



Ageing and Physical Activity

Rethinking Approaches

Hosted by the University of Exeter Medical School's European Centre for Environment and Human Health, as part of the ESRC funded Moving Stories project.

4th & 5th July 2013 at Burleigh Court Conference Centre



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Ageing & Physical Activity: Rethinking Approaches 4th and 5th July 2013

Burleigh Court Conference Centre, Loughborough

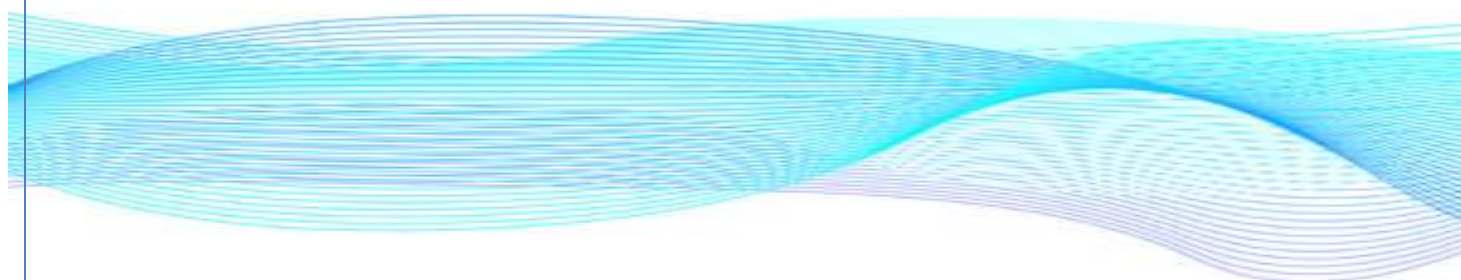
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#MOVE2013

Cassandra Phoenix @ItsCPhoenix



Timetable

All presentations will take place in the Soar Room

Thursday 4th July

- 9:30 – 10:00 Registration (with refreshments available)
10:00 – 10:10 Welcome – Dr Cassandra Phoenix

Ageing and Physical Activity in Context

- 10:10 – 10:45 Reconsidering the physical inactivity pandemic – *Dr Joe Piggin*
10:45 – 11:20 Interindividual differences and intraindividual change in older adults: An argument for a developmental approach in studying older adult physical activity – *Prof. Diane Whaley*
11:20 – 11:40 Tea & Coffee Break

The Moving Stories Project

- 11:40 – 12:15 Ageing well: Understanding how physical activity shapes perceptions and experiences of ageing - *Dr Noreen Orr*
12:15 – 12:55 How are physically active older adults perceived by others?: A life course perspective – *Dr Cassandra Phoenix*
13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

Considering Ethnic Minority Elders

- 14:00 – 14:35 'What would the neighbours think if I was walking in the street?' Understanding physical activity and sedentary lives amongst ethnic minority elders in Great Britain – *Prof. Christina Victor*
14:35 – 15:05 Exercise is medicine? Understanding the exercise beliefs and practices of ageing Chinese-Canadian women – *Dr Shannon Jette*
15:05 – 15:30 Panel Discussion (with Q&A)
15:30 – 16:00 Exhibitions
Afternoon Tea Reception
1900 Dinner at Burleigh Court (for those booked in for dinner, bed and breakfast)

FRIDAY 5TH JULY

- 9:30 – 10:00 Arrival (with refreshments available)
- 10:00 – 10:10 Welcome to Day 2! – Dr Cassandra Phoenix

The Embodiment of Ageing and Physical Activity

- 10:10 – 10:45 Older men, physical activity and embodiment: Interviews with obese men on a male-only community-based weight management programme – *Prof. Brendan Gough*
- 10:45 – 11:20 Embodying physical activity and inactivity: What can we learn from Master athletes? – *Dr Emmanuelle Tulle*
- 11:20 – 11:45 Tea & Coffee Break

Sensory Sensibilities

- 11:45 – 12:20 Physical activity among older adults with sight loss – *Dr Meridith Griffin*
- 12:20 – 12:45 Communication and social participation: Understanding and ameliorating the impact of age-related changes in hearing and cognition on communication in older adults – *Dr Antje Heinrich*
- 12:45 – 13:45 Lunch

