Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0041

Pink, Olive Muriel

(1884 - 1975)

Born	18840317, Hobart Tasmania Australia
Died	19750706, Alice Springs Northern Teritory Australia
Occupation	Anthropologist, Botanical artist

Summary

Olive Pink was a botanical artist and anthropologist who campaigned for the rights of Aboriginal people. She was one of few women anthropologists working in a male dominated field in the 1930s and 1940s. Pink positioned herself as an expert on Aboriginal people and campaigned from this basis in her criticism of government officials, missionaries and pastoralists.

Details

Educated in art at Hobart Technical College. Pink worked at the Public Works Department and later the Railways Commission of New South Wales. She studied anthropology at Sydney University with the Workers' Educational Association and became secretary to the Anthropological Society of NSW. In 1926 & 1927 she travelled to Ooldea on the Transcontinental Line, SA. There she created many of her early drawings of desert flora.

Pink spent much time in the Northern Territory, living first with Arrernte and Warlpiri people and settling eventually in Alice Springs. She was a prolific correspondent, writing many letters to government departments and the press, particularly to represent her beliefs about Aboriginal people and her views on their better treatment by the government. Historian Julie Marcus suggests that Pink eventually lost faith in the potential of Anthropology to assist Aboriginal people, and abandoned the discipline later in life.

In 1955 she applied for the reservation of an area of land on the eastern bank of the Todd River as a flora reserve. In 1956 the Australian Arid Regions Flora Reserve of 20 hectares was gazetted. Pink and her gardener Johnny Jambijimba Yannarilyi developed the garden, where Pink lived until her death. The garden was then renamed the Olive Pink Flora Reserve, and now contains over 300 of Central Australia's plant species.

Published resources

Resource Section
Guide to the Norman B. Tindale Archives:, South Australian Museum, 2000,
http://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/tindale/HDMS/338-4.htm

Pink, Olive Muriel (1884-1975), Marcus, Julie, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A160004b.htm

Resource
Papers of E.W.P. (Ernest William Pearson) Chinnery (1887-1972), National Library of Australia,
http://www.nla.gov.au/ms/findaids/0766.html

Significant Tasmanian Women: Olive Pink (1884-1975), Early Anthropologist, Aboriginal Rights Activist and Botanical Artist, Women Tasmania, 2001,
http://www.women.tas.gov.au/significantwomen/search/olivepink.html

Papers of Sir Paul Hasluck (1905-), National Library of Australia, 2001,
http://www.nla.gov.au/ms/findaids/5274.html

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Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003,
http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html

Book Section
The Beauty, Simplicity and Honour of Truth: Olive Pink in the 1940s, Marcus, Julie, 1993

Journal Article
The Landowners in the Northern Division of the Aranda Tribe, Olive Pink, 1936

Spirit Ancestors in a Northern Aranda Horde Country, Olive Pink, 1933

Book
Imagined destinies : Aboriginal Australians and the doomed race theory, 1880-1939, Russell McGregor, 1997

Yours truly, Olive M. Pink, Marcus, Julie, 1991c

The Indomitable Miss Pink: A Life in Anthropology, Marcus, Julie, 2001

Talkin' up to the white woman : Aboriginal women and feminism, Moreton-Robinson, Aileen, 2000

First in Their Field: Women and Australian Anthropology, Marcus, Julie; Lepervanche, Marie de; McBryde, Isabel; Prior, Mary Ellen Murray; White, Isobel; Morris, Miranda; O'Gorman, Anne; Marcus, Julie and Cheater, Christine, 1993

Journal
Bulletin of the Olive Pink Society, Olive Pink Society and Research Centre for Women's Studies, University of Adelaide, 1989-1999

Edited Book
200 Australian Women: A Redress Anthology, Radi, Heather, 1988,
https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20071105022623/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/78644/20071105-1315/www.200australianwo

Site Exhibition
The Encyclopedia of Women and Leadership in Twentieth-Century Australia, Smart, Judith and Swain, Shurlee (eds.), 2014,
http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders

Archival resources

Northern Territory Archives Service
Olive Pink Papers

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Ernest William Pearson Chinnery, 1897-1971 [manuscript]

Papers of Sir Paul Hasluck, 1925-1989 [manuscript]

Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Australian National University
Tom and Mary Wright collection deposit 1

Tom and Mary Wright Collection deposit 2

National Archives of Australia, Northern Territory Office
Flora and fauna reserve Alice Springs - Miss Olive PINK - General correspondence

Alice Springs Native Flora Reserve Olive Pink

Miss Olive Pink /secular Sanctuary Granites Tanami District

Flora and Fauna Reserve. Alice Springs (Miss Olive Pink - General correspondence)

Native Flora Reserve Olive Pink

Miss Olive Pink. Application for permit to enter Aboriginal Reserves General Correspondence

National Archives of Australia, National Office, Canberra
PINK, Olive

South Australian Museum Archives
Field diaries, notebooks and other data relating to fieldwork

University of Tasmania Library, Special/Rare Collection
Olive Pink Collection

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Olive Pink, anthropologist, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

AIATSIS Manuscript and Rare Books Collection
A patron and a friend : Olive Pink and J.B. Cleland

Warlpiri vocabulary slips / by Olive Pink, c1934

Letter, Miss Olive Pink to T.G.H. Strehlow, 8th September, 1946

Papers of Olive Muriel Pink

On policies for the Northern Territory Aborigines : an open letter, no.4

Collection of letters, documents, interview transcripts from [depositor's] collection on Ooldea closure and the Maralinga tests

ACT Heritage Library
RW Boden Work Files and Reports [relating to Olive Pink and the Olive Pink Society]

Author Details
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