

## **Liz Broderick: Life Lines: Sex discrimination over the lifecycle**

Anniversaries are a time for reflection as well as celebration, and the anniversary of the Sex Discrimination Act is a chance to consider how the legislation is serving contemporary Australian women. How has sex discrimination changed over the 'lifecycle' of the legislation? How well does the Act reflect our daily experiences of gender equality? Sex discrimination is most commonly understood as isolated acts that impact on individual women. Life events such as entering the workforce, pregnancy, return to work, balancing work and caring responsibilities and retirement are all 'trigger' points for individual experiences of sex discrimination. Yet discrimination around these individual life events can shape subsequent opportunities, choices and outcomes for women, and add up to serious disadvantage later in life. This paper advocates a 'lifecycle' approach to sex discrimination that has the potential to change how law reformers, policy-makers and individual women think about sex discrimination.