Space, Place and Everyday Activity

- 13:45 – 14:20 Thinking beyond the 'walkability' of urban environments: Developing critically informed research, policy and planning – *Prof. Gavin Andrews*
- 14:20 – 14:45 Finding common ground: The influence of physical and social characteristics of neighbourhoods on getting up, out and about – *Prof. Janice Thompson*
- 14:45 – 15:15 Panel Discussion (with Q&A)
- 15:15 – 16:00 Close
Afternoon Tea Reception

Exhibitions

MOVE

Cassandra Phoenix, Noreen Orr, Kate Bailey, Alex Smalley

MOVE is a photographic exhibition, which forms part of the 'Moving Stories' research project being conducted at the European Centre for Environment and Human Health, of the University of Exeter Medical School, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The project examines people's experiences of being physically active in older age, as well as how physically active older adults are perceived by other people.

MOVE depicts a number of research participants *doing* their activity. Its purpose is to *show* older adults being active in ways that might expand our (visual) narrative resources of what older age can be. Seeking spaces beyond what might be described as the 'sporting spectacular', MOVE conveys the experience of doing physical activity in older age in a way that cannot always be articulated through the spoken word.

MOVE has been exhibited in a number of public spaces such as hospitals, cafes and libraries. It contributed to a programme of initiatives taking place across Europe as part of the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity (see <http://bit.ly/12M3fe5>).

Masters Athletes: Growing Old Competitively

Alex Rotas <http://alexrotasphotography.com>

My photography showcases athletes who still compete in international events through their 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. Like all athletes, these older competitors are constantly pushing themselves physically and mentally to achieve new goals. They are breaking records, challenging themselves daily and continually working to better their techniques and maintain, if not improve, their performances. I hope my photographs convey something of how determined, strong, joyful, empowered and full of life they are. I believe these athletes offer inspiration, act as role models and demonstrate what's possible even as we enter our eighth, ninth and tenth decades. Importantly they remind us that there is another way of looking at ageing than viewing it either as a process of decline and deterioration or as a time to cover up the wrinkles in a quest for cosmetic youth. They don't necessarily look younger than they are. But they look wonderful and very alive and they reveal that no matter what your age, it can continue to be a time for new personal bests and new achievements.

I've shown my work at different venues in the UK, in Finland and in Washington DC, been interviewed on R4's Women's Hour, had my photos shown on BBC's Breakfast TV, yahoo.com, the Express online, the Mail online and the Telegraph.



Moving Stories: Understanding the Impact of Physical Activity on Experiences and Perceptions of Self-Ageing.

Cassandra Phoenix & Noreen Orr.

In this project, we are investigating people's experiences of being physically active in older age. We are also examining how physically active older adults are perceived by other people.

Like much of the population, many older adults live inactive lifestyles and this can have negative consequences for their health and wellbeing. Through this research we are learning "what works" from a group of older adults who are engaged in regular physical activity.

By listening to their stories about moving, we are understanding how and why – at different points in their life - they have been able to deal with the barriers and challenges to being active that we often face. We are also gaining insight into the role that they believe physical activity plays in ageing well.

A second aim of this project is to investigate how physically active older adults are perceived by others. We live in a youth orientated culture where growing older is often seen *only* as a period of physical decline. This can lead to stereotyping and assumptions being made about what behaviours are and are not appropriate for people as they age.

Physically active older adults can challenge stereotypes of ageing and broaden some of these assumptions, but only if their stories are engaged with by the listener. This is the focus in the second part of the project.

We are using a range of qualitative methods including life history interviews, photography, film and focus groups. The images produced as part of the research have been exhibited in a range of public spaces including hospitals, cafes, and libraries. The "Move" exhibition (as it's known) contributed to a programme of initiatives which took place across Europe as part of the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity (see <http://bit.ly/12M3fe5>).

Findings from the Moving Stories project have relevance for policy and practice within the realm of healthy ageing and intergenerational solidarity. To enhance the impact of this research, we are working closely with our Advisory Board, which includes representatives from AgeUK, Cornwall Sport Partnerships, the Centre for Narrative Research (University of East London), ESRC Centre for Sport, Leisure and Tourism Research (University of Exeter), the participants of the research and an independent health policy advisor.

