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# RWSA NEWSLETTER

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December

2019

## Impressive in Paris!

Several RWSA members, including Co-Chair Katherine Jellison, presented in September 2019 at the European Rural History Organisation.

The following papers were presented as a panel which was titled *Gender, Race, and National Identity in Rural Europe and North America*.

“Women Bestowed with Land, Endowed with Confidence, Obsessed with Utopia: The 1846 Migration from Rural Central Sweden to Rural Illinois,” Irene A. Flygare, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences-Uppsala, Sweden and Marja Erikson, Uppsala University, Sweden

“Look Away: Race and Sex on the Wilson Plantation in the Mid-Twentieth Century,” Jeannie Whayne, University of Arkansas, United States

“Ethel B. Dawson, the National Council of Churches of Christ Home Missions Division, and Racial Activism in Rural Jim Crow Arkansas,” Cherisse Jones-Branch, Arkansas State University-Jonesboro, United States

“Farm Women and Farm Work: Re-Evaluating in the 1980s,” Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, Iowa State University, United States.

The Organizer and Chair of the panel was Katherine Jellison, Ohio University, United States. Comments followed from Nicola Verdon, Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom.

Katherine Jellison also chaired another session, “Rural Social, Political, and Economic Reform in Global Perspective. Deb Reid was on that panel and presented “Indigenous Collards and Corporate Iceberg Lettuce: Production at Henry Ford’s Richmond Hill Plantation, Inc., 1930-1940s.”

The crowning achievement was Katherine’s keynote, “From the Palatinate to Pennsylvania: Gender Relations and the New Agriculture in Europe and North America,” which was described by a fellow RWSA member as “brilliant.” She also commented that “the added luster was the setting: the Sorbonne. Champagne reception afterwards. Very impressive.”



# May 2021 RWSA Conference Update

University of Guelph, Canada

## **What's Cooking for the RWSA-2021 Conference?**

We have some great events planned for the RWSA 2021 conference and these are just a few to whet your appetite.

We're kicking off the event with a pre-conference tour to the Adelaide Hoodless Homestead, a national historic site, and a few other surprise stops on May 12th. Once the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron, and later the Haudenosaunee people, we'll travel down country roads and view vernacular architecture built by settlers in the nineteenth century as well as some modern farms. Adelaide is credited as the co-founder of the Women's Institute, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the National Council of Women, and the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON). She also was a powerful force behind the formation of three faculties of Household Science, one being at the University of Guelph, and housed in the very building where we will hold our sessions, Macdonald Institute.

Keeping in mind that our theme is "Kitchen Table Talk to Global Forum," our keynote speaker on May 13th is Kim Anderson (Métis), historian and Associate Professor in the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition, University of Guelph. She will be presenting on "Kitchen Table Methodologies." Daughter of a white woman who graduated with a home economics degree, Kim identifies as Indigenous and shares with us her indigenous feminist ideologies of mothering, managing wellness, and community organizing. Her research and current initiative is to "Indigenize" the academy, one step being to create a Grannie cabin/Nokum's house in a wooded area on campus, a research lab/kitchen table where "conversational methods" will bring people together in creativity and learning. Invited into this female-centered space, people can do ceremony and engage in land-based learning concerning food and medicinal plants, and in community building. As Kim reminds us, so much more takes place around the kitchen table than simply eating food.

We'll conclude the conference with a tour to Crawford Lake to see the natural wonders of the Niagara Escarpment and explore the fifteenth-century Iroquoian village, one of the most accurately dated pre-contact archaeological sites in Canada. First, we'll enjoy a short video and sample some traditional cornbread and maple syrup, then tour through a reconstructed longhouse. Then it's time to relax and enjoy the fresh air on two kilometres of accessible boardwalk and longer trails should you feel adventurous.

# Call for RWSA Conference Proposals

The theme “Kitchen Table Talk to Global Forum” emphasizes how conversations, relationships, and food shape rural communities. This theme allows for the consideration of the ways that gendered, sexual, ethnic, and racial identities affect personal power, class consciousness, individual choice, and community development. These subjects lend themselves to the exploration of rural activism, social justice, innovation, politics, business development, cultural expression, self-governance, and collective experiences — both historical and contemporary — in local, regional, national, and global settings.

