

Centre for  
Death & Society  
(CDAS)



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**

## Centre for Death & Society

### November 2024 Newsletter

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## Director's Note

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Welcome to the November issue of the CDAS newsletter, where we are recovering from a full two-day workshop on more-than-human loss. If you are reading this newsletter on the day it comes out, it is not too late to join us for our next event in our more than human loss week, our University of Bath Minerva Public Lecture (online) on the 13<sup>th</sup> November. Details of how to sign up are in this newsletter.

We begin the newsletter by thanking all those who are supporting our anniversary events this year. We have been really touched by how many people have volunteered their time to organize and contribute to events, attend events, organize the annual conference (details are forthcoming!!) and generally provide the centre with moral and practical support. The death studies community is generous and CDAS is a stronger centre and intellectual hub because of that generosity, thank you.

Our thanks extend too to Visiting Fellow Dan O'Brien, who has written a piece for us on the life and influence of Julian Litten, who has recently died. Dan's tribute to Dr Litten can be found later in this issue.

Finally, please join us on 19<sup>th</sup> November to celebrate the publication of Erica Borgstrom and Renske Visser's new book. Renske did her PhD with us and we are delighted to see her career blossoming. Co-organised with [Open Thanatology](#) at the Open University, Erica and Renske will take us behind the scenes of writing their critique of death studies and reflect on where the field is going. Given this year we are marking two decades of our centre, this is a timely session.

As always this issue is full of events, calls, new books and initiatives. The study of death is truly booming and at times it can be hard to keep up. We do our best to share information in this newsletter and via social media, please remember to tag us so we can forward information on.



Until next month

Kate and Naomi

With the new CDAS banner 😊

# Celebrating CDAS @ 20

Let's celebrate together in marking **20 years** as a **global death studies community**, producing world-leading research.

September

## Growing a community

Join CDAS directors, past and present, as they discuss the evolution of death studies during our 20 year history.

October

## Which deaths count?

Bringing together academics from across the globe, this panel discussion will explore issues of death and social (in)justice.

November

## More than human

A week-long exploration, including the University Minerva Lecture, of how death studies can speak to non-human loss.

January

## Death and armed conflict

We examine how death studies can help us understand contemporary conflicts in Africa and the Middle East.

February

## How do we know about death?

A panel discussion on different ways of knowing about death, and a debate on decolonising death studies.

March

## Death and famine

A panel discussion on the importance of death to famine, including in declarations of famine and its social meaning.

April

## Book launch: *Death & Institutions*

A conversation between co-authors, Kate Woodthorpe, Bethan Michael-Fox and Helen Frisby.

May

## *Mortality* Special Issue on innovation at the end of life and

## The Beatrice Godwin Memorial Lecture

June

## The CDAS Conference

Our annual event with a celebratory anniversary twist, as we invite papers on the theme, "Death Studies: Now & Next"

... with **even more** events to be announced!



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### *More Than Human Loss workshops*

Thank you to everyone who came to our More Than Human Loss workshop on campus at the University of Bath and online on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12 November. Over two days participants from the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Canada and the USA discussed the contribution that death studies can make to urgent understandings of environmental, climatic and species loss and change. We debated and discussed collective loss, extinction, famine, microbes, species, sociopolitical and structural grief, necrowaste, multi-species ethnography, combining visual art and quantitative methods and much more, aided by two creative sessions. The first of these sessions involved collages and the second a woodland walk and floristry. Check out the creations!



The workshop on campus at the University of Bath followed a series of conversations and a roundtable at Makerere University (Uganda), co-hosted by CDAS. In these discussions, themes also included flooding in South Sudan and its impact on burial, as well as much discussion about the role of trees and their loss in contemporary politics. This led to debates about what could compensate or redress loss, and therefore what loss really means.

These events were possible thanks to support from the University of Bath and from the [Centre for Public Authority and International Development](#).



## ***University of Bath Minerva Public Lecture***

If you are reading through this newsletter on the day it has gone out, it is not too late to join us for our Minerva lecture on 13<sup>th</sup> November! Online at 6pm GMT, the panel of Caleb Parkin (eco poet and PhD researcher as part of the RENEW Biodiversity project at the University of Exeter), Emily Malik (founding Director of EcoWild), Darcy Harris (Kings College Western University, Ontario), and Caroline Hickman (University of Bath) will be discussing Ecological Loss and Grieving the Non Human.



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ecological-loss-and-grieving-the-non-human-tickets-1044053511157?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=ebdsshcopyurl>

## ***Welcome to new CDAS member***

Welcome to James Fletcher from the University of Bath School of Management. James has a background in medical sociology and gerontology. He is interested in digital ageing and creative methods, with a focus on cognitive impairment and inclusive data generation. His research covers several areas of the political economy of ageing and dementia, with an emphasis on using social theory and creative methods to understand later life disability as a political entity. He has published on subjects including informal dementia care networks, mental capacity legislation and its influence on research governance, the anti-ageing technoscience market, anti-stigma and awareness raising campaigns regarding psychiatric disorder, the operationalisation of ethnicity and age in research, the biomarker discovery economy, the curation of dementia-friendly cultural events, dementia prevention public health strategies, environmental effects on cognition in urban settings and the role of fertility technologies in contexts of reproductive ageing.

## ***Confirmation success***

Well done to PhD student Polly Maxwell who successfully passed her confirmation, which means she now progresses onto her fieldwork year for her doctoral studies exploring death within queer families. Thanks go to her examiners Monica Greco and Diana Teggi, and to her second supervisors Lucy Selman and Fran Amery who provide her (and her lead supervisor Kate Woodthorpe) with excellent support.

