

Centre for  
Death & Society  
(CDAS)



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**

## Centre for Death & Society

### June 2022 Newsletter

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## Director's Note

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Hello and welcome to the June issue of the CDAS newsletter. We start with a huge thank you to everyone who attended the 2022 CDAS Conference (#CDASCon22), who presented, who helped organise and who ran the show behind the scenes. We were particularly pleased at how well received the interactive sessions online were, which allowed for more discussion, feedback and debate: just what we had hoped for! A special thank you to the Department of Social and Policy Sciences Research Office team and Allan Houston from the University of Bath Audio Visual who did all the hidden work that enable the conference to run smoothly online.

Our big CDAS news is that after seven years at the helm John Troyer is stepping back from CDAS Director and we're delighted to welcome Jeremy Dixon as the new Director along with Kate Woodthorpe. Jeremy has been involved with CDAS since he started at Bath a decade ago, having led on several research projects, and supervising PhD students. Jeremy and Kate will co-direct the Centre for the next three years, as it heads towards its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. You will hear more from them both with a planned InConversation in September (details to follow next month) where they will talk about what CDAS means to them and their ideas for the future of the centre – and where they will be actively welcoming your feedback. Jeremy has also written a brief introduction to his work, to be found on the next page.

It goes without saying that CDAS and the death studies community owes a huge thank you to John for all his hard work over the last few years. John has been pivotal to the development of a relationship between CDAS and colleagues in China, has brought in many PhD students, started the InConversation series and, of course, published his very successful book 'Technologies of the Corpse' along with giving many, many (likely hundreds!) of talks. Thank you, John, for everything you have done to keep CDAS a vibrant and active research centre and wider network. We hope that we can continue in your giant footsteps.

CDAS events continue throughout the year, with an InConversation between CDAS Visiting Fellow Tamarin Norwood and CDAS alum Renske Visser up next on 5<sup>th</sup> July, talking about writing and its value. This comes after a panel on therapeutic writing at the CDAS Conference organised by Kate, and is a strand of CDAS work that we hope to develop over the next year. Watch this space for #CDASwriting and join us for what should be a fascinating and motivating InConversation in a couple of weeks.

We are also leading a Researcher Wellbeing day on 19<sup>th</sup> July on the University of Bath campus. If you are research active we'd encourage you to attend. Sign up details and the session details are in this issue.

Until then,

Kate and Jeremy

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

Facebook: [Centre for Death and Society](https://www.facebook.com/CentreforDeathandSociety)

### *Introducing the new CDAS Director Dr Jeremy Dixon*

Dear friends and colleagues,

I am writing to introduce myself as I take up the role of director of CDAS with Kate Woodthorpe. I am a senior lecturer in social work at the University of Bath and joined the University in 2012. I have been a member of CDAS since joining the university.

Prior to becoming an academic I worked with homeless people before qualifying as a social worker in 1998. After qualifying as a social worker, I worked in a range of community mental health services and then went onto work in secure services, working with offenders who had mental health problems. Many of the people whom I worked with had committed serious offences, including manslaughter and serious violence. I first became interested in conducting research because I was interested to know how they understood their own offending behaviour, how they viewed their risk assessments and what they thought about community supervision. I completed a professional doctorate at Cardiff University focussing on these issues and then gained my first academic post at the University of the West of England in 2009.

Since completing my doctorate, my research has focussed on several areas. My research looks at how people with mental health problems and carers view mental health care. It also focusses on how professionals interpret mental health and mental capacity laws. I am currently writing a book which explores how social workers conduct adult safeguarding enquiries and have just joined a research project which will look at how safeguarding is conducted with people living with dementia. You can find out more about my research projects and publications on my University of Bath page at: [Jeremy Dixon — the University of Bath's research portal](#) .

I became involved with CDAS due to my interests in older adult care and dementia care. I have been involved in several CDAS projects and was Bath lead for the GW4 project Dying with Reduced Agency – People, Places, Principles and Policies. This project took place in 2015 and explored challenges around end-of-life care and its visibility.

CDAS has a great reputation amongst academics and the public and is well known for focussing on the social aspects of death, dying and bereavement. As co-director of CDAS I will seek to maintain its expertise in these areas but will also aim to strengthen its remit in the areas of aging and older adult care. In doing so, I hope to provide workshops and events which will be of interest to members of the public, health and social care professionals and academics.

I look forward to meeting CDAS friends and colleagues in the coming months. I am very keen to hear what areas of research members and would be keen to chat to people at coming events.

Best wishes, Jeremy Dixon

## ***Jeremy Dixon***

Jeremy Dixon will be a co-investigator on a research project which has recently received funding from the National Institute of Health Research! For more information about the project click here: [Partnership in Safeguarding People with Dementia from a Primary and Social Care Perspective](#).

## ***Naomi Pendle***

In May 2022, Naomi Pendle presented a paper titled 'Continuity and Calming the Dead' at the [20th anniversary conference](#) of the [Conflict Research Group](#) at the University of Ghent (Belgium). While war and conflict are often defined and measured by lethal violence and death, death studies are often absent from conflict studies. The paper drew on Naomi's ethnographic and ethnomusical research to highlight the dilemmas and moral struggles that arise from wartime death. She used this material to advocate for the importance of death studies in conflict studies.