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (Ref: ES/I009779/1)

<http://www.ecehh.org/publication/moving-stories>

List of Abstracts and Presenters

Prof. Gavin Andrews (McMaster University, Canada)



Thinking beyond the ‘Walkability’ of urban environments: Developing critically informed research, policy and Planning

Abstract

In the context of a substantial volume of research published in the last three years on the ‘walkability’ of the built environment and its relationship to health, I will present some initial thoughts on how a critical perspective might help enrich current debates and the policies and planning initiatives that flow from them. At one level this contribution could focus on the limitations of current epistemological and methodological approaches, but yet offer ideas on how they and others might be developed. At another level, given the limited scope of existing walkability research, another contribution could be to pay attention to different forms of embodiment, movement activities and the places, experiences, agency and cultures involved.

Bio

Professor Gavin J. Andrews was the inaugural Chair of the Department of Health, Aging and Society at McMaster University in Canada from 2006-2011. As of July 2011, he moved ‘back to the ranks’ as a Full Professor. A geographer and predominantly qualitative researcher, his wide-ranging interests including the dynamics between space/place and aging and older peoples’ care, complementary and integrated medicine, health care education and work, specific phobias, fitness cultures, health histories and popular music. Much of his work is positional and considers the development, state-of-the-art and future of medical and health geography. He has published more than one million words in four books, over one hundred and twenty journal articles and book chapters and a number of public reports. He has been involved in nine research operating grants, four as P-i and five as Co-i, and has been an associate editor of two international academic journals.

Prof Brendan Gough (Leeds Metropolitan University)



Older men, physical activity and embodiment: Interviews with obese men on a male-only community-based weight management programme

Abstract

Men do not access or engage with conventional weight management programmes with an emphasis on diet. Since male overweight and obesity is growing, new initiatives have been developed by some NHS bodies to appeal to men. Once such programme has been commissioned by NHS Nottingham City, which comprises a physical activity component as well as nutrition advice, is designed for men, and is delivered via a professional football club in the city. This paper reports on an interview-based study with older male clients (50+; n= 15) focusing on body consciousness, ageing, physical activity, and wellbeing. These interviews were transcribed and subjected to discourse analysis. Preliminary analysis points to social comparison processes, appearance concerns, subjective assessments of weight and progress, moderation, social support and self-determination as key concerns for participants. These findings are discussed with reference to literature on embodiment, ageing, health and wellbeing.

Bio

Professor Gough is a critical social psychologist and qualitative researcher interested in gender issues, especially concerning men and masculinities. He has worked at Sheffield Hallam University, the University of Leeds and most recently at Nottingham Trent University. He has published papers on gender identities and relations, mostly in the context of health and wellbeing such as alcohol consumption, smoking, diet, and aspects of men's health. His research has been funded by a variety of bodies, including the ESRC, NHS and the BPS. Professor Gough is co-founder and co-editor of the journal *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, and he edits the *Critical Psychology* section of the journal *Social & Personality Psychology Compass*. He has co-authored/edited three books in the areas of critical social psychology, reflexivity in qualitative research, and men's health.

Dr Meridith Griffin (University of Exeter Medical School)



Physical activity among older adults with sight loss

Abstract

Broad scale surveys (not specific to visual impairment) have shown that disabled adults are less likely than non-disabled adults to participate in cultural, leisure or sporting activities (DWP, 2013). If we are to consider these broader disability participation rates alongside declining participation rates with age, an alarming picture emerges. Part funded by the Thomas Pocklington Trust, this research aims to increase the knowledge and understanding of participation in physical activity among older people (60-75 years of age) who have acquired sight loss later in life, with the objective of identifying the ways in which visually impaired older people's participation in physical activity can be facilitated and/or prevented. Qualitative methods were employed including semi-structured interviews, audio diaries and mobile interviews. Findings emerged covering a range of themes, including: social support; challenge/independence; variety, sustainability and consistency of opportunities; health and fitness; transport and cost, fear and safety; and the environment: built and outdoor, facilities, and awareness of providers. Conclusions include recommendations to address real and perceived barriers and to improve inclusivity, through a consideration of both good and bad practice.