## ***Reddit Ask Me Anything***

Earlier in November CDAS Visiting Fellows Chao Fang and Bethany Simmonds did a Reddit AMA (Ask Me Anything) on ageism, end of life care and digital exclusion. The questions they are asked and their answers can be found [here](#). Thank you Chao and Bethany!

## ***Whose death counts? Social (in)justice and public health in death and dying***

In October we recorded a discussion with speakers from India, the UK and the US to learn about how death is accounted for, documented, politicised and contested. Watch Devika Bordia, Jennifer Brite, Jessica Jacobsen and Lorna Templeton who shared their work, before opening the panel to a wider discussion between the panellists and panel attendees. Follow the link to watch the recording: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/whose-death-counts-social-in-justice-and-public-health-in-death-and-dying/>

## ***In case you missed it: 20 CDAS publications for 20 years***

To mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Centre we have created a list of 20 publications from CDAS members past and present. We hope you find them interesting and a good walk down memory lane.

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/20-cdas-publications-for-20-years/>

## ***Julian Litten 1947 - 2024***

Dr Julian Litten FSA was a funerary historian who made a fundamental contribution to the study of funerary rites in post-medieval England.

For many people their introduction to Julian was *The English Way of Death*. Published in 1991, this is still an introduction and guide to many people interested in the history of English funerals. It remains so successful because it tells the six-centuries-long history of funerary change in a way which addresses both the grand and the intimate, explaining practices which might otherwise be taken for granted. Beyond this his research illuminated the fascinating worlds of burial vaults and catalogued the ledgerstones found in many of our churches. Spaces familiar and perhaps overlooked were given detailed meaning and more people were inspired to appreciate funerary architecture. Whether on television, in the written word or in public talks he was a guide through the fascinating world of funerary history to a wide range of audiences. Julian also applied his knowledge of historic funerary customs when he consulted on the funerals of Portsmouth's unknown mariner (a victim of the *Mary Rose*) and the remains of Richard III.

Since his death people have reminded me of the time that Julian gave to others, sharing his knowledge and providing an attentive ear to researchers across a variety of fields: coffins, memorials, cemeteries and more. He also demonstrated an enthusiasm for others' pursuit of funerary research, something that will be treasured by many people. I personally experienced such a moment after a talk in 2022 when Julian offered some interesting thoughts on the complexity of coffin production and supply for elite customers – needless to say it was incredibly useful. Significantly he contributed his time to organisations such as Kensal Green Cemetery, Birmingham's Coffin Works and the Church Monument Society whose activities protect and champion our often vulnerable funerary history. This will be one of his greatest legacies to us.

As funerary historians we do not walk in Julian's shadow but rather the light that he has cast upon some of the most fascinating questions in the study of final things.

Dr Dan O'Brien, CDAS Visiting Fellow

### *Development seminar and book launch*

#### *Critical Perspectives on death: where we are where we're going*

Prof Erica Borgstrom and Dr Renske Visser  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 6pm – 7pm GMT

To celebrate the publication of the new book '[Critical Approaches to Death, Dying and Bereavement](#)', CDAS and [Open Thanatology](#) are co-hosting an online seminar that will take you behind the scenes of book authorship and critically explore the future of death studies.

Particularly aimed at early career academics, those interested in death and dying, and those looking to write across a range of areas, former CDAS PhD student **Dr Renske Visser** and her co-author, the lead of Open Thanatology, **Professor Erica Borgstrom**, will lead an hour of candid conversation. They will discuss their new book, the challenges they faced in writing it, and where they see the field of death studies heading. All attendees will be given a discount code for the newly published book. During the seminar, CDAS will hold a competition to win a paperback copy.

Sign up [here](#).

### *CDAS to host Law Commission public consultation 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 on the University of Bath campus*

The Law Commission's consultation on Burial and Cremation began on 3 October 2024 and runs for 13 weeks until 9 January 2025. The consultation considers, among other things, the proposed reuse of old graves, regulation of burial grounds, and issues in cremation law like what should be done regarding sets of ashes left uncollected at funeral directors' premises.

As part of the consultation, the Law Commission is holding in-person events across the country (these events will not include a hybrid/virtual option). These events will be an opportunity to:

- hear about our provisional proposals for reform from Professor Nick Hopkins, the Commissioner for Property, Family and Trust Law, and his team; and
- ask your questions about the Law commission's provisional proposals and the issues raised in the Consultation Paper.

Join us in Bath on 26<sup>th</sup> November to input into the consultation. Full details and how to sign up are available [here](#).



## *Call for participants*

### **Baggage for the Beyond? Contemporary UK grave goods practices and their meanings**

This study explores 'grave goods' in the contemporary UK context.

Grave goods are any items placed with the dead when they are buried or cremated.

This study is being conducted by Dr Jennifer Riley at the University of Aberdeen, supported by The Leverhulme Trust early career fellowship scheme.

Interviews are an important part of this study.

#### **Are you...?**

- Someone who has experienced a bereavement since the year 2000, who is willing to discuss what place grave goods had (or did not have) in mourning that loss?; And/or
- A death professional working in the UK?

#### **What's involved?**

Completing a short expression of interest questionnaire

Reading some information about the study, and signing a consent form

A 1:1 interview with Dr Jennie Riley, on the subject of grave goods (Interviews typically last 45 minutes, and take place on Microsoft Teams)

#### **When?**

Interviews will take place in late 2024 and throughout 2025.

