and if necessary to the Superintendent of Primary Education.

W.T. McCoy

Director of Education

19th September 1922²

AC4.3.3 E.D. Circular No. 43

Head Masters and Infant Mistresses

1. For all purposes other than those stated below the Infant Mistress shall be regarded as having the same duties in her sphere as the Head Master of a school. See Regulations Part XVIII, Div. II, 20–35, 37, 38 and Part XXIX.
2. The Head Master is head of the whole school. He shall be responsible for –
 - (a) All school buildings and grounds.
 - (b) Recommendations for the appointment of school cleaners.
 - (c) Applications for free books. (Regulation XI, 4)
 - (d) All relations with the school committee. (Regulation IX, Div. 1)
 - (e) Notification of legal proceedings. (Regulation XXVIII, 36)
 - (f) Functions where the school appears as a whole before the public (but where there is an official party the Infant Mistress shall be included).

² State Records of South Australia: GRG 18/1/350 (1922), Correspondence files ('ME' files).

3. Where an Infant Mistress has been appointed, the section of the school for which she is responsible shall be referred to as the “Infant School”.
4. All incoming correspondence concerning the Infant School alone should be addressed directly to the Infant Mistress. This should include –
 - (a) Official Correspondence.
 - (b) Salary cheques, *Education Gazettes*, circulars etc.
5. Sales Tax Exemption Certificates should be issued by the Infant Mistress.
6. In cases of doubt whether a new pupil is to be admitted to Primary or Infant Department, the Head Master shall decide, provided that no child of 10 years or over shall be admitted to the Infant Department.

There may be some matters concerning which it is difficult to lay down definite rules which will differentiate between the duties of the Head Master and the Infant Mistress, and if a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached the matters should be referred to the Director, and in the interim the Head Master’s ruling must be observed. It is considered, however, that the exercise of tact and commonsense will, as a rule, obviate the need to refer to the Director.³

AC4.3.4 Circular to Teachers, No. 72

APPOINTMENT OF A PSYCHOLOGIST

Dr Constance M. Davey, M.A., has been appointed by the Governor in Council to be Psychologist to the Education Department of South Australia. Dr Davey will be attached to the Medical Branch of the Department.

Her duties as Psychologist will be

1. To examine and recommend to teachers treatment of: –
 - (1) Children retarded educationally. (a) Dull and backward. (b) Mentally defective.
 - (2) Problem children. *i.e.*, the nervous, unstable, stammers etc.
 - (3) Delinquent children. *i.e.*, truants, etc., co-operating with the Children’s Court and State Children’s Department.
2. To organize Special Classes in schools for: –
 - (1) Supernormal children.

³ *The Education Gazette*, 1952, E.D. 4051/1952.

- (2) Subnormal Children. (a) Dull and backward. (b) Moron. (c) Occupational classes for lower grades.
3. To supervise the additional training in the schools of classified teachers for these Special Classes.
 4. To organize short courses of lectures to teachers and students in training: –
 - (a) To enable them to recognize subnormal children.
 - (b) To learn the aim and methods of mental testing.
 5. To give Vocational Guidance to children leaving the Primary School for High and Central Schools, and to children in Special Classes, as to future occupations.
 6. To organize and supervise the work of After-Care Committees.
 7. To carry on Experimental Work.

The hearty co-operation of Inspectors, Head Masters, Head Mistresses, Infant Mistresses, and Teachers generally is cordially invited, and it is confidently anticipated that all teachers will not only render her willing assistance in coping with a difficult problem, but will also avail themselves to the fullest extent of her extensive knowledge and experience regarding subnormal, retarded and difficult children.

If necessary, the ordinary timetable of a class should be suspended to enable Dr Davey to carry out her duties.

W.T. McCoy, Director of Education. December 3rd, 1924⁴

AC4.3.5 Central Schools

The purpose of the Central School is to provide an education and training modified to some extent by a vocational bias for pupils who, being 13 to 16 years of age, will leave school to enter upon commercial, industrial or home-making pursuits. Three types of school were established at the commencement of 1925 to meet the needs of these pupils. Commercial schools for boys were opened at Thebarton and Hindmarsh with an enrolment of 45; Junior Technical Schools for boys were opened at Port Adelaide, LeFevre's Peninsula, Croydon, Goodwood, Unley, Nailsworth and Norwood, with an enrolment of 556; and Home-making Schools for girls were established at Hindmarsh, Port Adelaide, LeFevre's, Croydon, Goodwood, Unley, Nailsworth and Norwood, with an enrolment of

⁴ *The Education Gazette*, 5 Dec. 1924, p. 286.

767. Of the 1,368 children concerned, no less than 231 boys and 313 girls, total 554, completed the first year's work, and have indicated their intention of enrolling in 1926 in order to complete the course. The popularity of these schools seems to indicate that they are fulfilling a long-felt want.⁵

AC4.3.6 The Correspondence School

A Correspondence School was established at the beginning of the year for the benefit of children living beyond the reach of existing educational agencies. Previous to the establishment of this school, Miss Inspector Longmore, with the help of a number of friends, had endeavoured to carry out the work of teaching these children through the post, as a labour of love, but the large number of applicants for assistance, and the greater demands made upon the volunteer teachers by the increase of their ordinary duties, and the expansion of work in other directions, rendered it advisable to appoint teachers who could devote their whole time to this important work. There are now approximately 240 children on the roll of the schools taught by five certificated teachers, under the head teacher, Miss S. Twiss. The children receive instruction by correspondence in writing, spelling, composition, arithmetic, history and geography. The work is sent out every week with full written instructions to the supervisor (usually the mother or an elder sister). When returned it is carefully corrected, and the teacher writes a personal letter to the pupil, giving him further instructions, advice, commendation etc. A similar letter is frequently sent to the supervisor, whose interest in the work is a determining factor in the child's progress.

Careful records of the progress of each child are kept. As a rule steady improvement is made, and there are several cases where the work compares favourable with that of children in the ordinary country schools. Many of the parents have expressed their appreciation of the great help afforded of the teachers of the school.⁶

⁵ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1925, p. 4.

⁶ *Annual Report of the Minister of Education*, 1920, p. 24.

AC4.4 Advertisement for Inspector of Schools

Applications Invited

Inspector of Schools

Application are invited from women teachers of not less than 10 years' experience for the position of Inspector of Schools (Girls' Departments) in the South Australian Education Department. Salary: Minimum £478.19.9.; maximum £538.19.9.

Each applicant should state –

- (a) The period and nature of her professional training.
- (b) Particulars of her teaching experience.
- (c) The nature of her professional studies in recent years.
- (d) If a graduate of the University, particulars of graduation course; if not a graduate, particulars of subjects passed at the examinations in the Faculties of Arts or Science.
- (e) The High and Junior Technical School subjects which she is competent to examine.

It is not essential that applicants should have been in charge of a large school. The duties will include the inspection and reporting upon equipment, buildings, and teachers in the Girls' Departments of High, Junior, Technical, or other Public Schools, the training of teachers, generally assisting the Superintendents concerned, and carrying out such other duties as may be allotted by the Director of Education.

Applications, which should be addressed to the Public Service Commissioner and forwarded the Director of Education, will be received up to and including Saturday, 10th May, 1941.⁷

⁷ *The Education Gazette*, Apr. 1941, p. 90.

