



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Changing Families,  
Changing Food.

# Families Remembering Food

## Principal Investigators

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## Summary

'Families Remembering Food' is an oral history study informing, and informed by, the other projects in the programme. The study documents changes in family structures and relationships as well as changing patterns of food consumption, based on the re-use of qualitative data from existing archived materials.

A particular focus in this secondary data use will be intergenerational attitudes to family, health and food across Britain. This study also seeks to address particular qualitative questions raised in the course of the other projects in the programme.

Royal Holloway  
University of London

The Leverhulme Trust

[www.sheffield.ac.uk/familiesandfood](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/familiesandfood)

## Research questions

- Have social constructions of the family, and memories of the family, changed over time and place (with particular reference to food consumption and mealtimes)?
- What is the place of food in people's memories of family life (and are there geographical differences)?
- How do gender, ethnicity and social class impact on the different interconnections between family and food?
- What methodological considerations do researchers face when re-using oral history archives?



## Research design

The project will examine existing archived oral historical evidence collected in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The evidence, elicited from these collections, will allow for family and food to be located within broader life story data that covers the years from the Edwardian period to the Millennium. The data sources being used are:

- The Edwardians (The Economic and Social Data Service – ESDS)
- 100 Families (ESDS)
- Millennium Memory Bank (The British Library)

## The 'Changing Families, Changing Food' Programme

'Changing Families, Changing Food' is a major inter-disciplinary research programme, funded by The Leverhulme Trust. The Programme began in October 2005 and will run for just over three years.

It is organised into three research strands on: pregnancy and motherhood; childhood and family life; and family and community. Focusing on contemporary Britain, the Programme also includes some international comparisons and a 'time-line' to establish the quantitative and qualitative nature of social changes affecting families and food over the last century.

The Programme is coordinated by Peter Jackson (Director of Research for the Social Sciences at Sheffield University) and is based in ICoSS (the University's new social science facility). The Programme involves colleagues from Clinical Sciences, East Asian Studies, Geography, Nursing and Midwifery, the School for Health and Related Research and Sociological Studies at Sheffield in collaboration with colleagues in Health and Social Care at Royal Holloway, University of London.

The research takes food as the lens through which to observe recent changes in family life and examines how changes in family form have affected patterns of food consumption. The Programme's findings are expected to contribute to current debates about obesity and nutrition, media and consumption, food choice and deprivation.

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