#### **Please note**

#### **You should:**

- Be over 18
- Be based in the UK (or talking about a UK-based bereavement, burial or cremation)
- Feel able to reflect on your experiences of bereavement and associated funerals and rituals

I advise that if your bereavement is quite recent, you may wish to think carefully about whether or not now is the right time for you to volunteer. Please feel free to contact Jennie to

discuss whether or not you might like to participate – and thank you very much for considering participating.

## Get Involved

If you would like more information, please contact [jennifer.riley@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:jennifer.riley@abdn.ac.uk)

Dr Jennie Riley – Research Fellow – Divinity and Religious Studies – University of Aberdeen

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/sdhp/divinity-religious-studies/baggage-for-the-beyond-3068.php>

## *New Books!*

### *Critical Approaches to Death, Dying and Bereavement*

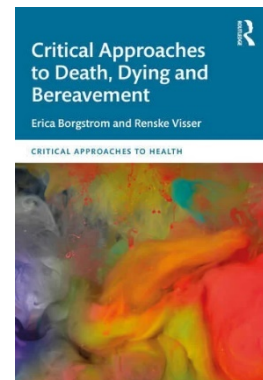
By Erica Borgstrom and Renske Visser

This book is the first of its kind to examine key topics in death, dying, and bereavement through a critical lens, highlighting how the understanding and experience of death can vary considerably, based on social, cultural, historical, political, and medical contexts. It looks at the complex ways in which death and dying are managed, from the political level down to end-of-life care, and the inequalities that surround and impact experiences of death, dying, and bereavement.

Readers are introduced to key theories, such as the medicalisation of dying, as well as contemporary issues, such as social movements, pandemics, and assisted dying. The book stresses how death is not only a biological process or event but rather shaped by a range of intersecting factors. Issues of inequalities in health, inequities in support, and intersectional analyses are brought to the fore, and each chapter is dedicated to an issue that has interdisciplinary resonance, thus showcasing the wider sociocultural and political factors that impact this time of life.

This book is valuable reading for scholars in thanatology and death studies, and for those in related fields such as sociology of health, medical and social anthropology, and interdisciplinary social science courses.

<https://www.routledge.com/Critical-Approaches-to-Death-Dying-and-Bereavement/Borgstrom-Visser/p/book/9781032330624>

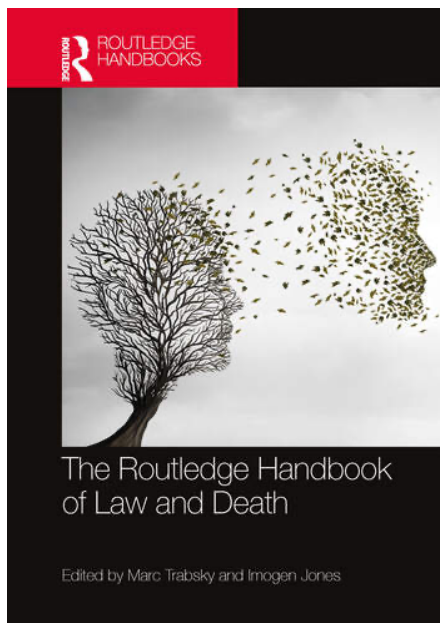


## ***The Future of Dark Tourism: Enlightening New Horizons***

Edited by: Philip R. Stone, Daniel W.M. Wright

[The Future of Dark Tourism by Philip R. Stone \(channelviewpublications.com\)](https://channelviewpublications.com)

This book offers critical scenarios of dark tourism futures and examines how our significant dead will be remembered in future visitor economies. It aims to inspire critical thinking by probing the past, disrupting the present and provoking the future. The volume outlines key features of difficult heritage and future cultural trauma and highlights the role of technology, immersive visitor experiences and the thanatological condition of future dark tourism. The book provides a collection of informed observations of how future societies might recall their memorable dead, and how the noteworthy dead might be (re)created and retained through dark tourism. The book forecasts a dark tourism future that is not only perilous but also full of possibilities. It is a helpful resource for students and researchers in tourism, heritage, futurology, sociology, human geography and cultural studies.



### ***The Routledge Handbook of Law and Death***

[Marc Trabsky and Imogen Jones \(ed\), \*The Routledge Handbook of Law and Death\* \(Routledge, 2025\)](#)

*The Routledge Handbook of Law and Death* provides a comprehensive survey of contemporary scholarship on the intersections of law and death in the 21st century.

It showcases how socio-legal scholars have contributed to the critical turn in death studies and how the sociology of death has impacted upon the discipline of law. In bringing together prominent academics and emerging experts from a diverse range of disciplines, the *Handbook* shows how, far from shunning questions

of mortality, legal institutions incessantly talk about death. Touching upon the epistemologies and materialities of death, and problems of contested deaths and posthumous harms, the *Handbook* questions what is distinctive about the disciplinary alignment of law and death, how law regulates and manages death in the everyday, and how thinking with law can enrich our understandings of the presence of death in our lives.

**20% off with code AFLY03**

# CDAS COMMUNITY EVENTS

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## *Writing People's Lives: A BSA Members-Only Event*

25 November 2024 (13.00-16.00 GMT) Online

More information here: <https://www.britsoc.co.uk/events/key-bsa-events/writing-peoples-lives/>

### About the Event:

A core part of sociology is writing about people's lives. There are numerous ways of going about it, many of them engaging and thought-provoking, but there are also several challenges to doing it well, including both practical and ethical ones.