**AC4.5 By-Law No. XXXIX. – In respect of the North Adelaide
Children’s Playground**

Whereas the council of the corporation of the city of Adelaide has, in exercise of the powers contained in the Municipal Corporations Act 1890, fenced in or otherwise enclosed that portion of the park lands more particularly delineated or described in the plan drawn in the margin hereof and therein hatched in black and marked “North Adelaide Playground” as a playground for the recreation of children, and it is desirable to make a by-law in respect to the said playground (hereinafter called “the playground”). Now therefore the council of the corporation of the city of Adelaide, in exercise of the powers contained in the Municipal Corporations Act, 1890, and the Municipal Corporations Act, 1903, and of every other power enabling it in that behalf, hereby makes and ordains the following by-law in respect to the playground, that is to say: –

1. In the construction of this by-law the expression “the council” means the council of the city of Adelaide.
The expression “the playground” means and includes the area of the said park lands shown on the said plan and any part thereof.
The expression “the supervisor” means the person appointed by the council to supervise or manage the playground or the person for the time being acting as such.
2. The playground shall be open daily from 9 o’clock in the morning until sunset, except Sundays and such other days or times as many from time to time be decided by the council.
3. No person shall enter or remain on or within the playground except during the hours it is open for admission.
4. No male person above the age of twelve (12) years (other than employees of the council or persons authorised by the Lord Mayor or town clerk or police) shall at any time enter the playground.
5. Mothers and female attendants of children may be present during such times as the playground is open.
6. No person above the age of fourteen (14) years shall use any of the appliances erected on or within the playground.
7. No person shall climb on or climb or jump over any fence on or around the playground or in any way damage the buildings, appliances, trees, plants, seats or other property

on or within the playground, or place or leave any glass, paper, or litter of any kind therein or thereon save in the receptacles provided for the purpose.

8. No person shall throw any missile in or on to the playground.
9. No person shall bring any dog or other animal into the playground, and any dog or animal found therein or thereon shall be liable to be destroyed.
10. No person shall spit anywhere within the playground.
11. All persons on or within the playground shall obey the directors of the supervisor and of any employee of the council.
12. No person shall remain in or upon the playground after being requested to leave by the supervisor or by any employee of the council.
13. The corporation shall not liable for any accident arising from the use of any of the appliances on or within the playground.
14. So soon as this by-law becomes effective, by-law XIX, of the corporation of the city of Adelaide in respect to park lands, reserves, plantations, and squares, shall cease to apply to the playground.
15. Any person who commits a breach of any of the provisions by this by-law shall be liable, upon conviction, to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds.

The foregoing by-law was duly passed by the council of the corporation of the city of Adelaide at a meeting of the council held on the 10th day of October, 1921, 16 of the 19 members for the time being constituting the council being present.⁸

⁸ *The South Australian Government Gazette*, 15 Dec. 1921, pp. 1442–3.

AC4.6 South Australian Centenary Celebrations 1836–1936

Women’s Centennial Congress and Pageant, 12th to 18th September. – Women’s part in the establishment and development of the State was commemorated by the Women’s International Centennial Congress, at which the principal guest was Professor Winifred Cullis, C.B.E., of London. This was followed by the spectacular pageant, “Heritage,” which attracted crowded attendances every night for a week.

Floral Festival and Pageant, 17th to 26th September. – This was probably the most beautiful, and it was certainly the most appropriate of the Centenary celebrations of the Garden City of the Commonwealth. It was inspired by a woman, and to the women of the State must be given due credit for the marvellous decorations which transformed the buildings of the city, for the success of the pageant procession, and for the beauty of the floral carpet.

...

Schoolchildren’s Demonstration, 27th and 28th November. – South Australian schoolchildren have staged some remarkable demonstrations in the past, but the spectacle illustrating the growth of the Empire presented by nearly 14,000 of them on the Adelaide Oval last month, has never been surpassed in Australia. It was an outstanding contribution to the Centenary pageants.⁹

⁹ *South Australian Centenary Celebrations, 1836–1936: Official Souvenir Programme, Special Carnival Period, December 18th–31st 1936*, p. 11.

AC4.7 Title Page and Contents of *A Book of South Australia*

FIGURE 6

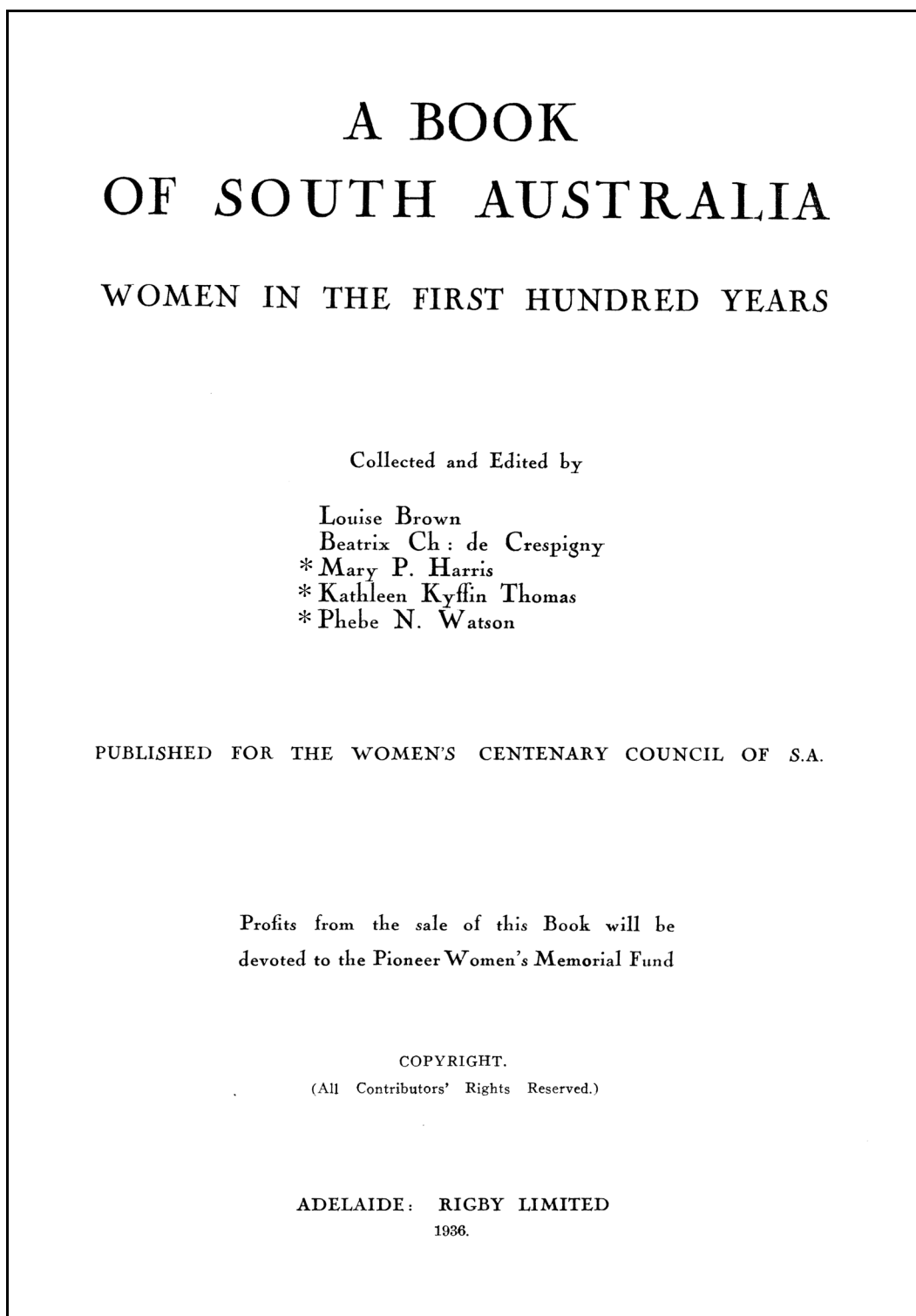
Title Page of *A Book of South Australia** Single women contributors and subjects in *A Book of South Australia*.

