

Centre for  
Death & Society  
(CDAS)



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**

# Centre for Death & Society

## February 2022 Newsletter

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## Director's Note

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We start this issue with news that was really satisfying for us here in CDAS, when we learnt recently learnt that CDAS alumni Steve Nimmo has gone on to do great things with his degree. Steve completed the University of Bath Foundation Degree in Funeral Services just over ten years ago, and from this he has continued a keen interest in and commitment to education and professional development within the funeral industry, culminating in this year taking on his own education and training programme (see page 3). It is great for us and the CDAS community to hear about the long lasting impact of education, so thank you for sharing your good news Steve and we wish you a lot of success.

It was also really great to receive such a positive response to the 2022 CDAS Conference call! Thank you to all who submitted a proposal, we were inundated with responses. Reviewing the proposals and structuring the conference is now underway, please watch this space for more info in the next few months. To everyone who submitted a proposal thank you again and we will be in touch with an outcome as soon as we can. A huge thank you to the conference organising team, most of are volunteers, who are working behind the scenes to review, discuss proposals with presenters, and put together what promises to be a really stimulating online conference in June.

As part of a higher education institution, we're all about learning, evidence, upskilling, professional development and personal growth and want to ensure that what we provide as a research centre is meeting the needs of the death studies and wider academic community. So, please keep telling us what you want, need, would benefit from, and we'll see what we can do. Talk to us about doing a PhD. Get involved in our research! And to ensure we keep contributing to the community we will keep putting on accessible events that we hope stimulate, encourage, foster and develop the network. Please get in touch if you want to be part of an event. Full details of upcoming Research Seminars and In Conversations can be found on page 3 onwards.

As always, send us details of what you're doing, organising, publishing and planning and we will promote as best we can via the newsletter.

Finally, take a listen to the Death Studies Podcast this month which features CDAS co-director Kate talking about the potential of research, education, and supporting the death studies community and next generation. And if you have experience of Inquests either personally or professionally please get in touch with CDAS researcher Hannah Rumble to participate in the ESRC Voicing Loss project, as she would like to hear your thoughts about what happens and how the system could be improved (see page 7).

John and Kate



## CDAS NEWS

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As noted in the Directors Note, we learnt this month about CDAS Alumni Steve Nimmo taking on his own education and training course. Kate asked him to share a few words about what he's doing and planning. It's great to hear about the long lasting impact of education, thank you for sharing your news Steve and best of luck in your new adventures!

To all other CDAS Alumni, please share your news with us, it's great to hear what you're getting up to.

“They say most things happen for a reason. In 2008, Steve Nimmo found himself arriving at the University of Bath to embark on the inaugural Degree in Funeral Services. Through the course, he was lucky to meet a group of people who were very like minded, and who all had a passion for learning more about the industry in which they worked. One such person was Simon Smith, co-owner of Green Fuse Training. He was already successfully running courses for Funeral Celebrants, and wanted to investigate the possibility of running courses for funeral operatives, and those who wanted to enter the industry. Between them, Simon and Steve went on to create a number of courses which have seen many hundreds of students over eleven years successfully pass through. This includes over thirty who have opened their own funeral businesses as a direct result of their experiences with Green Fuse Training.

In December of 2021, Simon and his wife, Jane, felt it was time to take semi retirement, and so handed the business to Steve, in order for him to take things to the next level, expanding the number and variety of courses, and also, running them in both the South and the North of England. This, he hopes, will widen the availability of the courses to students from all parts of the UK.

This expansion has included a re-brand of the business, while always keeping closely to the ethos of Green Fuse. Thus, The Funeral Training Academy has been created, and it is under this umbrella that courses for those wanting to work in the funeral industry, and those wishing to be funeral celebrants will be operated.

The existence of this business is testimony to the degree course run by the University of Bath all those years ago. Without the course, and CDAS, the Funeral Training Academy wouldn't exist, and wouldn't be bringing new and innovative ideas to the industry.”

### **SPS Department Research Seminar (online)**

#### ***Researching Societal Relationships on Death: Predicting Global Pandemics for both the Living and the Dead***

*Professor Lucy Easthope*

Date: March 1<sup>st</sup>

Time: 11:00 to 12:30 (GMT)

Professor Lucy Easthope has been associated with the Centre for Death and Society for over 14 years. During that time a particular focus has been readying for a pandemic and providing advice to government departments on the way in which they might recover from such a disaster. She predicted, through the insights provided by her work with CDAS, that a pandemic would shine a stark light on UK societal relationships with the dead and dying. In this presentation she reflects both on this work to date and the next steps for her research.