This online event is designed to provide a forum for discussion of the range of issues that arise when writing about people's lives and examination of some of the ways of responding to these challenges. It will involve presentations by four sociologists who will focus on their experiences of writing about people's lives, including how they have conceived their projects, how they have gone about collecting and analysing material, and how they have presented their research to their audiences. There will also be time devoted to discussion of each presentation and of the general themes arising from consideration of how and why we engage in writing about people's lives.

### Speakers:



**Ann Oakley** will speak about the process of writing her most recent book, *The Science of Housework: The Home and Public Health, 1880-1940* (Policy Press, 2024), for which archival research on the key figures of the household science movement was undertaken. Relating the story of people who sought to establish domestic science as a respected academic discipline is no easy matter because their efforts enjoyed only limited success in breaching the walls of academe and they have become largely lost to view by later generations. Doing justice to the lives of historical figures who have been forgotten, overlooked or deliberately ignored requires respect for their endeavours as a counterbalance to the condescension of posterity. It also requires sensitivity to the gendered processes at work both in their own lifetimes and subsequently.



**Graham Crow** will speak about the process of writing his most recent book, *The Emerald Guide to Ann Oakley* (Emerald Publishing, 2024), in which he endeavours to summarise her published output since the appearance of her first article in 1970 and to weave the story of her life into this account. Included among Oakley's publications are candid autobiographical reflections about family life, illness and working in university settings that are not always available to authors writing about the lives of others. Also unusually available are the several interviews given by Oakley about her career (a term which she disputes applies to her). The decision was made to include discussion of Oakley's novels, notwithstanding the challenges of dealing with characters in

them that bear more than a passing resemblance to the novelist. Avoiding ‘mansplaining’ is another challenge that has had to be faced.



**Ann Phoenix** will speak about how she has used narrative approaches in the study of a diverse range of topics broadly in the field of family relationships. Her presentation will describe how psychological experiences mesh with social processes to shape people’s identities and actions, noting the methodological challenges of undertaking research with diverse and sometimes marginalised groups. Her experience of researching in different societies will also be drawn upon to illustrate the potential of narrative methods to elicit people’s stories about their lives, but also the challenges of interpreting data collected in contrasting contexts.



**Gayle Letherby** will speak about her own practice of writing people’s lives and about her experience of working with others – including students and colleagues – who are interesting in writing in similar ways. Gayle has always argued for the importance of recognising the interplay between self and other in research and in scholarly writing; that is she has always insisted on the necessity of auto/biographical reflection. More recently she has also joined others in recognising the value of telling life stories in different ways, both in and outside of the academy, including (in her case) through fiction and memoir. Although her epistemological stance has resulted in occasional critique Gayle is both humbled and warmed by the support her work has received and encouraged by the increasing interest in this way of working amongst sociologists and others; not least in the social sciences, medical education, sports sciences and mathematics.

This members-only event is free to attend but registration is required.

### ***Symposium on Grief Literacy***

Jesus College, Cambridge is running a series of six panels and lectures at the [Intellectual Forum](#) this autumn on the topic of death and dying. The aim is to explore this fundamental human experience from cultural, spiritual, legal, and technological perspectives.

Sessions will consider questions such as:

- Can we combat inequalities in death and dying?
- How are developments in technology changing our experience of death?
- What is a ‘good death’?

More information can be found here: <https://www.jesus.cam.ac.uk/events/death-and-dying-lecture-series>

### ***Bethany Simmonds talking in seminar organised by WISERD***

Bethany be talking about the 'Intersections of ageing and disability during the COVID-19 pandemic: evidencing the need for an 'anti-ableist and anti-ageist ethics of care' to ensure human rights and dignity in society'. This lunchtime seminar is organised by WISERD (Cardiff University). Anyone interested is welcome to join this session.

Tue, Nov 19, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM GMT Online

Intersections of ageing and disability during the COVID-19 pandemic, just click the following link: [Join conversation](#)

### ***Burial and Cremation project online consultation events***

Our in-person events for the Law Commission's consultation on Burial and Cremation began on 3 October 2024 and will run for 13 weeks until 9 January 2025.

In addition to those in-person events we are also holding two online events. These events will be an opportunity to:

- Hear about our provisional proposals for reform from Professor Nick Hopkins, the Commissioner for Property, Family and Trust Law, and his team; and ask your questions about the Law commission's provisional proposals and the issues raised in the Consultation Paper.

Please see below for the schedule of events.

- 28 November, 3.30-5pm. [Click here for the link.](#)
- 2 December, 3.30-5pm. [Click here for the link.](#)

### ***Lifting The Lid International Festival of Death and Dying 2024***

Fri 15 Nov 2024 07:00 - Sun 17 Nov 2024 23:45 GMT  
(Online, Zoom)

An annual, online festival that lifts the lid on everything death & dying, through conversations, interactive events, workshops, art and craft sessions, live music, poetry and performance from around the world.

Featuring an international line-up of end of life and palliative carers, funeral directors, grief supporters, artists, musicians, writers, doctors, filmmakers, pet bereavement counsellors, coffin weavers, change makers and everyone in



**Lifting  
the Lid**

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DEATH & DYING

between. Lifting The Lid is informative, creative, fun, joyful and life affirming, catering for people of all levels of interest.