FIGURE 7

Contents of *A Book of South Australia* – First Page

CONTENTS.		Page
Introduction	<i>Her Excellency, The Lady Gowrie</i>	
Foreword	<i>Lady Dugan</i>	
Life in the Bush (1842)	<i>A. Lady</i>	14
Extracts from Diaries and Letters of Women in the Early Days.		15-61
Queen Adelaide and Her Treasures	<i>Elisabeth George</i>	62
Early Verse	<i>Mrs. Charles Todd</i>	66
My Lady Returns (Story)	<i>Anne Bennett</i>	72
Our Vice-Regal Ladies	<i>Lucy Webb</i>	76
The Sacred Island }	<i>K. Langloh Parker (Catherine Stow)</i>	82-83
The Legend of the Flowers }		
Extract from "We of the Never-Never"	<i>Mrs. Aeneas Gunn</i>	86
Early Days of Encounter Bay	<i>Lady Newland</i>	89
Our Pioneer Women and the Natives	<i>Mrs. Daisy Bates, C.B.E.</i>	93
* Retrospection (Story)	<i>Myrtle R. White</i>	99
* Some Early Schools	<i>Mabel P. Hardy, B.A.</i>	105
Stained Glass	<i>Edith Lungley, A.R.C.A., London</i> <i>Fellow of British Society of Master Glass Painters.</i>	109
The Story of Cummins	<i>Mrs. George Morphet</i>	113
* Mother Mary McKillop	<i>Mrs. D. P. McGuire</i>	115
Some Old Homes and Gardens near Adelaide	<i>Winnifred Scott</i>	119
The Elopement of Ambrosine (Story)	<i>Constance A. Sanders</i>	123
Reforms in Law Affecting Women and Children	<i>Mary Tenison Woods, LL.B.</i>	127
* Catherine Helen Spence	<i>Mrs. J. P. Morice, M.B.E.</i>	135
"Doctor" (Story, 1882)	<i>Ellen Liston</i>	139
* South Australian Women in Medicine, Law, Arts, and Science	<i>Rica Hubbe, B.A., M.B., B.S. (Adel.)</i>	147
No Idle Fingers	<i>Lady Mawson</i>	151

* Single women contributors and subjects in *A Book of South Australia*.

FIGURE 8
Contents of *A Book of South Australia* – Second Page

CONTENTS.		Page
What the Wicked Mandarin Said (Story)	<i>Inez Hyland</i>	158
* Her Garden	<i>Elsie M. Cornish</i>	164
The Maid of the Mount (Story)	<i>Louie Rebbeck</i>	166
Life on the River Murray	<i>Marjorie R. Casson</i>	168
The Clown and the Memory (Play)	<i>Brenda Kekwick</i>	171
* Women's Work for Child Welfare	<i>Helen Mayo, O.B.E., M.D., B.S. (Adel.)</i>	174
* Ecclesiastical Embroidery	<i>Mary P. Harris, D.A. (Edin.)</i>	182
Our Home Land	<i>N.K.T.</i>	186
A True Story	<i>Tarella Quin Daskein</i>	187
Recollections of the League of Nations Assembly	<i>Mrs. J. Carlile McDonnell, J.P.</i>	192
Spinning, Weaving, and Vegetable Dyeing	<i>Mrs. M. C. Dunstan</i>	195
Reminiscences	<i>Lady Galway</i>	198
Amongst the Diggers	<i>Mabel Marryat</i>	203
About Two Pictures	<i>Stella Bowen</i>	206
Women in the Repertory Theatre	<i>Ethelwyn Robin</i>	208
Some Recollections of Music in Adelaide	<i>Mrs. R. G. Alderman</i>	211
Reynella Pottery	<i>Gladys Osborne</i>	214
* The Matinee Idol (Play)	<i>Stella Hope (Marion Simons)</i>	217
The Old Table	<i>Bridget Amery (Marie Bornstein)</i>	223
Short Biography of Alice Grant Rosman.		225
* Elizabeth Jackson	<i>Mrs. Francis J. Fisher</i>	226
* Outback Education by Correspondence	<i>Phebe N. Watson</i>	227
The Christmas Tree (Story)	<i>Marie de J. Robin</i>	232
An Adventure in Musical Composition	<i>Ethel Cooper</i>	235
* Two Women on the Land	<i>Dorothy Gilbert</i>	237
Women's Social Clubs in Adelaide	<i>Amy Tomkinson</i>	240
In the Bough Shade	<i>Ernestine Hill</i>	243
The Proud Princess (Story)	<i>Elizabeth Skottowe</i>	246
* Kate Cocks, M.B.E.	<i>Edith S. Abbott</i>	250

* Single women contributors and subjects in *A Book of South Australia*.

FIGURE 9

Contents of *A Book of South Australia* – Third Page

CONTENTS.		Page
POEMS.		
The First South Australian Colonists (1838)	<i>Margaret Stevenson</i>	26
Then (illustrated by Nora Young)	<i>Ruth M. Hawker</i>	45
Song of Australia (1859)	<i>Caroline J. Carleton</i>	54
The New Year (1875)	<i>Eliza Strawbridge</i>	59
The Bush Fire	<i>Coreen Norman</i>	112
* Almond Blossom	<i>Ellinor Walker</i>	126
* The Sign	<i>Ellinor Walker</i>	138
Sanctuary	<i>Kathleen Chute-Erson</i>	157
Three Poems	<i>Inez Hyland</i>	163
On the Statue of Sturt	<i>Ethel Helm</i>	179
* To Sleep	<i>Patricia Hackett</i>	185
Two Poems	<i>Joan Kinmont</i>	207
Pink or Blue	<i>Lady Bonython</i>	213
Timity (illustrated by author)	<i>Pixie O. Harris</i>	222
Spring	<i>Maud R. Liston</i>	242
Lost Lyonesse	<i>H. J. Samuel</i>	251
MUSIC.		
* Excerpt from "Adelaide Overture"	<i>Miriam Hyde</i>	180
Centenary Song, "Land of Ours"	<i>Margaret Sutherland</i>	252
ILLUSTRATIONS.		
* Cover Design	<i>Mary P. Harris D.A. (Edin.)</i>	
In-Cover Map of Early Adelaide	<i>Dorothy Harvie</i>	
Queen Adelaide (from engraving)	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
Captain Sturt's Cottage (Grange). Lino cut	<i>Ruby Henty</i>	32
Illustration (Pen and Ink)	<i>Nora Young</i>	45
First Government House (Pencil sketch)	<i>Mary Hindmarsh</i>	46

* Single women contributors and subjects in *A Book of South Australia*.

FIGURE 10
Contents of *A Book of South Australia* – Fourth Page

CONTENTS.		Page
Mountain Valley (Oil Painting)	<i>Leila McNamara</i>	62
Late Afternoon (Oil Painting)	<i>Maude E. Gum</i>	62
* Spider Orchids (Water Colour)	<i>Rosa C. Fiveash</i>	65
* Camellias (Oil Painting)	<i>Nora Heysen</i>	79
Australian Cavalcade (Decoration)	<i>Elizabeth Skottowe</i>	82
Victoria Tower, G.P.O., Adelaide (Black and White)	<i>Beryl Morris</i>	88
The Obelisk: Port Elliot (Aquatint)	<i>Maude Priest, R.D.S. (Lond.)</i>	90
Kangaroo (Wood-Engraving)	<i>May Voke</i>	98
Stained Glass Window: Joan of Arc	<i>Edith Lungley, A.R.C.A.</i>	110
* Gum Trees. (Lino cut)	<i>Dorrit Black</i>	122
* Sortie des Communicantes (Oil Painting)	<i>Marie Tuck</i>	126
St. Peter's Cathedral (Water Colour)	<i>Isabel Haynes</i>	142
* Along the Coast (Aquatint)	<i>Gladys K. Good</i>	142
Desolate Country (Water Colour)	<i>Gwen Barringer</i>	146
Bustard Birds (Wood-Engraving)	<i>May Voke</i>	150
Silver Christening Bowl, Set with Moonstones, Designed, made and engraved by <i>Edith Lungley, A.R.C.A.</i>		154
Stole (Australian Motif). Designed and worked by	<i>Gwen Arnold</i>	154
Colour Woodblock	<i>Dorothy Lungley</i>	158
St. Francis Preaching to the Birds (Embroidered Panel)	<i>Mrs. E. Barton</i>	183
Cross of Sacrifice (Water Colour)	<i>Elizabeth Wright</i>	205
Portrait of Edith Sitwell (Oil Painting)	<i>Stella Bowen</i>	206
Conversation Piece (Oil Painting)	<i>Stella Bowen</i>	207
Illustration (Pen and Ink)	<i>Pixie O. Harris</i>	222
Decorative Correspondence Map	<i>Phyllis Stoward</i>	229

DECORATIONS BY:

*Lorna Lee,*Dorrit Black, Margaret Bevan, Grace Cooper, Margaret Ch. de Crespigny,
 Jessica Mawson,*Marjorie Gwynne, Ruby Henty, Mary Hackett,*Mary P. Harris,
 Elizabeth Skottowe.*

* Single women contributors and subjects in *A Book of South Australia*.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 5

AC5.1 Mary MacKillop's Syllabus and Time-Table for Josephite Elementary Schools¹

A: SUBJECTS FOR EACH CLASS

First class, First Division: Letters, Poetry or Hymns; Small Letters on Slates; Prayers.

