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# Australian Political Studies Association Women’s Caucus

(2007 - )

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**Born** 1 January, 2007

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**Occupation** Professional Association, Women,Ãs advocacy

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## Summary

The Women’s Caucus of the then Australasian Political Studies Association (APSA) was established in 1979. It was set up to improve the standing of women in the political science profession and to promote the study of women and politics. The annual general meeting of the Women’s Caucus is held during the annual conference of APSA. A representative serves on the APSA Executive. The caucus conducts regular reviews of the status of women in the profession and of the extent of the successful implementation of APSA’s policy that the study of women should be integrated into all politics courses.

## Details

The Australasian Political Studies Association's (APSA) Women's Caucus was established on the initiative of Marian Sawyer and Carole Pateman at APSA's 1979 conference in Hobart. Its purpose is to improve the status of women in the profession of political science and to make women visible in the political system particularly as it is studied through the discipline of Political Science. An immediate success was the inclusion of Carole Pateman on the Executive of APSA as Vice-President.

Marian Sawyer lists a number of activities of the Women's Caucus including:

- increasing the representation of women on the APSA Executive including as President,
- inspiring a more gender-inclusive journal,
- making the Annual Conferences more woman-friendly,
- instigating regular audits of the status of women in the profession,
- monitoring the gender inclusiveness of curriculum and textbooks,
- recording the completion of thesis research with a gender focus.

The Women's Caucus has also initiated and sustained prizes for research and study in the field of political science.

In 2018 the winner of the first Thelma Hunter PhD Prize for the best thesis on women and/or gender and politics will be announced. This will replace the Women and Politics Prize which was awarded from 1982 to 2016.

The Carole Pateman Prize is given for the best book on the topic of gender and politics. The Academic Leadership in Political Science Award was established by the Executive Committee of APSA in response to recommendations made by the Women's Advancement in Australian Political Science report (2012). It recognises inclusive and collaborative leadership, of particular importance to women and members of non-dominant groups, but also of benefit to all emerging scholars.

The Women's Caucus published an electronic newsletter WAPSA News from 1994 to 1995 and then created the moderated email discussion list Ausfem-Polnet in 1996. By 2003 this list had some 900 subscribers including many women working within government.

Madeline Grey's 2014 assessment of women's leadership in the field of Political Science makes three points.

The APSA Women's Caucus has allowed women political scientists to work collectively to exert influence and implement initiatives,

Their contributions to a feminist body of scholarship through the Australian Journal of Political Science and other national and international publications has laid the groundwork for transforming the discipline,

The creation of the Women's Caucus, a specific structure with a clear mandate to focus on gender issues, has played an important role in supporting women to challenge the status quo and promote change.

In these ways, the APSA Women's Caucus has been a significant influence on both the profession and the discipline of Political Science.

*This entry was sponsored by a generous donation from the late Dr Thelma Hunter.*

## Published resources

### Resource Section

Political Science, Grey, Madeline, 2014,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/biogs/WLE0178b.htm>

### Journal Article

The Impact of Feminist Scholarship on Australian Political Science, Sawyer, Marian, 2004

### Resource

Australian Political Studies Association Website, Australian Political Studies Association, 2017,  
<http://www.auspsa.org.au/about/womens-caucus>

### Journal

Politics: The Journal of the Australasian Political Studies Association, Australasian Political Studies Association, 1966-90

Australian Journal of Political Science, Australasian Political Studies Association, 1990 -

### Conference Proceedings

Papers- Australasian Political Studies Association, Australasian Political Studies Association, 1960 c

### Site Exhibition

Women Who Caucus: Feminist Political Scientists, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2017,  
<http://womenaustralia.info/exhib/caucus/>

### Book Section

A History of the Australasian Political Studies Association, Jaensch, Dean, 2009

## Archival resources

### National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Records of the Australasian Political Studies Association, 1956-1996 \[manuscript\]](#)

### Author Details

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