

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0014

Ryan, Lyndall

(1943 - 2024)

Born	19430414, Paddington New South Wales Australia
Died	20240430, Newcastle New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Academic, Educator, Feminist, Historian

Summary

Lyndall Ryan was a member of the first Sydney Women's Liberation Group in 1970. In 1974 she joined the Commonwealth Public Service as a policy analyst on women's health and child care. She became an academic in 1977 and has held positions in Australian Studies and Women's Studies at Griffith and Flinders Universities. She was appointed to the position of Foundation Professor of Australian Studies and Head of School of Humanities at the University of Newcastle in 1998.

Details

The daughter of Edna Ryan and a committed feminist, Lyndall Ryan was one of the early wave of scholars who examined the extent of violence perpetrated against Aboriginal people by white colonisers. Her book *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, first published in 1981 and based on her 1975 PhD thesis, presented a critical interpretation of the early history of relations between Tasmanian Aborigines and white settlers in Tasmania. A second edition was published by Allen & Unwin in 1996, in which she brought the story of the Tasmanian Aborigines in the 20th century up to date.

Her scholarship since then continued to confront this violent past. In 2013, she led a team of scholars in a four year project to map the frontier massacres in Eastern Australia, a project funded by an Australian Research Council (ARC) grant investigating Violence on the Australian Colonial Frontier, 1788-1960.

Ryan was elected as a Labor member of the ACT Advisory Council in September 1967 and resigned in December 1968.

Ryan was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in January 2019 for her significant service to higher education, particularly to Indigenous history and women's studies and then posthumously appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in January 2025 for distinguished service to tertiary education, particularly Indigenous history and colonial settlement through research and publications.

Events

1971 - 1971

Mejane

1972 - 1972

Refractory Girl

2018 - 2018

Australian Academy of the Humanities

1977 - 1977

Australian History, Australian National University, Canberra.

1998 - 2005

Australian Studies, University of Newcastle.

1977 - 1986

Comparative Social History and Australian Studies, Griffith University.

1970 - 1970

First Sydney Women's Liberation Group.

1973 - 1974

Leichardt Women's Community Health Centre.

1974 - 1976

Policy Analyst, Priorities Review Staff and Women's Affairs Branch, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra.

1984 - 1986

Queensland Committee on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation.

1999 - 2003

School of Humanities, University of Newcastle

2004 - 2005

School of Humanities, University of Newcastle, Ourimbah Campus.

1996 - 1998

South Australian Committee, Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.

1986 - 1998

Women's Studies, Flinders University.

Published resources

Book

The Aboriginal Tasmanians, Ryan, Lyndall, 1996

We Women Decide: Women's Experience of Seeking Abortion in Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania, 1985-1992, Ryan, Lyndall, Ripper, Margie and Buttfield, Barbara, 1994

Getting Equal: the History of Australian Feminism, Lake, Marilyn, 1999

Journal

Origins of a Royal Commission, Ryan, Lyndall, 1996

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition

From Lady Denman to Katy Gallagher: A Century of Women's Contributions to Canberra, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2013,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/ldkg>

The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders>

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Correspondence of Warren Osmond and Lyndall Ryan, 1972-1996 \(bulk 1974-1982\) \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Julia Ryan, 1947-1982 \[manuscript\]](#)

[Waterloo creek: the Australia Day massacre of 1838, George Gipps and the British conquest of New South Wales \(Melbourne: Penguin, 1992\)](#)

[Papers of Manning Clark, 1907-1992 \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Dymphna Clark, circa 1930-2000 \[manuscript\]](#)

[Papers of Lyndall Ryan, 1968-1992 \[manuscript\]](#)

National Library of Australia

[\[Biographical cuttings on Lyndall Ryan, Dr., author, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals\]](#)

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

[Julia Ryan interviewed by Sara Dowse \[sound recording\]](#)

[Interview with Lyndall Ryan, Professor of Australian Studies, University of Newcastle \[sound recording\] / interviewer, Sara Dowse](#)

Author Details

Elle Morrell

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