Three days of ideas, information, arts, crafts and ground-breaking insights. We're really proud of the 50+ speakers, collaborators, panels and activities we've curated and everyone involved is volunteering their time, there will be opportunities throughout the weekend to support individuals and organisations if you choose to. We have hand-picked speakers and collaborators carefully to bring you a diverse, varied and engaging, international programme of events.

Join us for all or any part of this weekend-long programme of events. You can pick and choose the sessions you want to join and create your own schedule. Meet other like-minded people, exchange ideas, share experiences and contact details if you choose to, and lay the foundations for new, fruitful relationships in the death positive community.

Death is of course something that will affect every one of us but can still be extremely challenging to discuss. Lifting The Lid offers audiences the opportunity to find out as much or as little as they like, allowing people to dip in and out as they feel comfortable. We hope this annual event continues to encourage an acceptance of the inevitability of loss and impermanence, and removes some of the fear of talking about death and dying so people can ask questions and talk openly and honestly about their experiences.

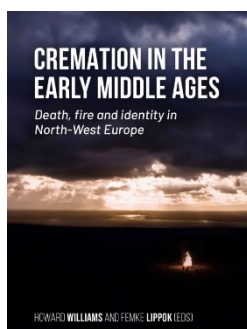
For more details and ticket info [click here](#)

## ***British Sociological Association Death, Dying and Bereavement Study Group annual symposium: Dying and Ageing***

***12<sup>th</sup> December 2024***

The study group have announced the programme for their upcoming symposium, full details and to contact the convenors for more information can be found [here](#).

## ***'Cremation in the Early Middle Ages' Book Launch, 5pm-7pm GMT Thursday 12 December 2024***



Running from 5pm-7pm GMT, Thursday 12th December, to book for FREE for the book launch.

I'm delighted to be able to invite all of you to the online book launch via Microsoft Teams to celebrate the publication of *Cremation in the Early Middle Ages* edited by Femke Lippok and Howard Williams by Sidestone Press.

When, where, how and why did early medieval people cremate their dead? The brand-new edited collection published with Sidestone – *Cremation in the Early Middle Ages* – draws together the latest research and thinking on early medieval cremation practices.

[Click here](#) for more information on the event and registration.

## ***'Poisons, Pills & Plants: 900 Years of Botany' at Barts Pathology Museum.***

We're welcoming three esteemed guests to regale us with illustrated talks on the various uses of plants as medicine, as poison, and as tools to help solve serious crime.

**November 13th** - 'From Apothecary to Pharmacy' with Catherine Walker. Manager of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society museum, Catherine Walker, will discuss the historical use of plants in *materia medica*, through to more modern medicines inspired by plants. Given the location tonight, she will also touch upon the unusual human remains specimens at the RPS Museum and discuss their historical usage.

[Click here for the museum's website.](#)



**November 27th** - 'Murder Most Florid' with Dr Mark Spencer - Forensic Specialist and author of 'Murder Most Florid: Inside the Mind of a Forensic Botanist', Mark Spencer, will discuss his unconventional and unique career solving serious crimes using botanical evidence. [Click here for the book.](#)

Admission to all talks is £10 (to go directly to the upkeep of the museum) and includes glass of wine, non-alcoholic drinks and nibbles. See links to the full series here. We also hope to have a stall featuring relevant books to be signed by the authors on the night.

[Follow this link](#) to purchase tickets and find out more about the events.



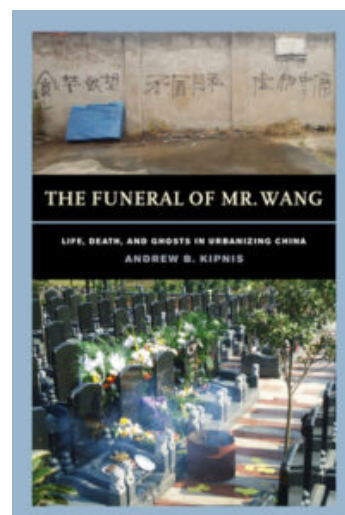
## *Cemetery Research Group*

### *Virtual Colloquium, 15 November 2024*

Our Keynote Speaker this year is Professor Andrew Kipnis, who has written widely on the subject of funeral practices in China. The title of his presentation is 'Ghosts, Urbanization and Strangers in China and Hong Kong'.

Follow the link here to view the programme and to book your place: <https://www.cemeteryresearch.org/events/webinar/>

Attendance is free. We'll be using the Zoom platform, and you can book by indicating which session(s) you would like to attend. Booking will be closed on 8th November: invitations will be sent by the 10th November.



### ***Death Studies special issue: Theory and Research on Death Education and the Pedagogy of Death***

Death is a perennial and universal phenomenon. Consequently, from the pedagogical point of view, an education for life that does not include death does not make sense.

The relationship between death and education has been investigated in different countries and epistemological traditions for many years now. In the English-speaking tradition, work has been done on the field of death education, centered on the design and assessment of teaching and learning activities on death-related issues in the social, health and educational spheres. In the Central European and Latin tradition, the Pedagogy of Death, as a scientific discipline, is differentiated from its field of application, i.e. death education, and focuses on theory and research on the inclusion of death in education for a more conscious life.

This special issue seeks theoretical and research articles (reviews and quantitative or/and qualitative studies respectively) from both perspectives (the English-speaking and Central European), integrating the two different epistemological traditions in the field.

We welcome scholarly contributions that examine, through theory and research, different dimensions of death education and the Pedagogy of Death such as:

- The theory and epistemology of death education and the Pedagogy of Death.
- Comparative analyses of the death education and Pedagogy of Death traditions.
- Death education and education for a more conscious life.
- Teacher and family education in death education.
- The curriculum and death education.
- Inclusive education and the teaching of death-related issues.
- Methodologies and teaching resources for death education.
- Schools and educational support in situations of bereavement.

