

Picket Line



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FOR THIS Picket Line I've been given a number of new publications to review relating to the area of Equal

Employment Opportunity (EEO), Affirmative Action and women and work. CCH Australia, who provide a number of loose-leaf reporting services in the areas of business, law, management and employment, have released two new publications on EEO and Affirmative Action. The first is the *Practitioners' Guide to Equal Opportunity Law and Practice*. At 1000-odd pages it is a comprehensive work falling into the 'everything you always wanted to know about EEO' category. It covers the background of international human rights conventions, the development of EEO legislation in Australian state and federal jurisdictions, the grounds of discrimination covered by legislation, guide-lines for employment, discrimination in education, accommodation, clubs and associations, goods and services and superannuation, privacy issues, and establishing an EEO program, with notes on relevant cases interspersed throughout. This book is suitable for libraries looking for a detailed research tool in the area which would be of use to EEO officers, lawyers, and students.

Whereas EEO legislation aims to prohibit individual instances of discrimination, **Affirmative Action** legislation takes a different approach. It aims to overcome entrenched discrimination by requiring people to take positive action. As a result of Affirmative Action legislation, companies with more than 100 employees have to analyse the position of disadvantaged groups within their company and then develop a program with specific goals to improve the situation. *Implementing Affirmative Action for Women* is a practical guide to this process and would be a useful addition to libraries servicing personnel/human resource management sections and senior management.

Women and work have always interested me. In *Breaking Through: Women, Work and Careers* Jocelynnne Scutt has compiled the contributions of 22 women telling the stories of how they came to be where they are. Women have always worked, but have not always had access to careers. Paid work is important because it gives economic independence. But a career is something more, often fulfilling a personal and social need. And as many of the hardships and the choices they made in their careers reveal, they did not do it for the money.

Although these women do have things in common, one of the strengths of this kind of a collection of stories is that it can depart from generalities, and focus on the diversity of individuals' experience.

These women are teachers, activists, lawyers, nurses, doctors, politicians, unionists, writers, journalists, researchers, academics, public servants, and social workers. They have been factory workers, waitresses, secretaries, shop assistants, bank workers, cleaners. They come from all classes. They are Aboriginal, migrant, and Anglo-saxon. Some suffered child sexual abuse, domestic violence in their marriages, and eating disorders. They had children early, late and not at all. Women are a diverse group—race and class cut across and overlay issues of gender and *Breaking Through* illustrates this.

The narratives also show that it is impossible to separate women's work and careers from other parts of their lives. Not only because of their immediate family commitments but also because of the ways their careers are bound up with social justice and involvement in the community, politics and the development of personal power. Many of the storytellers were discouraged from pursuing 'careers' apart from teaching and nursing, but they also had encouragement and openly acknowledge the importance of their role models (often their mothers)—those people who 'inspire others to contribute'. As you might expect with Jocelynnne Scutt's background in law there are quite a few lawyers among the collection. But also one lawyer who was a librarian as well - Beth Wilson:

'I did a post-graduate degree in librarianship, preparing myself for a happy, unhassled life of reading and looking up occasionally to stamp the odd book out on loan. I couldn't have been more wrong. Librarianship is a far more demanding (and rewarding) career than I could ever have thought. It taught me how to use a law library and to understand legal research methodology, a most empowering experience.'

All in all, a compelling read and too good to sit on the shelves for long.

Salary Scales

It's true—the long awaited 1992/93 edition of *Salary Scales* is out. It covers the public service, higher education, TAFE, hospitals, schools and local government. Unfortunately, information on salary levels for library and information services staff in the private sector (except private hospitals and independent schools) is almost impossible to gather and publish in the same way. But if you do work in the private sector, you can use the industrial information service to discuss appropriate salary levels with me on an individual basis.

To obtain your copy of *Salary Scales* just leave your postal address with ALIA's receptionist. If you have already requested a copy, your name will be on the mailing list and will receive one automatically. (Free to members; \$15 to non-members) ■