In the 1960s I was a rare working-class girl at Oxford, studying history, and I then studied social sciences at LSE. I’ve promoted interaction between history and the social sciences and the contribution of history to social policy formation, especially in areas including ageing, gender (in)equality and voluntary action. When I became a professor at Sussex in 1994 there were just eight female professors of history in Britain. Things have improved, but massive inequalities remain. The battle continues!