First Class, Second Division: Part Second of First Book; Hymns; Small Letters on Slates; Figures; Prayers.

First Class, Third Division: Part Third of First Book; Capital Letters and Small Words on Slates; Addition Tables and Figures on Slates; Learn First-sized Catechism; Girls Sew.

Second Class, First Division: Read Second Book; Spell from Same; Write in Copies; Short easy Sums in Addition; Addition and Multiplication Tables; Small-sized Catechism and Acts; Girls Sew; The Lessons assigned to this Class in the School Grammar and Geography.

Second Class, Second Division: Read Bible Stories; Spelling by Dictation and from Reading Book; Write in Copies; the four simple rules in Arithmetic; Second Class Lessons in Grammar and Geography; Girls sew and make Samplers; Third-sized Catechism and Acts.

Third Class: Read Third Book or English History; Spelling by Dictation; Write in Copies; Arithmetic – the Compound Rules; Third Class Lessons in Grammar and simple Parsing on Slates; Geography for Third Class; Historical Catechism and the Acts; Plain and Fancy Work.

Fourth Class: Read English History – learn same – and Ancient History; Spelling by Dictation; Write in Copies; Arithmetic as far as Proportion – should enter Sums in Books; Parsing nicely entered in Books according to the Rules of Syntax; Fourth Class Lessons in Grammar and Geography; Mapping; Should write short, easy Essays, Learn the Latin and Greek Roots, Historical Catechism; Plain and Fancy Work; Boys Book-keeping by Single Entry.

Fifth Class: Should read and study English and Ancient History; Write Essays; Parse and Transpose and know generally School Grammar, Latin and Greek Roots, Descriptive and Political Geography of the Continents and of Australia, and have a fair idea of School

¹ Foale, *The Josephite Story: The Sisters of St Joseph: Their Foundation and Early History 1866–1893*, pp. 199–201.

Geography, Arithmetic as far as Simple Interest; Should know and understand all the different Catechisms; Plain and Fancy Work; Boys Book-keeping by Double Entry, First Book of Euclid and Mensuration.

B: DAILY LESSONS FOR EACH CLASS

Second Class: Monday: Tables, Spelling, Poetry, and the same for the week

First Division of Second Class:

Monday: Grammar, Spelling, Tables
 Tuesday: Geography, Spelling and Tables
 Wednesday: Grammar, Spelling and Tables
 Thursday: Geography, Spelling and Tables

Second Division of Second Class:

Monday: Grammar, Spelling, Poetry and Tables
 Tuesday: Geography, Spelling, Poetry and Tables
 Wednesday: Grammar, Spelling, Poetry and Tables
 Thursday: Geography, Spelling, Poetry and Tables

Third Class: Monday: Grammar, Spelling and Mathematical Geography
 Tuesday: Geography, Spelling and Weights and Measures
 Wednesday: Grammar, Spelling and Poetry
 Thursday: Geography, Spelling and Weights and Measures

Fourth Class: Monday: Grammar, Spelling, Mathematical Geography and Weights and Measures
 Tuesday: Geography, Spelling, Poetry and English History
 Wednesday: Grammar, Spelling, Prose and Irish History
 Thursday: Geography, Spelling, Poetry and English History

Fifth Class: Monday: Grammar, Greek Roots, Ancient History and Poetry.
 Tuesday: Geography, Latin Roots, English History, and Irish History
 Wednesday: Grammar, Spelling, Ancient History and Prose
 Thursday: Mathematical Geography, English History, Irish History

FRIDAY: REPETITION IN ALL CLASSES.

C: TIME-TABLE**Morning:**

9.15	Hymn to St Joseph, Morning Prayers, Dictation
9.30	Writing
10.00	Arithmetic
11.00	Tasks
12.00	Examination of Conscience, Angelus, Calling the Roll, Catechism
12.30	Recreation and Dinner
1.30	Children Reassemble

Afternoon:

1.30	CHILDREN TAKE THEIR PLACES, SINGING HYMNS AS THEY DO SO					
	Ist Class		2nd Class	3rd Class	4th Class	5th Class
	TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS					
1.30 to 2.00	Little girls sew Boys copy on slates	1.30 to 2.00	Read	Parse on slates	Read	Parse & enter same in Books
2.00 to 2.15	Object lesson	2.00 to 2.30	Copy Grammar or Geography	Read	Parse & enter same in books	Read
2.15 to 2.45	Make figures & letters on slates	1.30 to 3.30	MONDAYS & THURSDAYS Plain and fancy needlework, Boys - book keeping etc.			
2.45 to 3.15	Spell & read Lessons	2.30 to 3.00	TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS Lecture or Gallery Lesson, that is, explanation of either Maps or Science Charts, Globes, etc.			
3.15 to 3.30	Exercises	3.00 to 3.30	TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS Mapping lessons			
		3.00 to 3.30	FRIDAYS Darning & Patching Boys - Book-keeping, etc,			
3.30	AFTERNOON ATTENDANCE MARKED AND CHILDREN DISMISSED, SINGING AS THEY GO OUT					

SOURCE: Woods, *Directory and Order of Discipline*, Adelaide, ca. 1870, pp. 84–86.

AC5.2 Eoin Cameron MP Talks About Mary MacKillop

Blessed Mary of the Cross, or Mother Mary MacKillop as she is better known to most Australians, has a lot to answer for. If it were not for the teachings of her sisters at a tiny school called Nangwarry in South Australia, I have absolutely no doubt that I would not be standing in this place today ...

I would like to tell the House a little bit about that school. It was just down the road towards Mount Gambier from the town of Penola, where Mary set up her first school. Our school was built by voluntary labour by the workers of the town of Nangwarry. To describe the town to you, it was set up after the war as a milling town, and the population consisted almost entirely of immigrants from Europe. A lot of people there were impoverished refugees from the Second World War who went there in the late 1940s and the 1950s ...

There was a total of 87 children at the school I attended, and virtually the only English speakers were the Cameron kids. There were ten of us all told – good Catholic family – but not all of us were attending the school at that time. The rest of the children at the school were made up of those migrant families and refugee families and, of course, there were many different languages. In fact, seventeen different languages were spoken at the school. And not one of those kids started at the school with English as a first language.

The nuns divided the classes into two rooms. Sr Anthony taught grades one, two and three and Sr Andrina taught grades four, five, six and seven. The classes were divided into those separate rows. It is a credit to those women that so many of those children left the school with scholarships. They were absolutely brilliant teachers, as other speakers have said today ...

Sr Andrina coached the football side, and this was in the days of nuns being in full drag – the heavy brown habits that they wore in those days. She would tuck up her habits, as far as modesty would allow, which was not very far – and she was one of the best drop punts in the southeast of South Australia.²

² Henderson, *Mary MacKillop's Sisters: A Life Unveiled*, pp. 57–8.

AC5.3 Records of Sister Mel Moroney³

AC5.3.1 Obituary (Anonymous)

SISTER MEL MORONEY 1896–1991.