The deadline for submission of completed articles for review and possible inclusion is 30 November 2024.

If you have an article ready to go for this issue full details of how to submit can be found [here](#).

## ***Death Notice/Body Copy: Representations of Death in Global Journalism***

Editor(s):

Kristin Skare Orgeret (OsloMet University) and Nechama Brodie (University of the Witwatersrand)

Submission of Abstracts: 15-30 November 2024

Submission of Full Papers: 15-30 April 2025

Publication of the Issue: October/December 2025

The thematic issue seeks to explore the ways in which news media around the world explore, report, and narrate death and the dead, in words, pictures, and even sound, where acts of counting become forms of recounting through which the literal body (a cadaver or corpse), being counted or discounted, becomes a site of incompatible biography: An object that has a history, but which no longer has a life. Accounts of death are unevenly explored across the journalistic landscape and earlier research has shown that images presenting dead bodies are infrequent (Griffin, 2010; Zelizer, 2010). This may however change with the increased importance of digital media and new conditions of production, content, and reception for representations of death in the news. Whereas some earlier research has focused mainly on the mediation of exceptional death (Sumiala, 2022), we see a need to empirically consider a variety of types of deaths, geopolitical perspectives, and whose bodies count in different geographies, societies, and times.

We are interested in singular and interdisciplinary articles and studies that look at current and historical journalistic forms of coverage of death, dying, and the dead, from journalists and photojournalists who are sent to cover combat zones, mass killings, or large-scale natural disasters, to media coverage of deadly pandemics, reporting on ways of assisted dying, or even a close reading of forms of obituaries. A specific focus will be given to emerging trends in the representation of death in digital and social media. Researchers looking at forms of journalism in the global south are encouraged to submit an abstract, and editing support will be given for accepted contributions where the authors are not first-language English speakers.

Full details available [here](#).

### ***“The Evolution of Palliative Care – Where to next?”***

Our International Palliative Care Conference “Kaleidoscope” returns on the 16th & 17th May 2025, in the Convention Centre Dublin. The 17th Kaleidoscope Conference, hosted by St. Francis Hospice Dublin, offers members of the Irish and international health care community an opportunity to explore issues related to palliative care. The overall theme for 2025 is “The Evolution of Palliative Care – Where to next?”. We have an exciting line up of speakers across both days, call for papers presentations and poster exhibition as well as workshops on Friday and Saturday morning. Tickets to attend the conference will be available soon.

**Abstract submissions are now open until the 15th November 2024**

[Abstract Submission Information Submit Your Abstract Form](#)

## ***DDD Conference call for papers***

The 17<sup>th</sup> International Death, Dying and Disposal Conference organised by the University of Utrecht for 27-30 August 2025 on ‘The Politics of Death’.

We are pleased to share the call for proposals for:

- Organised panels and individual papers
- Roundtables
- Workshops
- Other

You can find all the details about how to submit your proposal on the conference website, as well as more information about the theme, The Politics of Death. The deadline for all proposals is 30 November 2024.

Full details about the conference are available [here](#).

## ***Special Issue of Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences “Grief in the Digital Age”***

The Special Issue aims to explore the role of digital technologies for grief experiences

Grief is a complex phenomenon that can be characterised as an emotional process in response to the irrevocable loss of a significant person. In recent years, research at the intersection of phenomenology and empirically informed philosophy of mind has gained momentum (e.g., Cholbi, 2021; Fuchs, 2018; Markovic, 2022; Millar & Lopez-Cantero, 2022; Ratcliffe, 2023). This research has identified and analysed key aspects of the phenomenology and emotional structure of bereavement responses. However, the influence of socio-cultural practices and technologies on the structure and quality of grief experiences deserves further exploration and scrutiny. This is particularly true for death technologies (*deathtech*). Death technologies can be defined as personalized and individualized artificial intelligence (AI) systems, which are marketed as effective resources for the regulation of grief experiences and commemoration. Recently, death technologies have received considerable philosophical attention (e.g., Buben, 2015; Krueger & Osler, 2022; Lindemann, 2022; Stokes, 2021). However, this research has largely focussed on the ethical and moral implications of death technologies, rather than the systematic development of descriptive accounts of interactions between grieving agents and death technologies. This special issue aims to bring together research in phenomenology, philosophy of mind, the cognitive sciences, and the philosophy of AI to help better understand the impact of death technologies on the structure, quality, and temporal unfolding of grief within and across agents, situational contexts, and cultures.

**Possible topics include (but are not limited to):**

- How can agent-deathtech interactions be described from a phenomenological perspective?
- To what extent can accounts of 4E cognition and situated affectivity help understand agent-deathtech interactions?
- How do death technologies influence and shape grief experiences?
- To what extent does the wide availability of death technologies change our attitudes towards our own mortality?
- To what extent does the wide availability of death technologies change how we anticipate the death of significant persons?
- What are the phenomenological and moral implications of the actual or anticipated impact of death technologies on grief?

**Invited contributors:**

- Adam Buben
- Robert Brooks
- Nora Lindemann
- Mianna Lotz
- Thomas Montefiore
- Katarzyna Nowaczyk-Basińska
- Paul-Mikhail Catapang Podosky
- Patrick Stokes

**Guest Editors:**

- Regina E. Fabry, Department of Philosophy, Macquarie University, [regina.fabry@mq.edu.au](mailto:regina.fabry@mq.edu.au)
- Marilyn Stendera, School of Humanities and Social Inquiry, University of Wollongong, [mstendera@uow.edu.au](mailto:mstendera@uow.edu.au).