Register [here](#).

### **In Conversation**

#### ***The home funeral movements in the US and UK***

*Professor Phil Olson with Sam Hooker*

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

Time: 18:00 (GMT)

In this In Conversation Phil and Sam will talk about the home death and home funeral movements in the US and UK and their efficacy. Join us for what should be a fascinating chat about relationships between families, professionals and practitioners, social movements, and power.

## Phil Olson Biography

Professor Phil Olson is a technology ethicist and Associate Professor of STS at Virginia Tech, US. His work focuses on technologies of the body (especially the dead body), and on gender, labor, knowledge, and expertise. He has taught and published on a variety of topics, including funerary disposition technologies, US death care culture, civilian drones, philosophical ethics and epistemology, feminist pedagogy, and queer studies. Born into a four-generations-old funeral family, Phil has worked and lived with the dead and their caretakers all his life.

[Register here.](#)

## **In Conversation**

### ***Further Reflections on a Year of Turbulence: Holding Space for the Pandemic's Dead and the Living Left Behind***

*Professor Lucy Easthope with John Troyer*

Date: March 23<sup>rd</sup>

Time: 19:00 (GMT)

Professor Lucy Easthope is the country's leading authority on recovering from disaster. In their second CDAS In Conversation event about the pandemic, CDAS Co-Director Dr John Troyer and Professor Easthope examine the last year, reflect on what it feels like having spent careers readying for these times, and discuss Professor Easthope's forthcoming book 'When the Dust Settles' (Hodder & Stoughton March 2022) on what the future holds.

### Lucy Easthope Biography:

Lucy Easthope is a leading authority on recovering from disaster. For over two decades she has challenged others to think differently about what comes next, after tragic events. She is a passionate and thought-provoking voice in planning for pandemics, conflict and disaster, and has been a tactical advisor to UK disaster responders since 2001. Her research and practice portfolio includes mass fatalities planning, legal aspects of emergencies, identifying lessons post incident, the effectiveness of public inquiries, interoperability, and community resilience in practice. She holds an LLB (Bristol), Masters in Risk, Crisis and Disaster management (Leicester) and PhD in Medicine (Lancaster). Lucy is known globally for her work and holds an honorary position at the Joint Centre for Disaster Research, Massey University, New

Zealand. She is a Professor in Practice of Risk and Hazard at the University of Durham and a co-founder of the After Disaster Network based in their Institute of Hazard, Risk and Resilience. She is a Fellow in Mass Fatalities and Pandemics at the Centre for Death and Society, University of Bath. She is a former senior fellow of the Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College. She has acted as the external examiner for a number of international disaster management postgraduate programmes. She is a member of the Cabinet Office National Risk Assessment Behavioural Science Expert Group and sits on the editorial board of the Australian Journal of Emergency Management. Her first book 'The Recovery Myth' proved definitive on the challenges facing the UK in disaster recovery and her next book 'When the Dust Settles' is published in March. [@lucygobag](#) on Twitter

Register [here](#).

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## CDAS COMMUNITY NEWS

### Publications and Outputs



#### Podcast:

#### *Death Studies Podcast*

We are happy to announce that our 6th episode featuring Dr Kate Woodthorpe has been released!

Kate is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Social Policy Sciences and Co-Director of the Centre for Death and Society at the University of Bath. She is also co-editor of the journal *Mortality* and on the editorial board for the journals *Sociology* and *Death Studies* and has acted as a Special Advisor to the Work and Pensions Select Committee Inquiry into Bereavement Benefits.

Listen to the episode [here](#)!

### Funding News

#### *Good Death Fellowship*

The Order of the Good Death is pleased to offer project grants to individuals or groups working to make death a more meaningful, sustainable, and equitable experience for all. Our goal is to provide funding and support to a wide range of inspiring and innovative projects or

initiatives. The grants are open to thought leaders and community organizers in the death positive community that have a project intended to create more innovative and compassionate experiences around death and dying through education, community care, art, events, technology, and/or advocacy.

