

Centre for
Death & Society
(CDAS)



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

Centre for Death & Society

July 2022 Newsletter

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Director's Note

As we are nearing the summer break, we have been able to reflect on successful events over the summer period.

CDAS Members were invited to host a keynote symposium at the British Gerontological Conference 2022 which we provide more details of in the CDAS members news. Our CDAS In Conversation in July featured a conversation between CDAS Visiting Fellow Tamarin Norwood and CDAS alum Renske Visser and focussed on writing and its value and we will make available on our website soon. Last, but not least, we held a researcher wellbeing day on the 19th July. This event had originally scheduled to take place at the University of Bath, but due to record summer temperatures we held the event online and were joined by colleagues from Australia. The event featured talks from Dr Jo Batley from Winchester University who reflected on conducting emotionally demanding research with the bereaved. We also heard from Dr Tina Skinner the University of Bath on minimizing the potential for secondary trauma in research and from Dr Kate Woodthorpe on working with external partners and stakeholders.

There is a lot to look forward to as we head into the new year. We have two CDAS InConversation events scheduled for September and October. Our September event will feature a conversation between our new directors Kate and Jeremy and will focus on CDAS' past, present and future. We are really keen to hear what kinds of events and research are of interest to you and how we can develop these in the coming years, so we hope you can join us for that discussion. The sign up link is in this newsletter. Our October event will feature a conversation between Dr Imogen Jones, John Pitchers and Gemma Norburn on the autopsy stage of coronial death investigations.

We also provide details in this newsletter of our newly created CDAS writing group, which will explore the value, meanings and impact of writing for those researching death, dying, loss and associated areas of inquiry. We set out the scope of the writing group in the newsletter as well as giving some provisional dates. Anyone who is interested in writing about death and dying is welcome to attend.

We hope that you all have a rejuvenating summer break and look forward to seeing you in the next academic year.

Jeremy and Kate

Jeremy Dixon and Kate Woodthorpe – CDAS Directors

Introducing CDASWriting

After the success of the therapeutic writing panel at the CDAS conference in June 2022 and the CDAS InConversation between Tamarin Norwood and Renske Visser on 5th July, a group of CDAS colleagues have come together to form a group, CDASWriting.

The group focuses on the value, meanings and impact of writing for those researching death, dying, loss and associated areas of inquiry, as well as the broader personal and political dimensions of writing in and outside of academia. The group plans to facilitate talks, writing retreats, workshops and research activities. Key areas of focus are:

- therapeutic writing
- writing for wellbeing
- reclaiming writing (as personal, political and powerful)
- what it might mean to write for impact, pathways to policy change and the REF
- auto/biographical and creative writing
- the opportunities and challenges of personal, creative and fictional writing in the academy
- writing as community engagement
- the possibilities and limitations of writing for addressing sensitive subject matter
- finding the joy in writing for different purposes and different audiences

In a nutshell, we're keen to learn new ways of writing, to explore how we can write differently for different audiences, and to (re)learn to enjoy the process, together. For those that enjoy writing, want to (re)discover their love for it, want the intellectual stimulation, or just plain old need to do it for their job and career, we hope this will be a positive and productive environment, where you can nurture and develop your own writing, be that for public consumption or just yourself.

Provisional dates for our initial CDASWriting sessions are:

Wednesday 12th October 6pm – 8pm (UK time): online mini writing retreat

Saturday 12th November 10am – 12pm (UK time): online mini writing retreat

Early 2023: in person writing retreat over 2 days in Bristol

As we get going we are also intending to bring in external speakers for lively discussion and training, including published authors.

We will be promoting the sessions in the newsletter and via social media as we get closer to the dates. For now, pencil them into your diaries if you want to join us to write and enjoy the process. Watch this space for more details.

Any questions or suggestions, drop us a line at cdas@bath.ac.uk.