Sister Maria Mel, the daughter of Patrick Moroney and Kate (nee Roche) was born in Rinamona, County Clare in June 1896. As a young woman she went to London to train as a nurse, when her aunts resident in Norwood South Australia, invited her to Adelaide to live with them.

Somewhere along the line the Lord beckoned and she entered the Sisters of St Joseph at Kensington on St Joseph's Day, 1917. She received the Habit on May 6, 1918, was professed July 5, 1919 and made Life Vows on January 6, 1926. In that year she was chosen by Mother Laurence O'Brien as the junior member of the first community at Newmarket, Ireland. Mel could hold her own counsel and I doubt if anyone ever knew what she thought of that destination.

On her return to South Australia she slipped back into the school routine and wended her way as far east as Renmark, through the north to Pekina, Peterborough, Port Augusta and across the suburbs – Ellangowan, Woodville, Richmond, Hindmarsh and Hectorville.

All her teaching days she spent with upper primary children. A strict teacher she inculcated her own standards of excellence; and everywhere her past students spoke of her sense of justice. They liked her because they always knew where they stood.

The Sisters spoke of her as a peaceful woman who always did things well.

In retirement she went first to Cowandilla and later to Tappeiner Court. Incredibly, until her later years Mel had never known ill-health. As part of the growing wisdom of

³ Mary MacKillop Centre.

increasing age she learned through pain the marvellous gift that had been hers for so long. She would say in a tone of wonder: “I did not know how God had blessed me!” As the years went on that growth in wisdom showed itself in the healing of memories: she held on only to the good and she spoke only of the good in others. Thus she came to the waiting time of the wise virgin with trimmed lamp. Gone was the perfectionist attitude, the expectation of “doing”. She was at last in the freedom of the Lord just being with Him.

We are thankful to your relatives and friends, and especially the nursing staff at Tappeiner Court who bore you up in loving care in your later days. Rest now in the love and peace of your loving Lord.

AC5.3.2 Apostolate Record

See next page.

Sisters of St Joseph - Apostolate Record

MEL MORONEY (SA)

Born: 15-06-1899 *Professed:* 04-07-1919

Date	Diocese	Community	Ministry	Apostolate Location
1/07/1919	ADELAIDE	KINGSWOOD	T-GR 5&6	KINGSWOOD
1/01/1924	PORT PIRIE	PETERBOROUGH	T-GR 4-6	PETERBOROUGH
11/01/1927	ADELAIDE	HINDMARSH	T-GR 5&6	HINDMARSH
27/09/1927	IRELAND	NEWMARKET	T-JUNIORS	NEWMARKET
1/01/30	ADELAIDE	KENSINGTON	T-GR 6&7	ST PETERS
1/01/34	PORT PIRIE	PEKINA	T-GR 5-7	PEKINA
1/01/38	PORT PIRIE	PT AUGUSTA	T-GR 5-7	PT AUGUSTA
1/01/41	PORT PIRIE	RENMARK	T-GR 5-7	RENMARK
1/01/47	ADELAIDE	WOODVILLE	T-GR 6&7/PRIN	WOODVILLE
1/01/51	ADELAIDE	COWANDILLA	T-UPR PRIM/PRIN	RICHMOND
1/01/53	ADELAIDE	KENSINGTON	T-UPR PRIM/PRIN	KESWICK
11/02/55	ADELAIDE	COWANDILLA	T-UPR PRIM/PRIN	RICHMOND
1/01/61	ADELAIDE	CROYDON	T-UPR PRIM/PRIN	CROYDON
1/02/62	ADELAIDE	HECTORVILLE	T-GR 6	HECTORVILLE
1/01/64	ADELAIDE	KINGSWOOD	T-GR 5-7/PRIN	KINGSWOOD
11/01/67	ADELAIDE	HINDMARSH	T-GR 6&7	HINDMARSH
1/01/71	ADELAIDE	HECTORVILLE	T-GR 6	HECTORVILLE
1/01/73	ADELAIDE	NTH ADELAIDE	T-GR 4-7	NTH ADELAIDE
1/01/74	ADELAIDE	COWANDILLA	HOUSE DUTIES	COWANDILLA
1/01/79	ADELAIDE	COWANDILLA	RETIRED	COWANDILLA
1/01/86	DRES-ADEL	KENSINGTON	RETIRED	TAPPEINER CT

AC5.3.3 Life History**LIFE HISTORY AS AT 20 - 02 - 98**

SURNAME : MORONEY
RELIGIOUS NAME : MEL
CHRISTIAN NAME : MARY AGNES
PROVINCE : SA
APOSTOLATE :
BORN : 15/06/1896
PROFESSED : 4/07/1919

DIED : 09-06-1991
DETAILS OF DEATH
PLACE : TAPPEINER COURT, KENSINGTON
CEMETERY : MITCHAM
PLOT :

DETAILS AT ENTRY

ENT POSTULANCY : 19/03/1917
ENT NOVITIATE : 6/05/1918
OCCUPATION : HOME DUTIES
FROM PARISH : KILNABOY CO CLARE IRELAND
BORN AT : IRELAND CO CLARE
BAPTISED ON :
FATHERS NAME : PATRICK
FATHERS DOB :
FATHERS OCC : FARMER
FATHERS POB : IRELAND
FATHERS OTHER : DECEASED
MOTHERS NAME : CATHERINE ROCHE
MOTHERS DOB :
MOTHERS OCC : HOME DUTIES
MOTHERS POB : IRELAND
MOTHERS OTHER : DECEASED

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 6

AC6.1 Adult Female Living Wage Case 1956/57¹

Miss Kathleen Mavis Jarrad.

Employed S.A.R. Porteress.

Weekly Wage: £12.0.0

TABLE 26
Summary of Allowances and Costs

Item	Annual Allowance	Annual Cost
Summary	£624 – Annual Wage	£606.2.5
Rent of Flat	£2.10.0 per week	£130.0.0
Meals	£2.10.0 per week	£130.0.0
Fuel & Light	£0.7.0 per week	£18.4.0
Clothing	–	£188.14.0
Miscellaneous	–	£139.4.5

¹ State Records of South Australia: GRG 112/2/20, Papers of the 1956–57 living wage enquiry.

TABLE 27
Clothing

Item	Annual Allowance	Annual Cost (£188.14.0)
Stockings – Nylon	15 pr @ 12.11	£9.13.9
Corset	1 pr @ £4.10.0	£4.10.0
Brassieres	3 pr @ £1.10.0	£4.10.0
Slips	4 @ £1.15.0	£7.0.0
Vest Woollen	3 @ 12.6	£1.17.6
Vest Silk	3 @ 8.6	£1.5.6
Pyjamas Winter	1 @ £2.10.0	£2.10.0
Nightdress Summer	1 @ £2.1.6	£2.1.6
Blouse Art Silk	2 @ £2.5.0	£4.10.0
Blouse Cotton	2 @ £1.5.0	£2.10.0
Skirts R.M. Tweed	1 @ £6.10.0	£6.10.0
Costume R.M. Tweed	1 @ £15.15.0	£15.15.0
Overcoat R.M. Tweed	1 @ £14.0.0	£14.0.0
Overcoat Light Weight	1 in 3 yrs @ £18.18.0	£6.6.0
Frocks Woollen	1 @ £10.0.0	£10.0.0
Frocks Art Silk	2 @ £9.9.0	£18.18.0
Frocks Cotton	2 @ £5.10.0	£11.0.0
Gloves Fabric	3 pr @ 12.6	£1.17.6
Gloves Nappa (Kid)	1 pr @ £1.10.0	£1.10.0
Hats Fur Felt	1 @ £3.3.0	£3.3.0
Hats Summer	1 @ £4.4.0	£4.4.0
Dressing Gown Woollen	1 in 3 yrs @ £5.10.0	£1.16.8
Housecoat	1 in 3 yrs @ £4.0.0	£1.6.8.
Slippers	1 @ 19.11	19.11
Shoes best	2 pr @ £4.0.0	£8.0.0
Shoes working	3 pr @ £3.0.0	£9.0.0
Cardigans	1 @ £3.3.0	£3.3.0
Twinsets	1 @ £5.15.0	£5.15.0
Scarves neck	2 @ 10.6	£1.1.0
Sandals	1 @ £2.10.0	£2.10.0
Shoes tennis	1 @ £1.3.0	£1.3.0
Shorts	1 @ £1.1.0	£1.1.0
Aprons	4 @ 7.6	£1.10.0
Bathers	1 @ £5.0.0	£5.0.0
Handbag	2 @ £4.0.0	£8.0.0
Bloomers	6 @ 8.6	£2.11.0
Pantettes	6 @ 7.6	£2.5.0