This grant will provide funding to three recipients (fellows) to launch or advance their existing work on a specific project in their area of expertise. In addition to funding, they will receive expert support, access to resources, and connection to a community with a passion for changing the future of death care.

For more information on the grant and how to apply, click [here](#).

## **Calls for Contributions**

### ***Research Invitation: Voicing Loss: Meanings and Implications of Participation by Bereaved People in Inquests***

The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research (Birkbeck, University of London) and the Centre for Death & Society (University of Bath) are conducting research into bereaved people's experiences of inquests across England and Wales. We are interested in finding out to what extent, and in what ways, bereaved people feel able to participate in inquests and the wider process of coronial investigation. You can find out more about the project [here](#).

The research team would like to talk to bereaved people who have attended an inquest since 2013; people who work in coroners' courts (including coroners, coroners' officers and legal practitioners); and people who have given evidence at an inquest in a professional capacity since 2013. Participants will be asked to reflect on their experiences of inquests and the role of bereaved people in the coronial process. Bereaved people can be involved by taking part in an interview or by providing a written account of their experiences.

This is an independent study, funded by the Economic & Social Research Council, and with research ethics approval from Birkbeck University of London and the University of Bath.

Please contact Dr Hannah Rumble ([hr306@bath.ac.uk](mailto:hr306@bath.ac.uk)) or Professor Jessica Jacobson ([j.jacobson@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:j.jacobson@bbk.ac.uk)) to ask about getting involved or to receive more information.

## *European Grief Conference- Call for Abstracts*

**Submission deadline:** 01/04/22

**Acceptance notification:** 01/05/22

### **Presentation types**

- Oral presentations (15 – 20 minutes)
- Poster presentation
- Experiential activity (e.g., workshop, creative performance, personal narration; 60 – 90 minutes)

If you and your colleagues would like to combine your presentations into a symposium format, please contact Lene Larsen at [lla@sorgcenter.dk](mailto:lla@sorgcenter.dk). For more information on abstract proposal requirements click [here](#).

## *Fair Funeral Alliance*

If you have arranged a funeral within the last three years the Fair Funeral Alliance are seeking your views on the experience via a survey: <https://qsa.typeform.com/to/AhvLBUSr>

## **Opportunities**

### *PhD Opportunities*

**Application Deadline:** February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022

In partnership with the All Ireland Institute for Hospice and Palliative Care (AIIHPC), this PhD within the Centre for Improving Health-Related Quality of Life (CIHRQoL) in the School of Psychology at QUB aims to develop an understanding of death literacy across Ireland and make recommendations on how to support communities to become more death literate.

Apply using our online Postgraduate Applications Portal [go.qub.ac.uk/pgapply](http://go.qub.ac.uk/pgapply) and follow the step-by-step instructions on [how to apply](#).

For more information on the PhD, entry requirements, and how to apply; click [here](#).



## ***Research Associate Role***

The Forward with Dementia Study at UCL is seeking an enthusiastic individual with an interest in older adults and Dementia for a position as a Research Associate based in the UCL Centre for Ageing Population Studies (CAPS). CAPS is at the leading edge of research in primary care for older people and are a multi-disciplinary group with expertise in intervention development, qualitative research, epidemiology, and clinical trials.

The main role of the appointee will be to lead and manage the day to day running of the study. They will be expected to contribute to:

1. Developing, delivering, and evaluating an equality, diversity and inclusion strategy for patient and public engagement (PPI) and participant recruitment to make sure Forward with dementia is relevant to and reaches underserved members of the target audience
2. Recruiting for and conducting semi-structured interviews with family carers, people with dementia and practitioners
3. Coordinating and facilitating virtual co-design workshops and user testing
4. Conducting qualitative data analysis and working closely with the wider team to develop a resource for social care practitioners and to assist access to dementia related social care support.

For more information and to apply click [here](#).

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## **CDAS COMMUNITY EVENTS**

### ***The Beautiful Burial Ground Conference***

**Date:** March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Time:** 10:00 to 17:00 GMT

Join us for an inspiring day discovering how to transform burial grounds into havens for people, wildlife, and heritage. Hear from experts in the field and attend workshops of your choice. There will be plenty of time for asking questions and networking. Our Patron, Chris Baines, independent environmentalist with an international reputation as a landscape communication, an award-winning writer and broadcaster will be launching the conference.