Bio

Currently an Associate Research Fellow at the European Centre for the Environment and Human Health (University of Exeter Medical School), Dr Meridith Griffin relocated to the UK from Canada when awarded an Overseas Research Scholarship to pursue a PhD in Sport and Health Sciences at the University of Exeter. Also supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, her PhD focused on active ageing, embodiment, and health consciousness within a non-elite women's-only running group. Meridith's primary research interests are ageing, health and wellbeing, disability, gender and embodiment. She has published widely in peer-reviewed journals (e.g. Ageing & Society, Journal of Women and Aging, Journal of Aging Studies, Qualitative Health Research, and Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health). Her empirical and theoretical interests are framed by a methodological interest in interpretive forms of understanding including life history, ethnography, visual and narrative approaches. Currently, Meridith is a successful co-applicant and research lead on a project funded by the Thomas Pocklington Trust examining the experience of physical activity among older people with age-related sight loss.

Dr Antje Heinrich (MRC Institute of Hearing Research Nottingham)



Communication and social participation: Understanding and ameliorating the impact of age-related changes in hearing and cognition on communication in older adults.

Abstract

Difficulty in hearing speech or following conversations, particularly when other voices are present, is one of the most common complaints voiced by older adults. The discomfort and frustration resulting from these difficulties often prompts withdrawal or avoidance of social situations, and can severely limit the range of activities that are available to older adults. In addition, the wider consequences of hearing loss can include poorer cognitive functioning, accelerated rates of brain atrophy, and increased risk of dementia. Hence, increasing the ease and opportunity for older adults to communicate is highly likely to ultimately extend the duration of their healthy and active lifespan, improve their quality of life, and reduce their risk of cognitive decline and dementia. However, before we can develop effective strategies to help older people to communicate more effectively, we first need to know what problems various listening environments pose, and understand exactly how age-related sensory and cognitive declines interact with communication effectiveness. In this talk I will give an overview about the current knowledge on how various listening environments affect older listeners' listening abilities, how they impede communication and what we might be able to do to improve the situation.

Bio

Dr. Antje Heinrich is a research scientist with the MRC's Institute of Hearing Research in Nottingham, UK. Her main research interest is speech communication and specifically how age-related changes in speech perception and production impact communication abilities of older listeners with various amounts of hearing loss. She is particularly interested in the way in which a listener's hearing and cognitive abilities, characteristics of the message such as linguistic complexity, speaker characteristics such as accent and speech register, and background environment interact to affect speech understanding in young and old listeners. To probe the interplay between these factors, she uses psychoacoustic paradigms, phonetically informed speech perception and production experiments, and electrophysiological recording techniques. The work has received recognition through the award of fellowships and grants from funding bodies in the UK (MRC and BBSRC) and abroad (German and Israel).

Dr Shannon Jette (University of Maryland, USA)



Exercise is medicine? Understanding the exercise beliefs and practices of aging Chinese-Canadian women.

Abstract

In this presentation I examine how Western biomedical beliefs around exercise and related health practices compare and contrast with traditional Chinese medicine's (TCM) conceptions of health and exercise in a globalizing society, and how these narratives about health and physical activity are understood and taken up by 15 aging Chinese immigrant women (aged 65+) living in the multicultural city of Vancouver. I outline how the participants in the project take a pragmatic approach to their use of medicine, combining TCM with Western biomedicine in creative ways. However, understandings of the body are underpinned, I argue, by Eastern narratives of the 'oneness' of mind–body and the need for 'balance' in order to achieve health. Towards this end, we found that many of the participants view (and use) traditional Chinese body practices as an extension of TCM, a technique to help them achieve balance. I conclude that the neoliberal narrative of personal responsibility for health does not fuel the exercise practices of many of the participants, but rather that they perceive exercise as a pleasurable activity that improves their levels of happiness (and balance) and enhances their lives.