Presentations take many forms at RWSA conferences, including workshops, panel sessions, tours, interactive sessions, roundtable discussions, poster presentations, open-mic discussions, performances, readings, and audiovisual presentations. The RWSA encourages inter-, trans- or multi-disciplinary approaches that connect rural women’s/gender history and present-day concerns. The RWSA seeks to integrate creative work with the conference theme, and we encourage artists working in visual, film, performative, and literary genres to submit their ideas to make the conference most dynamic.

The theme: “Kitchen Table Talk to Global Forum” encourages exploration of several subthemes:

- Women and mental health
- Women and food justice
- Indigenous rural women
- Women and food tourism
- Women and technological and biological innovation (media, healthcare, equipment)
- What’s on the table (food production, preparation, rituals, hospitality, etiquette, and display)
- Women's Table talk (issues concerning family, community, politics, legislation, and markets)

Please submit the following information by **31 May 2020**.

1. Title of paper/panel/poster/workshop/performance (working title is acceptable).
2. 200-word description/abstract of paper, panel, poster, workshop, performance, etc.
3. Brief vita/bio of presenter or panel participants and complete contact information for all.

Please indicate if your proposal does not fit in the regular session time of 1.5 hours with three presentations and discussion. We will contact you if your proposal has been accepted. Submissions should be sent electronically (as a single Word document or combined PDF) to:  
RWSA2021@gmail.com

**Program Committee Co-chairs:** Katherine Jellison, Ohio University, and Jenny Barker-Devine, Illinois College

**Program Committee Members:** Margaret Thomas-Evans, Jodey Nurse-Gupta, Tracey Hanshew, Amy McKinney, Cathy Wilson.

**Information:** For information on travel grants and letters of invitation, contact [Catharine A. Wilson at cawilson@uoguelph.ca](mailto:cawilson@uoguelph.ca). For additional information on the RWSA, please go to the organization website (<https://www.ohio.edu/cas/history/institutes-associations/rwsa/>).

# Call for Submissions



## ***A Recipe for Success: We Need Your Input***

RWSA organizers would value your input as we pull together a grant proposal this coming winter that, if successful, will extend the impact and reach of the conference and further support the participation of grad students, emerging, and marginalized scholars.

Please let us know by February 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 if:

- you or someone you know might be interested in creating an edited collection from papers given at the RWSA 2021 conference;
- you are, or know of, a grad student, emerging, or marginalized scholar whose research fits the conference themes;
- you are proposing a different type of session, i.e. a roundtable, workshop, or performance; or
- you are planning to submit your RWSA 2021 conference paper for publication to a particular journal.

All these fantastic ingredients will help us get that additional funding.

Thanks SO much for your enthusiastic support. Too many cooks can't spoil this broth!

Contact Cathy Wilson, [cawilson@uoguelph.ca](mailto:cawilson@uoguelph.ca)

## ***Backstories: The Kitchen Table Talk Cookbook***

**Cynthia Prescott and Maureen Thompson, editors**

Food brings people to the table and dialogue ensues. While sharing food we exchange information and ideas, but also elements of our personal lives. We nourish each other with sustenance and knowledge. Food consumption is one site where even humans living in urban environments encounter rurality on a daily basis. Reflecting the theme of our upcoming 14th Triennial Conference in 2021, "Kitchen Table Talk to Global Forum," the Rural Women's Studies Association will publish a cookbook with The Digital Press at the University of North Dakota featuring member-

contributed heirloom recipes that relay family history, cultural heritage, and personal memories associated with the dishes. *Backstories: The Kitchen Table Talk Cookbook* will honor female tradition while producing a volume that elevates cookbooks to a scholarly level, reflecting the themes associated with the conference including food production, preparation, rituals, hospitality, etiquette, and display. It will consider how recipes transmit significance, meaning, and culture, appealing to an audience that craves a serving of knowledge alongside their food.