TABLE 28
Miscellaneous

Item	Annual Allowance	Annual Cost (£139.4.5)
Permanent Waves	2 @ £2.5.0	£4.10.0
Hair Nets	3 @ 8 pence	2.0
Hair Oil	1 bottle @ 3.3	3.3
Hair Clips	12 pks @ 4 pence a card	4.0
Face Powder	4 boxes @ 4.6	18.0
Face Cream	3 jars @ 5.6	16.6
Lipstick	6 tubes @ 5.3	£1.11.6
Perfume	2 bottles @ 5.6	11.0
Knitting Needles	3 pr @ 1.4	4.0
Knitting Wool	16 skeins @ 2.7	£2.1.4
Fares	Per year	£8.12.0
Union Fees	Per year	£1.19.0
Amusements	Per week @ £1.5.0	£65.0.0
Umbrella	1 in 3 yrs @ £3.15.0	£1.5.0
Hair Combs	6 @ 1.3	7.6
Tooth Paste	1 tube per month @ 2.10	£1.14.0
Tooth Brush	6 @ 1.11	11.6
Soap toilet	3 per week @ 11 pence	£7.3.0
Shoe Polish	6 tins @ 1.2	7.0
Medical & Hosp. Benefit	Per year	£4.8.0
Medical & Dentist	Per year	£10.0.0
Sheets	2 pr in 1.5 yrs @ £2.12.6	£2.16.8
Pillow Slips	2 pr @ 8.2	16.4
Towels	4 @ 11.3	£2.5.0
Tea Towels	6 @ 5.6	£1.13.0
Washing Soap (Persil)	1 pkt per week @ 1.11½	£5.1.10
Handkerchiefs	12 @ 2.6	£1.10.0
Shoe Repairs	Per year	£4.13.0
Dry Cleaning	Per year	£3.0.0
Glasses	2 pr in 3 yrs @ £7.7.0	£4.18.0

TABLE 29

**AC6.2 Hairdressing Industry in South Australia: Male and Female
Employees, 1908–1941**

Year	Males Employed	Females Employed	Total	% of Females Employed
1908	32	4	36	11
1909	61	–	61	–
1910	79	5	84	6
1911	102	6	108	6
1912	127	5	132	4
1913	109	5	114	4
1914	114	8	122	7
1915	100	5	105	5
1916	94	7	101	7
1917	65	5	70	7
1918	89	10	99	10
1919	106	8	114	7
1920	103	17	120	14
1921	101	15	116	13
1922	87	14	101	14
1923	83	10	93	11
1924	87	26	113	23
1925	129	44	173	25
1926	148	52	200	26
1927	133	57	190	30
1928	120	76	196	39
1929	100	73	173	42
1930	86	74	160	46
1931	55	62	117	53
1932	61	74	135	55
1933	55	97	152	64
1934	60	149	209	71
1935	61	183	244	75
1936	68	178	246	72
1937	62	193	255	76
1938	56	163	219	74
1939	48	136	184	74
1940	48	164	212	77
1941	57	188	245	77

Source: *South Australian Industrial Reports*, vol. 17, p. 177.

FIGURE 11

AC6.3 Circular From the President of SAPTU



A Circular from the President (Mr. H. M. Lushey).

To the Women Members.

There has recently come to my notice a circular sent, in the first place, to Women Teachers urging them to resign their membership in the Union and making charges which, to say the least, are somewhat exaggerated.

The appearance of such a circular comes as a painful surprise to me as President, since (much against my own private inclinations) I was persuaded to re-occupy the chair at the request of all the Women Teachers' Associations, and largely with a view to maintaining the spirit of fairness to all sections of the Union.

We live, of course, in a free country, but surely amongst professionally educated people, and particularly amongst teachers, there is a moral obligation which implies the necessity of openly stating grievances and of definitely seeking a conference upon matters in dispute.

As a matter of fact, neither in Council, nor in Executive has any charge ever been made on the lines suggested in the circular. Indeed, the Council would be glad to know the facts, and with a view to ascertaining them a motion stood on the Agenda (and has since been passed) to consider the differences and misunderstandings that "appear" to exist between men and women of the Union.

The British conception of Justice and Fairplay demand that at least an opportunity of knowing and answering charges must be given, but such opportunity has not been vouchsafed, and in consequence I feel that the officers and members have been grossly maligned without even having a chance of being heard on matters of vital importance.

The circular states that "the last years have proved conclusively that membership has done little to benefit the women in the Service." This is far from the truth. As President, I know that women have benefited from the Emergency Relief Fund, the Legal Defence Fund, the Library, and the Cash Purchase Scheme—to say nothing of Lecture Notes, etc. Indeed, teachers as a whole have never fully realised that our Union provides far more benefits than any other Teachers' Union in the Commonwealth.

We are also told that "the poor results achieved for women in the Arbitration Court are an indisputable proof" of this lack of benefit to women teachers. I say, unhesitatingly, that the Union is not to blame for this. The case was fought all along the line, lasting eighteen months and costing over £2,000. The Union did not make the Award. It was made by the Court, after hearing both sides. If the women think "there is little prospect that any further appeal to the Court will benefit them" why have they not asked for a withdrawal from the Court. As a matter of fact, they opposed such a course of action.

The women "feel strongly that more could be achieved by a separate body of women ready to place the matters that so vitally affect them before the Director or Minister for themselves." Surely no woman believes that 600 women can have as much weight as 2,400 men and women combined when matters are presented for consideration and adjustment.

To the women who have resigned I have nothing further to say, they have chosen their path, but to those who remain loyal to the South Australian Public Teachers' Union I would say—think the matter over fully for yourselves, consider carefully what you give up, and above all try to be fair in your final judgment. No Union could be run on subscriptions of 5/-, 7/6, 10/-, and 12/6, and no intelligent woman teacher should allow herself to be stamped into believing that it could.

Source: State Library of South Australia: Mills, May, PRG 26, May Mills, 'Private papers of Miss May Mills' (summary), 1906–1982.

FIGURE 12

AC6.4 Recruitment Pamphlet for the Women Teachers' Guild (1)

*What does the Guild do for you?***ANY FINANCIAL ADVANTAGE YOU NOW ENJOY HAS COME TO YOU THROUGH THE GUILD.**

1. The Guild applied to the Court on May 3 of this year to have certain salary anomalies corrected.
As initiator of the application the Guild opened the case with its claims—one for a general rise for women of £52 (reduced by certain dicta of His Honour to £38), another to allow Primary women to rise to £350, one to restore re-engaged teachers to their previous salaries, certificates and skill marks, four others referring to special classes of teachers.
The case resulted in Mr. President Morgan's awarding—
 - (a) A **£29 rise for all women over 21**, and other amounts for those below. (His Honor was "assisted to this decision" by the light shed on 1935 events by the Guild representative).
 - (b) £20 extra for Women Chief Assistants.
 - (c) The restoration of re-engaged teachers' salaries, certificates, and skill marks.
 - (d) A correction of an anomaly in the School of Arts.
 - (e) A regulation giving secondary rates to domestic arts, dressmaking, and millinery teachers with IIB subjects and a 31 skill mark.
2. The Guild—its first act—gained a £15 rise for the lowest paid of the outback teachers.
3. The Guild gained allowances for girl Junior Teachers equal to those of boys.
4. The Education Enquiry Committee.—The Guild exposed the Tyranny of the skill mark system to PROTECT YOU—ask any Guild member to let you see her latest "Chronicle", or on becoming a member we shall send you a copy of this evidence.
5. The path to a IIB has been opened for a number of "blocked" IIIA Assistants—by the Guild.
6. Many teachers have received advice and assistance in their difficulties with which the Guild deals swiftly, confidentially and efficiently.
7. The Guild subscription is 6/3 per £100 of salary—a comparatively low amount for an association of this type.
For this Library and Text Books are supplied; Lecture Notes provided; Cash Purchase Discounts are available, and there are comfortable club rooms awaiting your use in the holidays, and at all other times.
8. The Guild Works for Women—that means you—it has no divided loyal ties such as the Union cannot avoid having.