Bio

Dr. Shannon Jette is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Kinesiology (School of Public Health) at the University of Maryland. Dr. Jette's research interests focus on socio-cultural aspects of health, physical activity, gender and the body. She is currently examining lifestyle advice being provided to various groups of females who are considered 'at risk' in the context of the obesity epidemic, and is exploring how these individuals experience health, physical activity and weight gain in their everyday lives. Dr. Jette has published in such journals as *Qualitative Health Research*, *Journal of Aging Studies* and *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine*.

Dr Noreen Orr (University of Exeter Medical School)



Ageing well: Understanding how physical activity shapes the perceptions and experiences of ageing

Abstract

Despite regular physical activity being consistently promoted within health policy for older adults (Active Ageing Policy Framework, WHO, 2002), many older adults live inactive lifestyles. Understanding the complexity of the relationship between physical activity, healthy ageing and well-being is beginning to be addressed by a growing body of qualitative research. This presentation will draw on the findings from the first stage of the Moving Stories project; a qualitative study with physically active older adults (over 60 years). The research focus was on their subjective experiences of what it means to be physically active in later life. The methods included life history interviews (n = 51) and a photo-elicitation exercise (n = 27). The data were subjected to a categorical-content analysis and key findings cover a range of themes including: importance of pleasure; significance of competition, personal bests and training; variability of physical activity over the life course; and 'critical moments' within a life story that provide opportunities for change.

Bio

Dr Noreen Orr is an Associate Research Fellow at the European Centre for the Environment and Human Health (University of Exeter Medical School). Noreen's research interests focus on changing aged-based identities across the life course and in particular, how older people construct and manage distinctive later life identities through their leisure practices. Noreen is currently working with Dr Cassandra Phoenix on an ESRC funded project examining the impact of physical activity on experiences and perceptions of (self-) ageing.

Dr Cassandra Phoenix (University of Exeter Medical School)



How are physically active older adults perceived by others? : A life course perspective

Abstract

We currently know very little about how physically active older adults are perceived by others, and the degree to which this is shaped by gender. This is an important omission if proposing that participation in physical activity can facilitate more positive images of ageing (as has been the case in academic literature and government policy). It is correct that stories about physically active older adults can educate and expand horizons, but this is only possible if they are *engaged with*. In this presentation, I discuss findings from the second stage of the Moving Stories project. Here, stories of physically active older adults were shared with people at different stages of the life course in focus group settings. Our analysis pointed to a number of specific capacities that stories of physically active older adults might have and the ways in which these can change for males and females at different stages in the life course. How other people perceive and engage with the stories *told by* and *showing* physically active older adults has relevance to the level of success that can be expected of policy initiatives promoting physical activity alongside images of ageing that challenge traditional (and exclusive) notions of inevitable decline and deterioration.

Bio

Cassandra's work draws upon the sociology of ageing, the body and physical culture. The research she undertakes in this area explores the embodiment of ageing and physical activity across the life course; the impact of ageing on self, identity, and well-being; intergenerational relationships; disability; nature(s), exercise and the body. This work is often framed by narrative approaches, visual methods, and ethnography. Cassandra's work has been supported by a range of funding bodies including the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Nuffield Foundation, the Leverhulme Trust and the Thomas Pocklington Trust. It is published widely in journals such as Journals of Gerontology Series B, Ageing & Society, Journal of Aging and Physical Activity, Qualitative Research, Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health.

Dr Joe Piggin (Loughborough University)



Reconsidering the physical inactivity pandemic

Abstract

In 2012, The Lancet announced a global pandemic of physical inactivity and a call to action to effect change. Asserting that physical inactivity is pandemic is an important moment in health promotion, since the pandemic is said to be claiming millions of lives every year, and having more people physically active will add months to years of life expectancy to people around the world. The motives and techniques used to inspire citizens toward active living are worthy of scrutiny, since these will guide the allocation of resources to the task as well as influence how citizens think about physical activity. This presentation examines how the pandemic is rhetorically constructed and how various solutions are proposed. Specifically, it focuses on the proposal that a systems (or ecological) approach is needed to address the inactivity pandemic. With this in mind, the continuity, coherence and appropriateness of ideas about the physical inactivity pandemic are examined. The presentation concludes by considering other ways of thinking about health, physical activity and life expectancy with regard to public health policy.