We hope to see you there,

Kate Woodthorpe, Hannah Rumble, Beth Michael-Fox, Tamarin Norwood, and Gayle Letherby

CDAS Member News

CDAS Members were invited to host a keynote symposium at the British Gerontological Conference 2022. CDAS members Dr Jeremy Dixon, Dr Chao Fang and Dr Diana Teggi presented on the theme of Loss and Resilience. They were joined by Rachel Burns - Senior Social Worker from Dorothy House Hospice Care who provided insights from a practice perspective. The event was supported by the Independent Age who were one of this year's sponsors for the conference. John Palmer - Director of Policy and Communications for Independent Age introduced the conference and highlighted the importance of CDAS' work in light of the recent UK Commission on Bereavement Report.

The symposium looked at the gaps between gerontology and bereavement research. Chao Fang highlighted how gerontology has traditionally focussed on how older people may be intimately connected to a gradual process of losing defences to cope and adapt to disruptive circumstances. Bereavement research, by contrast, has focussed on the disruptive nature of bereavement and the significance of resilience in facing the loss of others. The symposium explored how themes of loss and resilience are framed within UK policy and how they play out in practice. CDAS members reflected on their current research, with the session including three brief presentations with Jeremy Dixon reflecting on safeguarding people living with dementia, Diana Teggi speaking on end-of-life care in care homes and Chao Fang presenting on bereavement in later life. Rachel Burns highlighted the challenges that end-of-life practitioners face. The remainder of the session consisted of questions from the audience. The event has helped to forge a positive alliance between CDAS and BSA which we hope will continue.

New publication

Prof Tony Walter was recently interviewed by Prof Michael Hvidd Jacobsen for Mortality on careers in death and dying. The article is available [here](#), if you cannot access it behind a paywall please let us know and we can send you a copy.

In Conversation

CDAS: the past, the present and the future

19:00 BST

Tuesday September 13th, [register here](#)

Join new Centre Directors [Jeremy Dixon](#) and [Kate Woodthorpe](#) to hear their visions for CDAS's future in our next online #InConversation. An open meeting where we will have chance to talk, this InConversation is also a chance for you to tell us what you want the Centre to be doing more of, to ask any questions about what CDAS can do, and can do for you specifically, and together for us to identify the potential growth areas for CDAS in the next few years. A transition of Centre leadership is a great opportunity for us all to take stock and consider the future of the death studies community around the world, and we hope you can join us in that conversation.

InConversation

Culture and care: the role of anatomical pathology technologists

19:00 BST

Thursday 6th October, [register here](#)

Join our InConversation between Associate Professor of Law at the University of Leeds [Dr Imogen Jones](#) and [John Pitchers](#), Chair of the Association of Anatomical Pathology Technology and Service Manager: Mortuary & Coroner Support for Avon and Bristol City Council, and [Gemma Norburn](#), Anatomical Pathology Technologist at Barking, Havering & Redbridge University NHS Trust, as they discuss the autopsy stage of coronial death investigations.

CDAS COMMUNITY NEWS

Policy: Parliamentary debate on potential doctor assisted dying legislation in Westminster Hall

The parliamentary debate on potential doctor assisted dying legislation in Westminster Hall on Monday 4th July showed up a 2:1 majority of speakers who spoke in support of Dignity in Dying's campaign and those that did so spoke powerfully of the stories shared by our supporters. Action towards compassionate end of life choice within strict safeguards should finally happen now.

Read Bath MP, Wera Hobhouse's speech at the [end of the newsletter](#).

Conference: Bereavement and Grief in Europe – Emerging Perspectives & Collaborations

In partnership with the Danish National Centre for Grief, Aarhus University and the Irish Hospice Foundation, the Bereavement Network Europe (BNE) will host the first European Grief Conference called “*Bereavement and Grief in Europe – Emerging Perspectives & Collaborations*”.

Location: Copenhagen, Denmark, September 21st – 23rd, 2022.

For further information click [here](#).

Funded PhD Studentship: The University of Warwick

“Complex Deaths: Understanding Experiences of Dying in Community Settings”

This fully funded studentship is an excellent opportunity for someone interested in the sociology of dying, palliative or end-of-life care, as well as those who may be interested in providing a social and political theory informed analysis of how biomedical technologies are shaping understandings of dying. More information can be found [here](#). The deadline is 25th July 2022.

