

## Making Labour Visible: Architecture, gender equity and the Parlour Project

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Since the 1970s feminists have brought the daily lives of women to light and argued that gender is formed and experienced in the everyday. Women architects' persistent under-representation in the profession remains almost a 'hidden contemporary history', surfacing at various moments in the last forty years, only to slip from view again. Now we are witnessing a resurgent architectural feminism forging alliances between new issues and new media. This paper analyses the Australian Parlour Project and its focus on women's everyday labour in the architectural workplace, a strategy to uncover how, why and where mechanisms of gender disadvantage operate. We will present the triple focus of the project: providing an evidence base, providing a theory of 'accumulative disadvantage' to explain how and why gender bias persists even in meritocratic organisations, and finally we will describe some of the activist outcomes we have used to kick start genderchange.

### Biographies:

Dr Karen Burns, Justine Clark and Professor Julie Willis (University of Melbourne) are co-recipients of an Australian Research Council funded project led by Dr Naomi Stead to research Equity and Diversity in the Australian Architecture Profession: Women, Work and Leadership. Burns' feminist essays have been widely published. Clark is the Editor of *Parlour: women, equity, architecture*. Willis is the author of *Women Architects in Australia 1900-1950* and co-editor of *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*.