Bio

Joe was born and grew up in New Zealand, where like 70% of the country, he was classified as “physically active”. After completing his PhD at the University of Otago, he moved to the UK, where only 34% of adults are physically active. Joe currently works at Loughborough University’s School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, where he is interested in the politics and marketing of sport and health policy. In particular, Joe is examining the rhetoric and discourse of state policies and private interests that aim to create a healthy population. His recent articles have been published in Health Policy, the Journal of Health Psychology and the Sociology of Sport Journal.

Prof. Janice Thompson (University of Birmingham)



Finding common ground: The influence of physical and social characteristics of neighbourhoods on getting up, out and about.

Abstract

The importance of being physically active to optimise physical function and promote health as we age is well-recognised. There is growing evidence suggesting that reducing physical inactivity (i.e., time spent sedentary) is equally important, and older adults are both the least physically active and most sedentary segment of the population in most developed countries. Despite this, there is limited information on how physical and social characteristics of neighbourhoods affect physical activity and sedentary behaviours of older adults. This presentation will provide an overview of what we currently know about levels of physical activity and sedentary time in older adults, and will examine how physical and social characteristics of neighbourhoods can promote or discourage older adults to get up, out and about.

Bio

Janice is currently Professor of Public Health Nutrition and Exercise in the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences at the University of Birmingham, UK. Janice's research interests include working with high-risk groups in community-based settings to examine the determinants of physical activity and healthy eating amongst individuals and families. She applies these findings to the development, implementation, and evaluation of culturally-tailored interventions to reduce obesity, physical inactivity, and the subsequent risks for type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Her research focuses on humans across their lifespan, with particular interests in applying mixed methods to enhance our ability to promote healthy and active ageing. At the University of Birmingham she is a member of the Centre for Obesity Research, the MRC-ARUK Centre for Musculoskeletal Ageing, and a Commissioner serving on the Birmingham Commission for Healthy Ageing in the 21st Century. Her research has been funded by the National Prevention Research Initiative, British Heart Foundation, National Institute for Health Research, Dunhill Medical Trust, Medical Research Council Lifelong Health and Wellbeing, Weight Watchers, and the ESRC-New Dynamics of Ageing Programme. In 2008, Janice was awarded a University of Bristol Engagement Award for her community-based research activities. She is a Fellow and past Vice President of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), a Scientific Committee member of the European College of Sport Science (ECSS), Associate Editor for the journal *Public Health Nutrition*, and has authored four nutrition textbooks in addition to

numerous scientific publications.

Dr Emmanuelle Tulle (Glasgow Caledonian University)



Embodying physical activity and inactivity: What can we learn from Master athletes?

Abstract

Perceptions of ageing are changing. Whilst only a decade ago, getting old was widely understood as a trigger to slowing down and resting more, this expectation is now being challenged. This challenge has come from runners and other athletes themselves, but also from sport science and policy-makers who have woken up to the health impact of growing inactivity in later life. Now the tables have turned and the expectation is that we should continue being physically active all the way through. This coming together of practice, evidence and policy-making to change aspirations for old age should make us pause however. There has in much of the literature been a tendency to focus on behaviour change as an individual obligation to address population health. The advent of sedentary behaviour as the newly discovered contributor to pathology in later life is instructive in that it places even more obligations on all of us to monitor our everyday lives, and potentially every minute of the day. Master athletes can provide us with some interesting insights into the challenges of becoming physically active and maintaining the momentum throughout the lifecourse. I will explore the complex array of individual/relational, structural, environmental, cultural and historical factors which make a physical activity career such a challenge to establish as the norm of ageing.

Bio

Emmanuelle Tulle has over 10 years' experience of doing research on ageing, sport, physical activity. As a sociologist, she is particularly interested in the lived experiences of becoming older and how these are affected by social, cultural and historical forces. Her interests grew out of her own tribulations as an amateur runner dealing with injury! Her writing has focused on Master runners, elite athletes, and 'ordinary' people who were prompted to be more physically active after illness or in response to health promotion messages. She is also interested in the science of ageing, notably sport science and its contribution to the normalisation of physical activity throughout the life course. The key concern underpinning her work is to find ways of improving the social and cultural status of older people and to think more creatively about the ageing process. She has published widely, notably *Ageing, the Body and Social Change*, published by Palgrave in 2008.