The studentships cover tuition fees, stipend, and some expenses. Supervised by [Dr John MacArtney](#), the studentship also provides the opportunity to work with the Marie Curie Policy and Research team, and so will serve to help develop key networks and contacts for a post-doctoral career.

Job Posting: PhD Position

The interdisciplinary Research Training Group (RTG) KRITIS "Critical infrastructures: Construction, Functional Crises and Protection in Cities" at the Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany, announces a PhD position (f/m/d) scheduled to begin **1 October 2022**. The position is limited to 3 years (until 30 September 2025) and comprises 65% of a full-time job.

For more information on the position and how to apply please visit the [end of the newsletter](#).

CDAS COMMUNITY EVENTS

Suicide Bereavement UK's 11th International Conference

Over 500 people attend this annual event in Manchester. For more information and to register [CLICK HERE](#)

DATE: September 22nd 2022

VENUE: Mercure Manchester Piccadilly Hotel

PABBS evidence-based, CPD accredited suicide bereavement training

This training is first of its kind internationally. The research which informed its development was conducted at the University of Manchester and funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)



For more information [CLICK HERE](#)



Evidence-based Suicide Bereavement Training

Evidence-based • Evaluated • Engaging • Effective

Responding To Suicide (RTS) evidence-based and CPD accredited, emergency services suicide bereavement training

This training is first of its kind internationally and informed by research conducted by Dr Sharon McDonnell (MD of Suicide Bereavement UK).

For more information [CLICK HERE](#)



CALL FOR PAPERS

Call for Papers: Dead Women and Gendered Death in Visual Culture

The guest editors (Dr Devaleena Kundu, Dr Bethan Michael-Fox and Dr Khyati Tripathi) of an upcoming focus issue of MAI: Feminism and Visual Culture seek papers offering critical and creative insights into representations of dead women, the dead female body and gendered death in visual culture. The deadline for proposals is 30 November 2022.

For full details please see the Call for Papers at: <https://maifeminism.com/cfp-dead-women-and-gendered-death-in-visual-culture/>

Redesigning Deathcare Conference

Format: In person and online, The University of Melbourne, Australia

Date: October 27-29, 2022

Website: www.redesigningdeathcare.org

The Redesigning Deathcare Conference aims to bridge the divide between research and practice at the end of life and death, through dynamic conversations about the challenges facing deathcare and how to build a better system.

The acute threat posed by COVID-19 over the last two years compounds more long-term threats to contemporary models of deathcare, including climate change and an ageing population. People today are presented with ever-expanding individual choice around the end-of-life, but are also forced to navigate complex, fragmented systems of care that fail to provide equitable and meaningful outcomes. As it stands, deathcare is artificially separated into silos, organised around different stages (dying, death, commemoration, etc.), different professions (medical clinicians, funeral directors, counsellors, etc.), and academic disciplines (medicine, anthropology, law, etc.).

Redesigning Deathcare conference asks delegates to consider:

- How do we remake our deathcare system so that it better meets community needs, not just today, but for future generations?
- How do we bridge long-standing divides in how we imagine and manage the end-of-life?
- How might contested views of the future be productively and equitably debated and resolved?
- How are the future of the planet and the future of deathcare intertwined?

Contact Us

Visit the CDAS [website](#) for more information.


Email: cdas@bath.ac.uk

Web: www.bath.ac.uk/cdas

Facebook: www.facebook.com/centrefordeath

Twitter: [@cendeathsociety](https://twitter.com/cendeathsociety)

To unsubscribe, please email cdas@bath.ac.uk



The interdisciplinary Research Training Group (RTG) KRITIS "Critical infrastructures: Construction, Functional Crises and Protection in Cities" at the Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany, announces a

PhD position (f/m/d)

scheduled to **begin 1 October 2022**. The position is limited to 3 years (until 30 September 2025) and comprises 65% of a full-time job.

