

# Making Women Count

## A History of the Women's Electoral Lobby

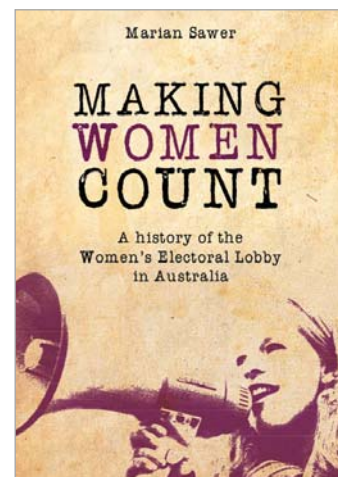
### Marian Sawer

In 1972 the Women's Electoral Lobby changed the political agenda forever. Australian political parties began producing women's policies, equal opportunity acts were passed, women's policy units were set up in government and women's services were funded. It became legal to advertise contraceptives and women became entitled to the minimum wage.

This ambitious history explores the effect of WEL both on politics and on the lives of women who discovered the power of sisterhood. It is the first full-scale history of WEL and draws on extensive archival, survey and media evidence. It challenges much social movement theory, showing women's movement continuities over time, whether 'polite' or disruptive. It contests a number of current myths concerning 1970s feminism, including the idea that feminists had to suppress diversity in order to constitute 'women' as an effective political actor.

### About the Author

**Marian Sawer** is an Adjunct Professor in the School of Social Sciences, ANU, where she leads the Democratic Audit of Australia. She has published a number of books on gender, politics and public policy, including *A Woman's Place: Women and Politics in Australia* (Allen & Unwin, 1984), *Sisters in Suits: Women and Public Policy in Australia* (Allen & Unwin, 1990) and *The Ethical State? Social Liberalism in Australia* (MUP, 1990).



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