

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE5547

Eggleston, Elizabeth Moulton

(1934 - 1976)

Born 6 November, 1934, Armadale Victoria Australia

Died 24 March, 1976, East Melbourne Victoria Australia

Occupation Academic, Activist, Lawyer, Solicitor

Summary

Motivated by a burning sense of injustice, Elizabeth Eggleston was a trailblazer in advocating justice for Aboriginal people. An academic lawyer and activist – she was the first doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Law at Monash University – Eggleston's research revealed systematic discrimination of Indigenous peoples in the administration of justice. She was a founder of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service in 1972.

Details

Elizabeth Moulton Eggleston was born on 6 November 1934 at Armadale, Melbourne. Her father, Sir Richard Moulton Eggleston, was a barrister who became a judge and chancellor of Monash University. Elizabeth graduated with a Bachelor of Laws (second-class honours) from the University of Melbourne in 1956. At university Elizabeth was active in the Australian /Student Christian Movement, the Students' Representative Council, a voluntary legal-aid service and the editorial board of the legal journal, *Res Judicatae*. After briefly practising law in Melbourne, Eggleston studied her Master of Laws at the University of California at Berkeley, graduating in 1958. She returned to Melbourne in 1961 and practised as a solicitor. Elizabeth completed an arts degree at the University of Melbourne in 1964.

In 1965, Eggleston became the first doctoral candidate in the faculty of law at Monash University. Her PhD focussed on Aboriginal people and the administration of justice. In 1969 Eggleston began lecturing at Monash University, where she established new courses. In 1971 she became part time director of the University's Centre for Research into Aboriginal Affairs. The Centre generated research, organized conferences, established a course in Black Australian Studies, provided resources for Aboriginal groups and individuals, and liaised with government and overseas bodies.

Eggleston was a founder of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service in 1972. She conducted a discussion group with Aboriginal people in Pentridge gaol and advised Aboriginal communities. In addition to publishing articles, Elizabeth made submissions to government inquiries and parliamentary committees. Eggleston returned to North America in 1972 and undertook research in Native American communities. Her major publication, *Fear, Favour or Affection* (Canberra, 1976), was acclaimed for revealing systemic discrimination against Aboriginal people in the administration of criminal justice. She died on 24 March 1976 in East Melbourne and Aboriginal friends sang at her memorial service.

Published resources

Resource Section

Eggleston, Elizabeth Moulton (1934-1976), Weeks, Phillipa, 2006,
<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/eggleston-elizabeth-moulton-10105/text17837>

Site Exhibition

Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers>

Archival resources

Monash University Archives

Personal Archives: Eggleston, Elizabeth Moulton (1934-1976)

Author Details

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