



West of England & South Wales Women's History Network 32nd Annual Conference

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN AND FOOD

Saturday 11 October 2025 9.15am – 5.00pm

The Forum, University of Exeter, Stocker Road, Exeter EX4 4PY



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9.15 Registration

9.45 Welcome

Keynote Speaker: Polly Russell, food historian and curator at the British Library

Material Matters, Narrative Strategies: Women, Food and History in Public Space.

10.40 Linda Henderson Introduction to University of Exeter Library Special Collections

10.45 Coffee

11.15 SESSION 1 Colonial India

SESSION 2 Food Production

Anamika Bhattacharjee, *Women as Consumers and Sellers of Food in Colonial Bengal*

Amelia Doherty, *The Everyday Hen: Medieval Chickens and the Working-Class Woman*

Shaona Barik, *The British Women's Recipe Books in Colonial India 1858-1930: critical perspectives*

Linda Henderson, *'In these places the ducklings are reared under the care of the good wife': the Women of the Aylesbury Duck Industry*

Siobhan Lambert-Hurley, *The New Kitchen: Urdu Cookbooks by Women in Late Colonial India*

Mary Casella, *The Importance and Impact of Women in English Cheddar*

12.45 Lunch Opportunity to visit University of Exeter Library Special Collections over the lunch break.

2.00 SESSION 3 Cookery books

SESSION 4 Politics of Food

Paul Cleave, *Food writers: a Devon perspective*

Helen George, *"Sugar Shortages, Sardines and Semolina: Changes in Food Supply on the Home Front 1914 to 1920", with the Hertfordshire town of Watford as a case study.*

Adilah Hameed, *Beyond the Waistline: Middle Eastern and Arab Recipes in the United States during the Age of Diet Culture*

Katherine Connelly, *Hunger, strikes and the suffragettes*

Adrienne Harrington, *Full and Plenty as Social History: Women, Work and the Irish Kitchen*

Sydni Zastre, *Diet, Weight and the Unruly Pregnant Body in Ann Vasta and Marie Stopes*

3.30 Tea

3.50 SESSION 5 The past speaks to the present

SESSION 6 Food Preparation and Consumption

Maura Sanchez, *'We're meant to be reclaiming our appetite here!' A Political Reading of the Representation of Female Appetite in Contemporary Culture*

Carina Mansey, *Sexism in Victorian and Edwardian high-end restaurants and the associated press*

Greer Gemin, *"They work like robots all their lives:" Housewives, Angel Food Cake, and Labour Dynamics in the Home Kitchen*

Raliat Olusola, *Threat of Modernity to the Traditional Roles of Women in the Preparation and Consumption of Indigenous Grains and Related Food items in the Ondo Province of South-western Nigeria*

16.50 Conference ends

For further information go to <https://weswwomenshistorynetwork.co.uk>