In the KRITIS RTG, historians, sociologists, urban and infrastructure planners, civil engineers, philosophers, political scientists, architects and computer scientists have been working together since 2016. In the third doctoral cohort of the RTG (2022-2025), which is currently being advertised, a total of twelve doctoral research fellows from various disciplines will have the opportunity to write individual PhD theses addressing the overarching theme of the RTG. Under the guidance of several professors, the interdisciplinary exchange is ensured through joint seminars, colloquia and workshops.

The research of the RTG focuses on technical networked infrastructures (water supply and sewerage, transport, energy, information and telecommunication systems), which are explored in their manifold entanglements with (urban) societies. The members of the RTG are researching particularly the "social construction" (How and why does an infrastructure become critical?), the "functional crises" (How do failures occur and what consequences do they have?) and the "protection" of critical infrastructures (How can failures be prevented or their consequences be diminished? How can cities prepare for them?). Our interdisciplinary collaboration is based on the five key concepts 'criticality', 'vulnerability', 'resilience', 'preparedness' and 'prevention'. For information on the guiding questions, the research programme and the first scientific results of the RTG, please see the following website: https://www.kritis.tu-darmstadt.de/rtg_kritis/index.en.jsp.

Tasks:

The objective of the advertised position is to develop an independent research contribution to the urban sociology of critical infrastructures by preparing a sociological PhD thesis. Ideally, the PhD project combines an investigation of the dynamics of critical infrastructures with an analysis of their spatial relations, transformations or underlying spatial concepts.

Possible research topics include:

- Functional crises of critical infrastructures through their targeted damage, destruction or shutdown in the context of strategic violent acts (e.g. through terrorist attacks or acts of warfare as currently in Ukraine) with particular focus on their social/spatial effects and dynamics.
- Functional crises of critical infrastructures due to their damage or destruction in the context of natural disasters (e.g. due to earthquakes, tsunamis or floods) with a particular focus on their social/spatial impacts and dynamics.
- Functional crises of critical infrastructures due to their overload or failure in the context of pandemics with a particular focus on their social/spatial impacts and dynamics (e.g. interruption of circulations in the course of measures to contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the establishment of new supply routes and services).

- Functional crises of critical infrastructures due to their overload or failure in the context of tourism (e.g. in the context of overtourism).
- Transformation of critical infrastructures through their musealisation/eventisation (e.g. development of the sewers in Vienna as a film tourist destination or water management systems inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list).
- Transformation of critical infrastructures through their stepwise reconstruction or their conversion (e.g. after wars and catastrophes).

Beyond these topics, own topic proposals for the sociological investigation of the dynamics of infrastructures that include urban or spatial perspectives are welcome.

Requirements:

The requirement for the position is an excellent academic degree in a social sciences discipline (diploma, master's degree or equivalent) with a focus on perspectives from urban sociology, the sociology of space or the sociological study of infrastructures. Moreover, very good knowledge of qualitative methods of empirical social research is required. As the regular joint activities of the RTG take place in German and English, a good command of the English language and willingness to acquire a good knowledge of German are also expected. An international orientation and experience in interdisciplinary cooperation and/or teamwork are desirable. The place of employment is Darmstadt (near Frankfurt).

The RTG offers an excellent research infrastructure for PhD candidates who would like to complete their dissertations in an innovative, international program. In addition to furthering research on the sociological aspects of critical infrastructures, the position holder is therefore expected to engage with the academic concepts of the research program and to closely collaborate across disciplines. A high level of commitment is expected in the exchange among each other and in joint scientific activities. The PhD thesis may be written in German or English.

The doctoral research fellows will work in common areas with dedicated office space, and will have the support of participating professors and their own research support office. They can take advantage of a wide range of support services during the doctoral phase. These include group/individual coaching, writing workshop, debate training or specific support offers for women. Within the framework of the available financial resources, staying abroad financed over several months is also possible. The RTG collaborates with four foreign partner institutes and with various partners from the field.

