

Changes to womens rights since 1945

[Sociology](#), [Social Issues](#)



Women's rights have changed significantly after 1945 as ideas that show women are inferior to men were being abolished to create a more equal society. Employment, politics and social change were factors that have been altered. Without these changes, Australia would still be a sex - segregated society with justified ideas that a women's place is in the home. Prior to 1945, women's rights were limited in areas of employment, politics and social change. Women were expected to be housewives who were not entitled to the same wage as men because society had an enshrined idea that men needed enough to support a wife and children.

Also, women had limited opportunities to voice their concerns and interests in public places and suffered against abusive family situations. This began to change when feminists started to liberate against these inequities. Employment before 1945 showed many inequalities between men and women due to differences in wage and unfair rights. The Equal Pay Case of 1972 was an event that sparked during the 70's due to inequalities of wages between men and women. The Whitlam government introduced the minimum wage for both genders as a start for equality in the workplace.

Another thing the Whitlam Government introduced was free tertiary education for all women allowing social mobility. This opened doors to a wider range of jobs like medicine, nursing, or law and gave women a chance to be independent. The Anti Discrimination Act of 1985 was a law made to prohibit discrimination based on gender or pregnancy for everyone from employers to co-workers or in public areas. Although the equal pay case was not a complete success, introducing the minimum wage, free

tertiary education and the anti discrimination act was a major success in changing women's rights.

Women had limited voices to discuss issues of equality in politics. This changed when feminists such as Germaine Greer wrote and encouraged women to be politically active. The Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) was formed in 1972, which advocated for childcare and maternity leave. In 1975, the Whitlam Government elected a women's representative Elizabeth Reid to address women's rights in the political arena. Politics has changed immensely since 1945 as women politicians started to rally for women's rights. Social change was a major change in women's rights from 1945 as different ideas and views were being voiced to force change.

In 1961, the introduction of the Birth Control Pill was a major event that affected many working class women. This pill gave women the chance to take control of their own body and lives as they can now move into the workforce without the problems of leaving due to giving birth. Also, the new laws like the No Fault Divorce of 1975 and the changing of the rape laws in 1981 helped women escape abusive relationships and prohibited men from divorcing their spouse for no reason. The introduction of the pill and new laws gave women more control and safety to women and this was a major change in women's rights from 1945.