Sharing recipes that produce our favorite dishes is a form of intimate conversation. Our cookbook will present diverse regional foodways across centuries and from around the world. These might include anything from simple eighteenth-century farm “receipts” to contemporary vegan dishes. *Backstories: The Kitchen Table Talk Cookbook* will consider social aspects of eating and gathering that have empowered women to form organizations that benefit them as a group and society as a whole. It will mirror the global nature of the Rural Women’s Studies Association.

*Backstories: Kitchen Table Talk to Global Forum* (the RWSA 2021 theme) draws on a long tradition of women’s clubs producing cookbooks as fundraisers for their organizations. In keeping with that tradition, we will collect cherished recipes from our members and allies. But *Backstories* will be much more than just another fundraising cookbook. As an organization that unites historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and community activists, we aim to enhance our recipe collection by providing brief essays that situate them in their social and cultural contexts. The recipes will be accompanied by brief contextual essays—ranging from 50 words to 500—that explain how the recipe was collected and used, and how it reflects rural women’s culture in a particular place and time. We will unite these recipes with scholarly essays, including an editorial introduction will provide a historical overview of how recipes and cooking have varied over time and place, and several longer thematic essays on foodways.

**We invite a wide variety of contributions to this volume, including:**

- 1) **Scholarly introduction** examining the history of cookbooks and discussing how they can be used to understand foodways, women’s work, and more
- 2) **Thematic essays** (1,000-10,000 words), including:
  - History of foodways
  - Anthropologies of food
  - Food Studies research
- 3) **Recipes accompanied by brief stories or commentaries, including:**
  - Historic recipes collected from cookbooks and other primary sources
  - Favorite family recipes
  - Contemporary recipes
- 4) **Art and photography**
  - Historic photographs
  - Original art

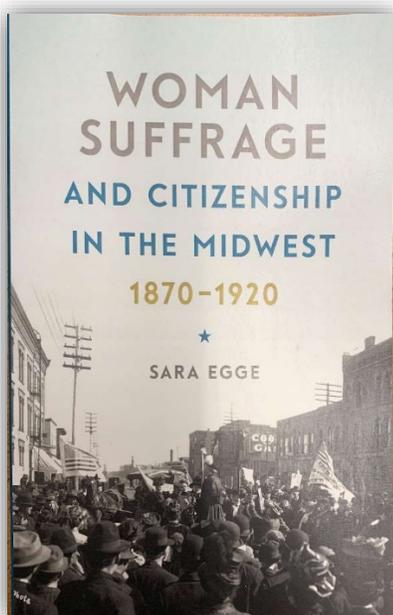
**Submission Guidelines:**

Anyone interested in contributing longer thematic essays or the scholarly introduction is strongly encouraged to submit a 200-word abstract to [RWSAcookbook@gmail.com](mailto:RWSAcookbook@gmail.com) by February 1, 2020.

Send all recipes, completed essays, art, and other materials (saved in MS Word, PDF, or TIF format) to: [RWSAcookbook@gmail.com](mailto:RWSAcookbook@gmail.com) . Submission Deadline: April 1, 2020.

## New Book

In 2018, Sara Egge published *Woman Suffrage and Citizenship in the Midwest, 1870-1920* with the University of Iowa Press. The book explores the ways white rural midwestern suffragists constructed claims to the right to vote out of their civic work on behalf of their communities. These rural women literally built the public institutions that anchored white settlement in the region, and they garnered acclaim for their civic responsibility. As the United States inched closer to joining World War I by the mid-1910s, their civic responsibility transformed into war mobilization. They claimed the ballot not only because they fulfilled their civic duty but also because they supported the war as loyal patriots. These arguments resonated powerfully across the Midwest in the face of growing anti-German sentiment. Since the late nineteenth century, suffragists had charged immigrants as ignorant and backward. Before World War I, their suspicions simmered, but after the United States joined the conflict in Europe, it became easy for suffragists to condemn Germans as disloyal traitors. They used anti-German hysteria to bolster their claims to the ballot, transforming the Midwest as a region considered stubbornly opposed to the cause in the late nineteenth century to a region wholeheartedly supportive by 1918.