**Submission deadline:**

Please submit your paper by **February 1 2025**.

**Word limit:**

Submissions larger than 10,000 words (including references) are discouraged.

**Online submission:**

Please use the journal's Online Manuscript Submission System (Editorial Manager®).

**Author Submission's Guidelines:**

Authors are asked to prepare their manuscripts according to the journal's standard Submissions Guidelines.

Please access the Collection Page for further information. For any questions, feel free to contact the Lead Guest Editor Regina Fabry ([regina.fabry@mq.edu.au](mailto:regina.fabry@mq.edu.au))

## ***‘Heritage Matters’ series***

Julie Rugg (University of York) and David Ocón (Singapore Management University) are co-editing a text for Boydell and Brewer’s [‘Heritage Matters’](#) series. The rationale for the text sits below. We are issuing a call for chapter proposals. The themes include

- the cemetery as a locale for tangible and intangible funeral heritage;
- the principles of cemetery interpretation;
- the emotional, social and economic impact of cemetery tourism;
- contested sites, where the site’s purpose desire for preservation is compromised by the site’s purpose; and
- the interaction between funeral heritage and sustainable development.

The chapters will have an 8,000-word limit. Please submit a 250-word abstract by the end of November 2024. The deadline for completed chapters is September 2025. The text will include academic contributions from across the globe but, unfortunately, all submissions will have to be in English. Please send your abstracts to us both: [julie.rugg@york.ac.uk](mailto:julie.rugg@york.ac.uk); [davidoccon@smu.edu.sg](mailto:davidoccon@smu.edu.sg)

## ***Special issue on Digital Death to be published in the Thanatos journal***

Thanatos is an open access multi-disciplinary peer-reviewed online journal published by the Finnish Death Studies Association (FDSA).

The first deadline for abstract submissions (500 words max) is 30 November 2024.

We invite contributors from various academic backgrounds and scholarly positions to explore the cultural and social transformation of death in the present era of digital saturation and to deepen and enrich a global understanding of digital death as a cultural and social phenomenon.

This special issue invites both theoretical and empirical contributions from relevant disciplinary backgrounds, addressing but not being limited to the topics below:

- Digital mourning and grief
- Digital afterlife
- Hybrid death rituals
- Platformed politics of digital death
- The dark side of digital death
- AI and digital immortality
- Legal and ethical perspectives on digital health

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Authors are invited to submit original research articles, reviews, and case studies that align with the themes outlines below. Submissions should adhere to the journal's guidelines and will undergo a double-blind peer-review process.

If you want to contribute an article to this Thanatos special issue, **please send your proposed paper title and an abstract (500 words max.) by email to [Thanatos.fdsa@gmail.com](mailto:Thanatos.fdsa@gmail.com) by 30 November 2024.**

For more information about the journal, please visit: <https://journal.fi/thanatos>

### ***'The 2025 Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA) Conference features a new current topic stream 'Defining, Defying, and Desiring Death'***

This Current Topic brings together scholars and practitioners to consider the legal, social, political, and scientific developments pertaining to our perception of death and its meanings. It will provide a space to interrogate what death is precisely, why/if we should fear it, to what extent the law should be involved in the death of the individual, and to what extent technologies transform these challenges. Some of the themes and questions that the papers might want to explore include:

- When does death occur, and according to what criteria is it identified (total brain, higher brain, info-theoretical, cardiopulmonary, etc.)?
- Responses to the Nuffield Council on Bioethics' Citizens' Jury on assisted dying. Should assisted dying remain prohibited, or should it be permitted within part or all of the UK?
- What is a good death, and is it a matter of Law to promote or protect such states of dying?
- Is the legal interpretation of life and death being binary still fit for purpose, or does a more nuanced understanding need to be developed?
- How do technological advancements (cryopreservation, BrainEx, AI, etc.) challenge the contemporary understanding and definition of death and the postmortem?
- How do/should we regulate technologies designed to alleviate grief and/or replace the deceased's persona? Is this a concern of law, policy and regulation?

Convenors: Richard B. Gibson (Aston Law School) [r.gibson2@aston.ac.uk](mailto:r.gibson2@aston.ac.uk) and Edina Harbinja (Aston Law School) [e.harbinja@aston.ac.uk](mailto:e.harbinja@aston.ac.uk) .

Call for Papers Deadline: **18 December 2024.**

Please find more at: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/law/slsa-2025/call-for-papers/>

## ***2025 conference of The Roles of the Agency of the Dead in the Lives of Individuals in Contemporary Society project***

International interdisciplinary conference, July 2 – 4, 2025

Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Aškerčeva 2, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Organised by

ERC project *The Roles of the Agency of the Dead in the Lives of Individuals in Contemporary Society*

Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (DEAGENCY, ERC № 101095729)

Contrary to pre-modern European societies, and many contemporary non-Western societies, where the dead were considered members of the community and continued to be significantly involved in people's everyday lives, the dominant Western ontology nowadays does not integrate communication and exchange between the living and the dead. However, as a bulk of quantitative as well as qualitative research testify, for people in many contemporary Western societies, social interactions do not necessarily cease after death but are merely transformed. The dead continue to be involved in our lives, affecting our thoughts, emotions, values, behaviour, and social relations. While scholars have often treated the accounts of the agency of the dead as expressions of “folk belief”, and ghosts as symbols and metaphors of larger cultural and social problems and changes, our aim is to take the effects of the agency of the dead in the lives of individuals seriously, as people themselves experience them.