**Tickets:** £15 pounds for non-members, £12 for members

For more information and to get tickets click [here](#).



## *A Matter of Life and Death*

**Date:** March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Time:** 19:00 to 20:30 GMT

Inspired by books from the [BBC Arts 100 Novels That Shaped Our World](#), Redbridge Libraries bring you a panel event featuring some of the UK's most exciting voices in the arts, literature and death industries talking about their work and the books and novels that have shaped them. This promises to be an illuminating and electrifying night!

For more information and to get tickets click [here](#).

## *Death and Culture IIII*

The Death & Culture Network (DaCNet) based at the University of York is pleased to invite abstracts for Death & Culture IIII, the fourth iteration of its biennial conference – hosted by York St John University. Founded in 2016, DaCNet seeks to explore and understand cultural responses to mortality. It focuses on the impact of death and the dead-on culture, and the way in which they have shaped human behaviour, evidenced through thought, action, production and expression. The network is committed to promoting and producing an inter-disciplinary study of mortality supported by evidence and framed by theoretical engagement.

We welcome contributions on topics including, but not limited to:

- Death and the popular imagination
- COVID-19 and the arts
- Work in death and death-adjacent industries
- Governance of mortality
- Death and the non-human
- Mass death in the age of individualism
- Mortal spaces

Abstracts of no more than 2,500 characters should be submitted to the [online portal](#) by no later than 31 March 2022.

This internationally reaching conference will bring together death scholars, including postgraduate students, artists, the charity sector, the professional environment, as well as those who might not consider themselves death scholars whose work overlaps with thanatological enquiry.

**Day 1:** Thu, 8 Sep 2022

08:30 – 17:30 BST

**Day 2:** Fri, 9 Sep 2022

08:30 - 17:00 BST

**Booking fees:**

- Standard rate: £110.00
- Concession (students or the unwaged): £70.00
- For more information and to register click [here](#).

**Keynote speakers:**

- Dr. Kami Fletcher | Albright College, PA, USA
- Prof. Matthew Ratcliffe | University of York, UK
- Dr. Cath Davies | Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

***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](#).

# CALL FOR PAPERS

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## *Redesigning Deathcare Conference*

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

**Date:** October 27-29, 2022

**Deadline:** EOIs close 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022, full submissions close 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022.

**Website:** [www.redesigningdeathcare.org](http://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* invites contributions from diverse backgrounds to collectively imagine and build a holistic system of deathcare. The 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?

We seek contributions from diverse disciplinary perspectives, including (but not limited to) anthropology, death studies, history, palliative medicine, public health, taphonomy & forensic sciences, and philosophy. Sessions that incorporate different stages of death, different professional backgrounds, and disciplines are encouraged. There are several submission formats, including presentations or ‘papers’, roundtables, posters, and artistic/non-traditional outputs.

Submission is a two-step process. Expressions of Interest (a call for panels and roundtables) close 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Organisers will curate the program on the basis of EOIs and call for individual submissions within each session. Full submissions close 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022.

### ***Afterlife counts: the economics and materiality of funerals and dealing with death [AGENET]***

Death marks an important moment in life – while it ceases the physical existence of an individual, it significantly extends into the lives of those left behind. Anthropologically, death is acknowledged a “fait sociale totale” (Hertz 1907), and how people deal with death socially, spiritually, and economically remains object of anthropological investigations (Goodwin-Hawkins and Dawson 2018); recently, these have focused mainly on two main interests: how life persists, and the dead body in its iconical and indexical forms (Engelke 2019).

Funerals and materially expressed commemoration practices, such as the construction of graves, are often the most evident activities death entails. Across the world, they are by far the most important and most elaborate life cycle events. While revolving around the life of the deceased, these events activate social relationships and networks that extend far beyond the family. They often serve as a platform for descendants and otherwise related persons to stage themselves socially, economically, and politically.

We invite fresh ethnographic papers dealing with the economic, religious, political, and material aspects death entails in varied ways. Contributions may focus both on communities in their home countries as well as diasporic communities. These may include studies on how the COVID pandemic has impacted funerals and their related activities. Questions also may revolve around materially and spatially expressed commemoration practices.

For more information and to submit a paper click [here](#).

## **Contact Us**

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

**Email:** [cdas@bath.ac.uk](mailto:cdas@bath.ac.uk)

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

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