Stand Shoulder to Shoulder with Your Fellow Women

BE ONE OF A STRONG MAJORITY.

Join the Guild !

J. M. COOPER, President.

N.B.—Resignations from the Union must be returned to us on or before the 28th September, otherwise you will be called on to pay Union subscriptions for next year, but do not send any of the accompanying forms to the Union, **SEND THEM DIRECT TO US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** and we will do the rest for you.

Hon. Secretary Women Teachers' Guild, Epworth Building 33 Pirie St., Adelaide.

Source: State Library of South Australia: PRG 26, May Mills, 'Private papers of Miss May Mills' (summary).

FIGURE 13

AC6.5 Recruitment Pamphlet for the Women Teachers' Guild (2)

Dear Fellow Teacher,

Since its inauguration the Women Teachers' Guild has fought successfully and ceaselessly, for the rights of women. A brief account of its history and achievements will not come amiss as it has now completed seven splendid years of untiring service.

In 1937 the South Australian Public Teachers' Union received, in one day alone, a batch of 616 resignations from women teachers belonging to it. For the next few weeks more, and more, and more resignations came in. Why did all these women, the majority of the women in the service, resign from the Union and join together to form their own organization—the Women Teachers' Guild?

The reason was that for four years **the interests of the women in the S.A.P.T.U. had been sacrificed to those of the men, especially when it came to salaries.** The Union's attitude was that, as there is only a limited sum voted for Education, the more there was for the women the less there was for the men. The Salaries Committee consisted of five men and one woman, who was not allowed to put the women's viewpoint to the Court. So, in the 1935 Award, women suffered severely, some even receiving reductions.

All attempts to remedy this inadequate representation failed, although the numbers of men and women were nearly equal. Every possible mode of conciliation was tried by the women. One suggestion, a very fair one, was rejected by a packed meeting urged to vote against it by the largest men's association, which told its members (we still have the circular): "If the women gain control **YOUR UNION** is in danger." But still the women remained patient. At last came the final straw, after four years of opposition, contumely, and injustice. By a narrow majority the women succeeded in gaining a Salaries Committee of one man, one woman, and a chairman (man). But their success was short lived. Immediately attempts were made to have the election rescinded in favour of a Salaries Committee of three headmasters.

Do you wonder that at last the majority of women decided that they would be better off out of the Union? But, perhaps you have been told they were wrong, that unity is strength—strength for the men perhaps, not for the women, not for **you!**

For her own protection every woman should join the Guild. This advice is supported by no less a person than His Honour the President of the South Australian Industrial Court, who decided that—

IT IS NOT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF WOMEN TEACHERS TO BELONG TO THE UNION.

He said: "**WOMEN NEED AN ORGANIZATION OF THEIR OWN.**"

Should you allow any other influence to outweigh the decision of such a highly qualified authority?

To a logical mind such a statement means only one thing—

Join the Guild !

Source: State Library of South Australia: PRG 26, May Mills, 'Private papers of Miss May Mills' (summary).

AC6.6 Women Teachers' Guild Presidents 1938–1950

1938–39	Phebe Watson
1939–40	Phebe Watson
1940–41	Jessie Cooper
1941–42	Jessie Cooper
1942–43	Jessie Cooper
1943–44	Jessie Cooper
1944–45	Jessie Cooper
1945–46	Mary Coombs
1946–47	Mary Coombs
1947–48	Mary Coombs/Veta Macghey
1948–49	Veta Macghey
1949–50	Veta Macghey ²

² Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 272.

AC6.7 Life Members of SAPTU and SAIT

FIGURE 14

Life Members of SAPTU and SAIT Year Unknown, 1923–1949

YEAR UNKNOWN	1936
Mr T. Harry	Mr F.J. Gartrell
Mr R.T. Burnard	Mr J.D. Drinkwater
Anne Espie	Adelaide Miethke
1923	J.W. Odgers
Mr J. Willmott	Phebe Watson
Mr F. Wholohan	1937
1924	Mr G.T. Polson
A.E. Lampe	1940
1929	Ellie Opie
Mr W. Bennett	Mrs E. Swift
Victor J. Pavia	Miss A. Schmidt
1930	Elsie Smily
Mr C. Bronner	1942
Mr C. Charlton	Peter A. Corry
Mr F.W. Cole	1945
Mr J. Fairweather	Hilda Cotten
1931	Euphemia Drummond
Mr G.S. Berriman	Margaret H. Stacy
Mr T.S. Bosch	1946
Mr L.H. Gordon	Mr I.G. Symons
Mr W. Ham	Mrs J. McDougall
F.N. Leak	Hilda Taylor
Mr T.G. Roberts	1947
Mr R. Sutton	E. Allen
1932	J.H. Williams
Mr G. Charlesworth	Mr R.A. West
1933	Miss N. Hynes
Laura O. Heyne	1948
Mr E.W. Skitch	May Cleggett
1935	1949
Lizzie A. Lamb	Gertrude Law
	D.D. Smith

Source: Vicary, A., *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1997, p. 274.

FIGURE 15**Life Members of SAPTU and SAIT 1949–1987**

Miss F. McDonald	Mr J.E. Eddy
Miss Z. Wilson	R.E. Mitchell
1950	Eileen M. Kean
May Mills	1967
Miss D. Hodges	J. Naughton
Dora Flint	Mr W. Westgarth
Thomas S. Raggatt	1969
1952	William H.A. Cochrane
Janet McKechnie	1971
Mr A. Hart	Murray D. Haines
Mr R. Barbour	Graham F. Smith
1955	1972
Frances Nicholas	Wilfred A. White
Mr R.A. Potter	1973
1956	Lillian G. Short
M. Veta Macghey	Frank A. Woithe
Dorothy Collins	1974
1958	Mr D. Warren
Jean Leslie	Betty Tomlinson
1959	1976
Mr W. O'Connell	Mr A.K. Beaty
Mr C. McKinnon	1977
Donald Carmichael	Ron W. Close
1960	1978
Fred H. Davis	Milton P. Hunkin
Dulcie Smith	1980
1961	Cath McNaughton
Alan Rendell	1984
1963	Les Kemp
Edmond W. Golding	1987
Garnett J. Lord	Laurence E. Kiek
Jean Pavy	
1965	
Edward Russell Speed	

Source: Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 275.

AC6.8 Presidents and Vice-Presidents of SAPTU and SAIT

FIGURE 16

Presidents and Vice-Presidents of SAPTU 1896/97–1908/09

YEAR	PRESIDENT	VICE-PRESIDENTS
1896–97	G. Gill Milton M. Maughan (from April 1897)	Milton M. Maughan (to April 1897) J. Donnell A. Holloway
1897–98	Milton M. Maughan	C.B. Whillas A. Holloway
1898–99	C.B. Whillas	J. Harry S. Jackman
1899–1900	J. Harry	J. Donnell A. Lampe
1900–01	J. Donnell	A.H. Neale T.G. Roberts
1901–02	A.H. Neale	R.T. Burnard A.A. Wicksteed
1902–03	R.T. Burnard	C. Charlton G. Charlesworth
1903–04	A. Williams	C. Charlton B.S. Roach (after Easter) W. Steadman
1904–05	A. Williams	A. Clark J. Kollo sche
1905–06	A. Clark	A. Lampe J. Kollo sche
1906–07	C. Charlton W.H. Cherry (from December 1906)	W.H. Cherry Mr Wholohan (from December 1906) J. Drinkwater
1907–08	W.H. Cherry	J. Harry J. Willmott
1908–09	J. Fairweather	W. Bennett G. Charlesworth

Source: Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 266.