The aim of this conference is to gain an insight into the situations in which the agency of the dead manifests itself and the presence of the dead is experienced. What are the reasons, the triggers and the contexts in which the dead affect the living? The violation of social norms of behaviour and cultural and religious values is generally seen in traditional cultures as a typical reason for the manifestation of the agency of the dead. Temporal contexts traditionally regarded as triggers for unwanted interaction with the dead as ghosts, were usually critical, liminal periods in the daily, annual and life cycle. The same applies to the spatial context: boundary sites within the social construction of space, but also places associated with death (where people died or were buried), buildings with particular physical features and history, as well as places associated with mourning and the commemoration of the dead, were typical locations where the encounters with the dead were expected and where the agency of the dead was invoked. But do such “traditional” reasons and contexts still have meaning for people today? Or have new reasons and triggers emerged for the dead to affect the living? And how have new platforms for post-mortem communication - such as social media and the digital space - influenced the interactions between the living and the dead?

We invite folklorists, ethnologists and anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, thanatologists, but also scholars from other disciplines who deal with the dead in contemporary society to submit an abstract and participate in the conference. Papers may be based on a variety of sources – ethnographic, archival, digital, media, etc. The conference language is English; the expected length of papers is 20 minutes. There is no conference fee, but you will have to cover your own travel, accommodation and catering costs. Please use the [this link](#) to submit your application.

In case of questions, contact [Marja.Kovanda@ff.uni-lj.si](mailto:Marja.Kovanda@ff.uni-lj.si).

The deadline for submission of applications is 31 December 2024. Acceptance of papers will be confirmed by 31 January 2025.



## ***Symbols of Mortality Online Conference In Conjunction With Orkney Museum - Call For Papers***

Mortality symbolism is an important part of our heritage, and deserves to be treated as such. It resides in a landscape of both poignancy and sadness, complete with a wide variety of inscriptions and carvings that reflect the lives, the beliefs and the attitudes to death of communities now past. As part of the Symbols of Mortality Exhibition, opening in Orkney Museum (February 2025), this online conference aims to bring about an interdisciplinary and wide-ranging approach to the study of mortality symbolism, in all its many guises, thus providing an engaging space to people from all backgrounds to share their research with others.

We welcome papers from a wide variety of topics and subjects, including but not limited to Archaeology, Architecture, Art History, Folklore, Cemeteries and Graveyards, Church History, Historiography, Literature, Material Culture, Museum and Heritage Studies, Social History and Victorian Studies.

Please send an abstract of no more than 250 words, together with a short biography to: [symbolsofmortality@gmail.com](mailto:symbolsofmortality@gmail.com) by 10th January 2025

## ***New insights into Scottish deathways: a digital conference 24th - 25th April 2025***

This multi-disciplinary conference aims to connect academics and practitioners to share insights and ideas across a range of topics, periods and perspectives relating to death and Scotland. It is intended to facilitate learning from recent and current research and to stimulate further research, including by supporting the development of new connections and networks between people working in different academic disciplines and areas of policy and practice. This two-day online conference centres primarily around the presentation and discussion of (a) papers reporting research insights and (b) summaries (with or without accompanying posters) of work in progress or areas of research interest. The programme includes two invited presentations from:

Professor Michael Brown, Chair in Irish, Scottish & Enlightenment History,  
University of Aberdeen  
Dr Naomi Richards, Director of the Glasgow End of Life Studies Group, University  
of Glasgow

There will also be opportunities to discuss ideas about research need and scope for collaborative research development.

### **Call for papers:**

Presentations are invited from people researching Scottish deathways from any disciplinary or theoretical perspective, and from anywhere in the world. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Death, grief and mourning

- Burial and cremation
- Violent death including war
- Plague, pestilence and famine
- Death poverty, age, gender and status
- Death in literature and the visual arts
- Death and identity
- Folklore, custom and rituals
- Legal and medical aspects of death
- Theology, liturgy and funeral ministry
- Architecture, landscape and monuments

Proposed titles, together with abstracts of no more than 200 words and the names of the presenting author and any co-authors, should be sent via [New insights into Scottish Deathways website](#) by no later than Sunday 12 January 2025. Decisions on acceptance will be notified by Friday 24 January 2025.

You will be asked to indicate whether your abstract should be considered for presentation as (a) a 20 minute research paper, (b) a 5 minute presentation of work in progress or area of research interest (with or without an accompanying poster), or (c) either.

### **Registration:**

All speakers must register for the conference. The registration fee (for access to all sessions) is £50. You can register, in due course, at: [New insights into Scottish Deathways website](#) When you register, you will be asked to indicate interest in a local in-person ‘get together’ around the conference. This is entirely optional. It will require you to indicate where you will be attending the online conference from and whether you are willing for the conference organisers to share your email address with others attending from the same area.

As the conference is intended to facilitate networking and collaboration beyond the event, you will also be invited to indicate if you are willing for your name, a short description of your research area (e.g. disciplinary perspective and/or key topics relating to Scottish Deathways) to be shared with other conference participants who have also expressed willingness.

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## **Contact Us**

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**Web:** [www.bath.ac.uk/cdas](http://www.bath.ac.uk/cdas)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/centrefordeath](http://www.facebook.com/centrefordeath)

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