

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Organisation

Entry ID: AWE0642

New South Wales Typographical Association

Occupation Trade Union

Summary

The male-only New South Wales Typographical Association opposed the employment of women at the publication *The Dawn*, a journal for women, which was launched by Louisa Lawson in 1888. It aimed to be a “phonograph to wind out audibly the whispers, pleadings and demands of the sisterhood.” By October 1889, *The Dawn* office employed ten women as typesetters, printers, binders, and unskilled workers. The staff who were paid less than union rates and were harassed by male workers in the printing trade were not eligible to join the all male Typographical Association. On 26 July a motion was put to the general meeting of 26 July 1890 that the rules be altered to allow

the admission of female compositors, who may be duly qualified, and may agree to claim equal rates of pay for equal hours of labour with men [1]

With only four votes in favour the motion was lost. Women were not admitted into the Union until 1916, and then not as compositors, but in a special Women and Girls' section. [2]

[1] Hagan, Jim, 1929-, *Printers and politics : a history of the Australian printing unions, 1850-1950*, Australian National University Press [in association with the Printing and Kindred Industries Union], Canberra, 1966, p. 82

[2] Hagan, J, 'An Incident at the Dawn', *Labour History*, vol. 8, May 1965 p. 21

Published resources

Journal Article

An Incident at the Dawn, Hagan, J, 1965

Book

Printers and politics : a history of the Australian printing unions, 1850-1950, Hagan, Jim, 1929-, 1966

Resource Section

New South Wales Typographical Association (1882 -), Elford, Ross G, 2002, <http://www.atua.org.au/biogs/ALE1154b.htm>

Newspaper Article

A woman's political work is never done, Roxon, Nicola, 2003

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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Created 12 December 2003

Last modified 8 May 2009