Prof. Christina Victor (Brunel University)



‘What would the neighbours think if I was walking in the street?’: Understanding physical activity and sedentary lives amongst ethnic minority elders in Great Britain

Abstract

How active are older people? Self report data from the 2008 Health Survey for England (HSE) suggests that: 19% of those aged 65-74 achieved the recommended activity level compared with 7% of those aged 75+ whilst accelerometry data demonstrated that 5% of men aged 65+ achieved the activity target and none of the women. Our evidence base with regard to physical activity amongst minority elders is however weak and we lack clear and unambiguous data describing levels of physical activity and sedentariness amongst minority elders, and identifying barriers and facilitators that influence these. Previous studies are limited but highlight the importance of cultural norms about ageing, and that activity and growing old acted as significant barriers to engagement in therapeutic exercise based activities but are not discussed with regard to physical activity more broadly. This paper will start to explore this knowledge gap by reanalysing data from the ESRC study, *Families and Caring in South Asian Communities study* of 109 Pakistani and Bangladeshi people aged 50+ to examine levels of physical activity and the factors enabling or acting as barriers to being active.

Bio

Christina Victor is Professor of Gerontology and Public Health in the School of Health Sciences and Social Care and Director of the Doctorate in Public Health at Brunel University. She has a BA in Geography from Swansea University; an MPhil in medical geography from Nottingham and a PhD from the Welsh National School of Medicine and is Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health. She is also Programme Director for Healthy Ageing at the Brunel Institute of Ageing Studies (BIAS:- <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/about/acad/health/healthres/researchareas/bbias>). Christina’s initial research interests were focussed upon health and health inequalities and the evaluation of services for older people. More recently she developed a keen interest in loneliness and isolation; the benefits of exercise and activity in later life and the experiences of old age and later life amongst minority communities. Christina has published 8 books and 200+ papers in the fields of gerontology and public health. She is Editor of *Ageing and Society*.

Prof. Diane Whaley (University of Virginia, USA)



Interindividual differences and intraindividual change in older adults: An argument for a developmental approach in studying older adult physical activity

There is no clear consensus as to when one becomes an older adult. The U.S. Census bureau uses 65 as the cutoff when describing this segment of the population. The *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity* has historically required participants in submitted studies to have a mean age of at least 60 years, which means a number of articles include individuals as young as 50. Other studies focus exclusively on the “oldest old”, generally considered to be individuals 85 and over. Although there has been some attention to differences between “young old” and the “oldest old” (for example, with regard to balance), it is more common to see articles boasting samples with age ranges 30 years or more, with no attention given to potential differences within that broad age span. That begs the question: Are we missing important differences within and between older adults? For example, are the correlates of exercise consistent across the older adult age range? Those who study adult development would respond that differences are likely. This talk will present an argument for why research on older adults’ physical activity should move toward a developmental approach in examining behavior. With growing numbers of people living into their 90’s, it will not be atypical for someone to be an “older adult” for 30 or even 40 years. It is time to stop treating this group as a homogenous block. We must consider the variability across individuals and old age groups (interindividual differences), as well as investigate in more detail the capacity for an older adult to change over those years (intraindividual change). I will present information from the developmental literature regarding what it means to take a developmental approach, as well as propose some minimum standards we might move toward in our research and writing that embraces a developmental approach.

Bio

Dr. Diane Whaley is a Professor in Educational Psychology/Applied Developmental Sciences in the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia. She earned her doctorate in Exercise and Sport Sciences at Oregon State University after receiving her Masters and Bachelors degrees from the University of Rhode Island. Dr. Whaley’s research explores how social, cognitive, and affective factors influence exercise participation and adherence across the life span, and how individual differences like age, gender, and race impact those decisions. She is particularly interested in issues of identity and self, including views we have of ourselves in the present and views of ourselves in the future (“possible selves”). Diane presently serves as editor of the *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, after serving as associate editor for 6 years. As editor, her mission is to continue to build the reputation of the *Journal*, encourage a variety of methodological and epistemological perspectives, and push for a more developmental approach to the study of aging and physical activity.

NOTES: