Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0108

Daniels, Kay

(1941 - 2001)

Born	19410101, Australia
Died	20010717
Occupation	Historian, Public servant, Writer

Summary

Kay Daniels taught and published widely in the fields of women's, social and colonial history. Until her two-volume work *Women in Australia: An Annotated Guide to Records* was published in 1977, it had been generally believed that women could not be included in history as they lived within the family and there were no records of their lives in the public sphere. She spent part of her life as a Commonwealth public servant in Canberra, contributing in areas of cultural policy and intellectual property rights.

Details

After graduating from the University of Adelaide in 1963, Daniels chose an interdisciplinary studies course offered by University of Sussex. It was here that she completed her doctoral thesis on the publication of novels in England in the 1890s, under labour historian Asa Briggs and literary critic David Daiches.
From 1967 to 1988, Daniels taught history, applying the insights she had acquired to the new field of women's history, at the University of Tasmania. With a grant funded from the International Women's Year project, Daniels designed and supervised a project that set out to unearth in Australia's official archives all materials relating to women. *Women in Australia: An Annotated Guide to Records* was published in 1977. She also attended early women's movement conferences, as well as leading the fight to save the Cascades Female Factory and publishing the newsletter *Liberaction*.
Daniels took leave in 1985, to head up the committee to review Australian studies in tertiary education in Canberra. The resulting report, *Windows into Worlds*, led to the establishment of many Australian Studies centres, and to the increased Australian content of much of tertiary education.
She was the principal intellectual force behind the 1993 cultural policy statement *Distinctly Australian*, and also had significant input into its successor *Creative Nation*, after commencing work for the federal Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, in 1989.
Before passing away, Daniels was awarded an adjunct professorship at Macquarie University and an honorary degree from the University of Tasmania.
In 2003 The Kay Daniels Award was established to honour her work as a historian and public servant. It is a biennial award, sponsored by members and associates of the Australian Historical Association, the University of Tasmania and the Port Arthur Historic Site.

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Newspaper Article
Kay Daniels: writer, historian, scholar and bureaucrat, Summers, Anne, 2001

Life of compassion drove gifted feminist, Flanagan, Richard, 2001

Enlightened voice of women's history, Roe, Jill, 2001

Destined for distinction, 2001

Journal Article
Obituary, Roe, Jill, 2001

Kay Daniels 1941-2001, Roe, Jill, 2002

Edited Book
Women in Australia : an annotated guide to records, Daniels, Kay, Murnane, Mary, Picot, Anne and National Research Program (Australia), 1977

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
Papers of Marilyn Lake, 1964-1999 [manuscript]

Author Details
Anne Heywood

Created 22 August 2001
Last modified 29 October 2018