

Inaugural Professorial Lecture Professor Cara Aitchison

Marking Difference or Making a Difference:

Constructing Places, Policies and Knowledge of Inclusion, Exclusion and Social Justice in Leisure, Sport and Tourism

This talk introduces leisure, sport and tourism as places of inclusion, exclusion and social justice. These inclusive and exclusive spaces are explored as physical places, social policies, and knowledge practices. The first part of the presentation draws on empirical research conducted by Professor Aitchison to demonstrate ways in which identity and difference have been marked in sites and sights of leisure, sport and tourism. Illustrative examples include disability and leisure in the UK, gender and sport policy and management in the UK and Iran and ways in which identities of gender, sexuality and ethnicity intersect in the construction of, and contestation within, global tourism. Each of these case studies contests previously dominant definitions and discourses in leisure, sport and tourism studies suggesting that new ways of seeing and explaining leisure-related relationships between people, places and policies are required.

The second part of the presentation expands this critique of the ways in which knowledge has been constructed, legitimated and reproduced within leisure, sport and tourism studies. This is done by developing epistemological work from social and cultural geography, sociology and gender studies to introduce the theoretical framework of the social-cultural nexus. This critique draws on both materialist and poststructuralist accounts of identity in recognition of the mutually informing interconnections between social and cultural relations. In doing so the lecture seeks to demonstrate ways in which we can go beyond marking difference through exclusionary identities, places, policies and practices to making a difference through inclusive ways of knowing and ways of being.



Faculty of the
Built Environment

Inaugural Professorial Lecture

Cara Carmichael Aitchison

Professor in Human Geography

Director of the Centre for Leisure, Tourism and Society

and

Launch of the Centre for Leisure, Tourism and Society

Monday 6pm 10 July 2006 Bristol UWE

Frenchay Campus, Lecture Theatre 2B020 (ground floor in B block) followed by wine reception and buffet in The Street Café in S block

**To accept this invitation or for further details contact
fbe.entry@uwe.ac.uk 0117 328 3000**



Centre for Leisure, Tourism and Society

The Centre for Leisure, Tourism and Society (CELTs) was granted Research Centre status by Bristol UWE in June 2006.

Staff and research students within CELTs undertake interdisciplinary research that investigates and explains the place of leisure and tourism in shaping wider social, cultural and spatial relations within society. Research concentrates on developing both critical theory and theoretically informed applied research that contributes to policy-making in leisure and tourism:

- Evidence-based policy for the economic development of leisure and tourism at regional level
- Rural and coastal development policies of regeneration and sustainability
- Social, cultural and spatial theories and policies of equity, inclusion and social justice
- Mobility, migration and new forms of tourism experience
- Critical theory, methodology and pedagogy in leisure and tourism research and education



Cara Carmichael Aitchison - Biography

Cara Carmichael Aitchison was appointed as the first Professor of Geography at Bristol UWE in 2003.

Cara was born in Falkirk in Scotland in 1965, educated locally in Larbert and then in Stirling before attending Edinburgh University where she gained an MA (Hons) in Geography in 1987. She took a Postgraduate Diploma in Recreation and Leisure Practice at Edinburgh from 1987-88 and was appointed as Lecturer in Leisure Studies at Croydon College of Higher Education in 1988. A year later she moved to the Polytechnic of North London (University of North London from 1992) where she was a Lecturer from 1989-90, Senior Lecturer from 1990-93 and Principal Lecturer from 1993-97. During this time Cara gained a Postgraduate Certificate in Education from Greenwich University, an MA in Gender and Society from Middlesex University and, from 1996-99, undertook her PhD titled Leisure Studies: Gender, Power and Knowledge awarded by Bristol University. From 1997-2003 Cara worked at the University of Gloucestershire as a Senior Research Fellow from 1997-99, Reader in Leisure Policy and Cultural Theory from 1999 and Head of the Leisure and Sport Research Unit from 2001.

Cara's teaching and research focus on the integration of social, cultural and spatial theories and policies related to leisure, sport and tourism with a particular emphasis



on issues of identity, inclusion and social justice. She has published eight books and over 50 journal articles, book chapters and reports. Her inter-disciplinary approach to geographical, sociological, gender, leisure and tourism studies is best highlighted in *Leisure and Tourism Landscapes: Social and Cultural Geographies* written with Nikki MacLeod and Steve Shaw and published by Routledge in 2000. Cara is perhaps best known for her research on gender, synthesised in her book *Gender and Leisure: Social and Cultural Perspectives* and published by Routledge in 2003 although she has also published theoretical and empirical research on disability and, more recently, sexuality (*Gender, Sport and Identity: Masculinities, Femininities and Sexualities* published as an edited collection by Routledge, in press) and ethnicity and religion (*Geographies of Muslim Identities: Diaspora, Gender and Belonging* co-edited with Peter Hopkins and Mei-Po Kwan and published by Ashgate, 2006).

Cara is an appointed member of the Research Assessment Exercise sub-panel for Sport-Related Studies for RAE 2008, an elected Academician of the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences, an appointed Member of the Arts and Humanities Research Council Peer Review College, Principal Organiser of the ESRC Research Seminar Series *Tourism, Inequality and Social Justice* (2006-2008), Chair of the Women and Gender Commission of World Leisure (2002-) and was Chair of the UK Leisure Studies Association from 2001-04. Cara has been a Course/Award Leader for eight courses in three institutions, an External Examiner/Advisor for seven courses in four institutions and has held visiting lecturing positions in the Netherlands and Iran.