## About the RWSA

Founded in 1998 as an outgrowth of the Sixth Conference on Rural and Farm Women in Historical Perspective, the Rural Women's Studies Association is an international organization for the advancement and promotion of farm and rural women's gender studies in historical perspective. The Association aims to encourage research, to promote existing and forthcoming scholarship, and to establish and maintain links with contemporary farm and rural women's organizations. The RWSA aims to encourage scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds and countries to communicate about their research and all other activities that are supportive to the Association's goals.

### **RWSA Officers**

#### **Co-Chairs**

Katherine Jellison, Ohio University  
Catharine Wilson, University of Guelph

#### **Co-Secretaries**

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, Iowa State University  
Position open for second secretary

#### **Treasurer**

Jenny Barker-Devine, Illinois College

#### **International Membership and Communication Coordinators**

*Pacific*—Kate Hunter, Victoria Univ. of Wellington

*Canada*—Jodey Nurse-Gupta, University of Waterloo

*Europe*—Margreet van der Burg, Wageningen University, Holland

*Africa*—Olubunmi Ashimolowo, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria

*U.S.*—Vivianne Holmes, University of Maine;  
Tracey Hanshew, Washington State TC

#### **Emerging Professional & Graduate Student Coordinators**

Maggie Weber, Iowa State University  
Kendra DeHart, Sul Ross State University  
Karissa Patton, University of Saskatchewan  
Diane McKenzie, University of Lethbridge

### **RWSA Officers Cont.**

#### **Web Master**

Katherine Jellison, Ohio University  
Website:

<https://www.ohio.edu/cas/history/institutes-associations/rwsa/index.cfm>

#### **Social Media Coordinators:**

Cynthia Culver Prescott, University of North Dakota  
Maggie Weber, Iowa State University

Blog:

<https://ruralwomensstudies.wordpress.com/>

#### **Newsletter Editor**

Margaret Thomas Evans, Indiana University East

#### **Fundraising**

Cynthia Culver-Prescott, University of North Dakota

### **Share Your Work on the RWSA Blog**

We invite submissions to the RWSA blog, which publishes on a wide range of topics related to rural women, gender and sexuality. We publish scholarship and book reviews as well as more informal reflections. We also seek to highlight rural activism. Posts typically range from about 200 to 2,000 words. Send submissions and queries to Cindy Prescott at <cynthia.culver@gmail.com>.

### **Send Us Your News!**

RWSA members would appreciate hearing of your accomplishments, awards, changes in employment, publications, and research discoveries or needs. We welcome announcements from institutions and organizations regarding historical holdings, job openings, and events. Send submissions to Margaret Thomas Evans [margevan@iue.edu](mailto:margevan@iue.edu)

We plan to have two issues per year – fall and spring.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

MEMBER INFORMATION

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

AFFILIATION

MAILING ADDRESS (please circle: Work or Home)

CITY

STATE

ZIP / COUNTRY CODE

COUNTRY

E-MAIL PHONE FAX

MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO RWSA:

ANNUAL DUES are \$10.00 for students, non-academics, and adjunct and part-time faculty; \$25.00 for tenure-track faculty; and \$50.00 for contributing members.

JOAN JENSEN-MARY NETH FUND: RWSA welcomes contributions to the Joan Jensen-Mary Neth Fund to help offset registration fees for invited speakers and international participants. Memorials may be made to the Fund as well. Please designate the name of the person being memorialized.

DUES: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please circle: Annual \$10; Annual \$25; Contributing \$50)

JENSEN-NETH FUND: \_\_\_\_\_ IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail a personal check or international money order made out to RWSA to:

Jenny Barker-Devine, RWSA Treasurer  
Dept. of History, Illinois College  
1101 W. College Avenue  
Jacksonville, IL 62650

**(RWSA is a 501C-3 non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible.)**