FIGURE 17**Presidents and Vice-Presidents of SAPTU 1909/10–1922/23**

YEAR	PRESIDENT	VICE-PRESIDENTS
1909–10	W.M. Bennett & J. Harry	T.W. Cole R. Robinson (resigned February 1910) J. Drinkwater
1910–11	J. Harry C. Bronner (from March 1911)	C. Bronner (to March 1911) D. Murphy J. Donnell
1911–12	T.W. Cole (resigned January 1912) V.J. Pavia	J. Willmott W.H. Hand
1912–13	V.J. Pavia	W.H. Hand J. Willmott
1913–14	J.A. Kennedy	J. Willmott W.H. Hand
1914–15	S.H. Warren W. Bennett (from June 1915)	W. Bennett (to June 1915) O. Witt G. Gosden
1915–16	J. Donnell	Miss Adelaide Miethke (First female Vice-President) Charles Maley
1916–17	C. Bronner	Charles Maley
1917–18	John Moyes	J. Drinkwater
1918–19	G. S. Berriman	Miss Adelaide Miethke
1919–20	R. Sutton	Charles Maley
1920–21	John Moyes	Miss Adelaide Miethke Charles Maley
1921–22	T.H.S. Nicolle	Miss Phebe Watson Charles Maley
1922–23	W.H. Hand (retired January) T.H.S. Nicolle (January–June)	Miss Phebe Watson Charles Maley

Source: Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 267.

FIGURE 18**Presidents and Vice-Presidents of SAPTU 1923/24–1939/40**

YEAR	PRESIDENT	VICE-PRESIDENTS	
1923–24	W.M. Bennett	Miss Phebe Watson Charles Maley	
1924–25	F.J. Gartrell	Miss Phebe Watson E.A. Allen	
1925–26	H.A. Lushey	Miss Phebe Watson E.W. Skitch	
1926–27	E.W. Skitch	Miss Lizzie Lamb L. Gordon	
1927–28	R.A. West	Miss Lizzie Lamb Miss Laura Heyne (replaced Lizzie Lamb in January 1928) Peter Corry	
1928–29	L.H.R. Gordon (retired April 1929) Peter Corry (from April 1929)	Miss Laura Heyne P.A. Corry (replaced by) B.J. Fitzgerald (in April)	
1929–30	George Charlesworth	Miss Laura Heyne R.E.J. Miller	
1930–31	Peter Corry	Miss Laura Heyne J.W. Odgers	
1931–32	R.A. West	Miss Laura Heyne J.W. Odgers	
1932–33	G.T. Polson	Miss Jessie Cooper J.W. Odgers	
1933–34	R.L. Bromley	Miss Jessie Cooper J.W. Odgers	
1934–35	Peter Corry	Miss Jessie Cooper A.P.C. Hart	
		Male	Female
1935–36	I.G. Symons	W.R.G. Sharp J. Whitburn	Miss Jessie Cooper Miss H. Coffen
1936–37	A.P.C. Hart	W.R.G. Sharp J. Whitburn	Miss H. Coffen Miss F. Blake
1937–38	H.M. Lushey	R.F. Brand P.R. Judd	Miss N. Davies Miss K.N. Powell
1938–39	Peter Corry	W.E. Howell C.R. McKinnon	Miss May Mills Miss A.L. Tapp
1939–40	R.A. West	D.D. Smith Garnett J. Lord	Miss May Mills Miss A.L. Tapp

Source: Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 268.

FIGURE 19**Presidents and Vice-Presidents of SAPTU 1940/41–1950/51**

YEAR	PRESIDENT	VICE-PRESIDENTS	
1940–41	C.R. McKinnon	D.D. Smith	Miss May Mills
		Garnett J. Lord	Miss A.L. Tapp
1941–42	W.S. Coombe	Fred H. Davis	Miss May Mills
		E.J. Rigby	Miss B.R. Wellington
1942–43	D.D. Smith	Garnett J. Lord	Miss May Mills
		W.T. Westgarth	Miss A.L. Tapp
1943–44	Miss May Mills (First female President)	F.J.W. Schneider	Miss A.L. Tapp
		Garnett J. Lord	Miss F.M. Nicol
1944–45	A.P.C. Hart	W.T. Westgarth	Miss A.L. Tapp
		D.P. Schubert	Miss J. Leslie
1945–46	Thomas S. Raggatt	W.T. Westgarth	Miss J. Leslie
		W.S. Gent	Miss M.C. Naismith
1946–47	Thomas S. Raggatt (D.P. Schubert was to have become President 1946–47 but resigned to become Secretary of VTU. Raggatt re-elected)	Reginald A. Nelson	Miss A.L. Tapp
		E.J. Pryor	Miss J. Leslie
1947–48	Alan Rendell	Reginald A. Nelson	Miss May Mills
		W.S. Gent	Miss A.L. Tapp
1948–49	E.J. Pryor (to February 1949)	Reginald A. Nelson	Miss May Mills
	Thomas S. Raggatt (from February 1949)	W.S. Gent	Miss A.L. Tapp
1949–50	Thomas S. Raggatt	Reginald A. Nelson	Miss May Mills
		W.S. Gent	Miss G.C. Jeffries
1950–51	Thomas S. Raggatt	Reginald A. Nelson	Miss May Mills
		Donald R. Carmichael	Miss G.C. Jeffries

Source: Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 269.

FIGURE 20**Presidents and Vice-Presidents of SAIT 1951–1967**

		MEN'S BRANCH	WOMEN'S BRANCH
1951	Thomas S. Raggatt	Pres.: Reginald A. Nelson V-Pres.: Edward Russell Speed	Pres.: Miss M. Veta Macghey V-Pres.: Miss F.M. Nicholas
1952	Thomas S. Raggatt		
1953	Thomas S. Raggatt		
1954	Donald R. Carmichael		
1955	Donald R. Carmichael		
1956	Fred H. Davis		
1957	Fred H. Davis	Pres.: Edmond W. Golding V-Pres.: R. Judd	Pres.: Miss D. Smith V-Pres.: Miss Ann Milne
1958	Fred H. Davis		
1959	Edmond W. Golding		
1960	Edmond W. Golding		
1961	Murray D. Haines	Pres.: W.H. Cochrane V-Pres.: Henry T. Bown	Pres.: Miss Jean M. Pavy V-Pres.: Miss Betty M. Tomlinson
1962	Murray D. Haines	Pres.: Wilfred A. White V-Pres.: Henry T. Bown	Pres.: Miss Jean M. Pavy V-Pres.: Miss Betty M. Tomlinson
1963	Murray D. Haines	Pres.: Wilfred A. White V-Pres.: C.G. Cook	Pres.: Miss Jean M. Pavy V-Pres.: Miss Betty M. Tomlinson
1964	Wilfred A. White	Pres.: Frank A. Woithe	Pres.: Miss Betty M. Tomlinson
1965	Wilfred A. White	Pres.: Frank A. Woithe V-Pres.: C.G. Cook	Pres.: Miss Betty M. Tomlinson V-Pres.: Miss F. Parish
1966	Frank A. Woithe	Pres.: H. Clark V-Pres.: R. Munro	Pres.: Miss E. Curnow V-Pres.: Miss M. Jenkins
1967	Frank A. Woithe	Pres.: H. Clark V-Pres.: R. Munro	Pres.: Miss E. Curnow V-Pres.: Miss M. Jenkins

Source: Vicary, *In the Interests of Education: A History of Education Unionism in South Australia*, p. 270.

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