

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Resource  
**Entry ID:** AWH002692

## Rosemary Follett interviewed by Nikki Henningham in the Women and leadership in a century of Australian democracy oral history project [sound recording]

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**Repository** National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

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**Reference** [ORAL TRC 6290/30](#)

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**Date Range** 28-Feb-12 - 28-Feb-12

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**Access** Access open for research, personal copies and public use.

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**Finding Aid** Timed summary (16 p.) and uncorrected transcript (typescript, 111 leaves).

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### Details

2 sound files (ca. 172 min.)??Rosemary Follett speaks about leading a government with a slim majority; Julia Gillard; her family's history; her parent's backgrounds; sectarianism in Australia in the middle of the twentieth century; her family's move to Canberra; her siblings; her mother's university education; the importance of faith and organised religion to her; her Catholic schooling; female role models; family discussions about politics; her secretarial studies at TAFE; living and working in Darwin; meeting her husband; secretarial work; her university education; joining the Australian Labor Party (ALP); working for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC) in the Office of Women's Affairs; establishing the National Women's Advisory Council; feminism; Gough Whitlam's sacking; working at the Department of Home Affairs; her career motivations; the Public Service Executive Leadership Program; mentors; Moveable Cultural Heritage; what drove her eventually towards formal politics; her role as the Member for Fraser; working towards self government for the A.C.T.; her role as President of the A.C.T. branch of the ALP; her consultative approach to leadership; her election as first Chief Minister of the A.C.T. in 1989; the opposition to A.C.T. self government; her attempts to introduce feminist policies; experiencing consistent commentary about what she was wearing; establishing the machinery of government; working with an inexperienced public service and huge minister portfolios; media scrutiny; her goals of legislation for occupational health and safety and consumer protection laws; losing the leadership through a vote of no confidence; the growth of ALP women at state and territory leader meetings; gender and leadership styles; dealing with criticism and judgement; losing the 1995 election; working as Discrimination Minister for the A.C.T. Human Rights Office; being Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Canberra; chairing the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA); taking on board member roles after politics; mentoring; public speaking; critical incidents in her leadership; what leadership entails; character traits and behaviour she admires in leaders; the support of family and friends; her love of Canberra.

### Author Details

Nikki Henningham

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