

Neoliberalism, Post-Feminism, and Gender Equality: Why Educational Attainment does not translate into Income Equality for Contemporary Australian Women.

Dr Julie-Anne Carroll

School of Public Health and Social Work, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Queensland

Dr Mangalam Sankupellay

School of Public Health and Social Work, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Queensland

Although arguably the birth of neo-liberalism and the atomisation of both individuals and ideas under New-Wave Capitalism not only allowed, but encouraged feminism to get on with its task of awarding equality to women, empirical evidence in sociological and public health data still suggest otherwise. The women's movement, and those struggling to obtain equality for the genders across health, education, income, and political representation saw an interesting transition during neo-liberalism to the popular theoretical notion of 'DIY feminism' – or 'postfeminism' – where women could simply exercise individual agency to avail themselves to the educational and career opportunities so far awarded primarily to their male counterparts. However, in 2015, we see Capitalism in a post-GFC state; the shine of neoliberalism considerably dulled, and data from the Global Gender Gap Index (2015) showing that despite massive improvements in educational attainment for many women, these are not translating into income inequality, nor any tangible career success for women across a broad range of disciplines and industries. This presentation will discuss the failings and successes of neo-liberalism in getting us to this point, and the structural, social, and economic changes needed for these successes to be sustained for women in a meaningful and financially rewarding way.