Opportunity to work on a PhD thesis is given. The provision of the service also serves the scientific qualification of the applicant.

The TU Darmstadt has an affirmative action program to promote equity in the employment of women and members of underrepresented minorities and strongly encourages them to apply. Candidates who have a degree of disability of at least 50 are given preferred treatment if equally qualified. Salaries depend on each fellow's qualifications and experience and will be calculated according to the collective agreement of TU Darmstadt (TV-TU Darmstadt). By submitting your application, you agree that your data will be stored and processed for the

purpose of the recruitment process. You can find our data protection declaration on our homepage.

Your application:

Please submit your application by **10 July 2022** in English or German to the following email address (compressed in one file, max. 6 MB): baumann@ifs.tu-darmstadt.de. Please enclose the following documents: (1) a motivation letter, (2) a CV with information on academic qualifications, language skills and international experience, (3) scanned copies of academic credentials, and (4) a short proposal for your planned PhD project (two to four pages), taking into account the scientific program and (some of) the concepts of the RTG.

Potential candidates may contact Ms Allegra Baumann (baumann@ifs.tu-darmstadt.de) for advice on possible PhD thesis topics and research designs before submitting their application. We look forward to receiving your application!

Code number: 401

Application deadline: 10 July 2022 (CET)

6.12pm Doctor assisted dying debate Westminster Hall 4th July

[Wera Hobhouse](#)

[\(Bath\) \(LD\)](#)

I want to thank the tireless campaigners, especially Pauline Carroll from our local Bath branch of Dignity in Dying, who has taken me on a journey over the past five years. Due to her courageous campaigning—she never let go—I gradually changed my mind over this difficult and complex issue, and Pauline is in the Public Gallery today.

The Government have amended the Health and Care Act 2022 so as to fully fund palliative and hospice services in the future. That is very welcome, but it is not enough. Our current law needs to change. One approach should not exclude the other. It is disappointing that no time was given to debate Baroness Meacher's Bill and that Conservative peers were whipped on 16 March to vote against Lord Forsyth's proposed assisted dying amendment to the Health and Care Act. It is time to apply honesty and justice to the debate. Constituents of mine have campaigned for years for a safeguarded assisting dying law for mentally competent, terminally ill adults with a six-month prognosis. I do not accept that this is the thin end of a wedge.

Whatever might otherwise be heard, it is a fact that palliative medicine and care has its limitations, even at its most excellent. Figures from the Office of Health Economics in 2019 show that every year, 6,400 terminally ill patients in hospices have horrendous deaths. One of my constituents wrote to me:

“I watched my mother being tortured to death with care, she was in extreme pain and was given the maximum level of pain relief. This only works for a time and between doses she was in agony.”

Those who suggest that palliative care can manage pain are ignoring what happens. In too many cases, pain cannot be alleviated. We should not hide that truth.

It was disappointing to learn in 2021, in a piece of research on end-of-life preferences by my local hospice, that assisted dying was not to be included. The reason given was that it is not legal. We cannot leave out the most pressing topic for end-of-life preference. Some people wish for assisted dying. Discounting it as a patient's preference from the start is ideologically blinded and suggests that blanket opposition to assisted dying is supported by the hospice movement, for which I otherwise have the greatest respect.

In a BMA survey, 4,500 doctors voted in support of assisted dying legislation, whereby they could assist patients who can voluntarily take life-ending prescriptions under very clear and defined legislation. Recent evidence from a Royal College of General Practitioners survey shows that opposition to such legislation has fallen from 77% to 46%. Here in Parliament, we are falling very far behind public and medical opinion. We continue to force people to suffer

a protracted death against their wishes, to spend £10,000 to go to Dignitas at a rate of one a week, or to add to the horrific new suicide statistics from the ONS.

Some terminally ill people will not choose palliative care but will opt for the choice of a safeguarded, doctor-assisted death, and that should be their right. I have gone on a journey to believing truly that prolonging an agonising life is not what I should stand for, and I speak as a Christian. Instead, we should allow for a compassionate death when that is what the dying person wishes for.