## ***Publications and Outputs***

This month CDAS member George Gumisiriza had two articles published in Routed Magazine. Congratulations to George!

[OMC 2022 | How private is \(my\) grief? | Routed Magazine](#)

[Oxford Migration Conference 2022: Contours of Power | Routed Magazine](#)

Walter, Tony (2022) '*Heading for Extinction*': *how the climate and ecological emergency reframes mortality, Mortality*, available [here](#).

**Abstract:** The discourse of a climate/ecological emergency (CEE), especially as articulated in 2019 by Extinction Rebellion, impinges on two major features of western death mentalities. First, in order to motivate action, CEE discourse induces mortality awareness, death anxiety and grief, thus furthering the de-sequestration of death and grief. Second, the CEE redirects attention from the death of personally known individuals, to species death; and even if humans survive as a species, it may only be after many billions of humans have died. This anxiety about future collective death arguably comprises a new death mentality. The paper compares and contrasts the CEE with other harbingers of mass mortality such as nuclear war and the Covid pandemic.

Walter, Tony (2022) [Finding Solace in Nature: A Protestant/Secular Sensibility? In A. Køster & E.H. Kofod, eds Cultural, Existential and Phenomenological Dimensions of Grief Experience. Routledge, pp. 229-243.](#)

**Abstract:** Cemeteries, painting and poetry regularly use nature to offer solace for grief in northern Europe's historically Protestant and secular cultures, but rarely in southern Europe's Catholic cultures. To explain this difference, the chapter examines two hypotheses. The first argues that the comfort that northern European mourners find in nature is rooted in nationalistic forms of romanticism. The second hypothesis takes this further to show how northern European mourners' love of nature is rooted historically in anti-Catholic movements—the Protestant Reformation and the French Revolution. From the eighteenth century right through to the twenty-first century, Protestants and secularists, being unable to pray for the deceased's soul, have shifted attention to the mourner's grief. Lacking Catholic rites for the dead, they turned elsewhere to express grief and find comfort. One place to which they turned was nature, Protestantism tending to favour romantic nature, secularism favouring classical nature. Examples are given from a range of Western European countries (plus brief mentions of Russia and Greece), chiefly from cemeteries but also from poetry and painting; examples not readily explicable by either hypothesis are discussed. The chapter concludes that cultural understandings of nature can shape not only grief's expression but also forms of solace, and grief itself.

## ***Upcoming CDAS events***

### ***In Conversation***

***CDAS Visiting Fellow Tamarin Norwood and CDAS alum Renske Visser***

### ***Life-Writing and Death Studies***

***19:00 BST***

***Tuesday 5 July <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/348619830297>***

In our next InConversation Renske Visser and Tamarin Norwood discuss aspects of lifewriting in the context of death and bereavement. So-called 'grief memoirs' are increasingly popular and Tamarin and Renske will reflect on strategies for building upon academic research on death and dying within these types of creative works. Should death academics take better care in engaging in creative research outputs? And in what way? Renske will reflect on starting her blog [Dead Good Reading](#), in which she reviews books on death and dying, and being a co-host of the Death Studies Podcast. As the podcast episodes focus on individual death researchers, this can be seen as a spoken form of autobiography and a pertinent way in which the general public will not only 'meet' theories around death and dying, but also the researcher behind those studies. Tamarin will reflect upon the process of writing a memoir of the brief life of her baby son, and upon the process of contextualizing extracts of this memoir for academic

contexts of diverse disciplines, including her essay [‘Something Good Enough’](#) which was awarded The Lancet’s Wakley Essay Prize in 2021. She will consider the impact of such writing - for the writer, the reader, and the ‘written’ alike - across academic and non-academic contexts, and ask what is the nature of insight gained through this kind of writing.

### ***CDAS Research Seminar: Researcher Wellbeing***

*Day long seminar Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July*

*University of Bath campus*

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/349453634227>

The talks are:

Dr Jo Batey, University of Winchester: *“I Just Need a Break. I Just Want to Chill Out. I Don't Wanna Hear About Any More Deaths.”* A Research Teams’ Reflections on Conducting Emotionally Demanding Research with the Bereaved.

Dr Tina Skinner, University of Bath: *Minimising the potential for secondary trauma in research: a protocol to build researcher wellbeing into the research process*

Dr Kate Woodthorpe, University of Bath: *Working with external partners and stakeholders: being relevant and responsive*

#### **\*Save the date\* future CDAS online events:**

September date TBC: InConversation Jeremy Dixon and Kate Woodthorpe on CDAS: the past, the present and the future

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October: InConversation with CDAS Visiting Fellow Imogen Jones with Anatomical Technology Pathologists

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November: Research Seminar with Dr Lorraine Hansford, Exeter University on Poverty and Death

If you would like to take part in a research seminar or InConversation to promote your research or work, please let us know via [cdas@bath.ac.uk](mailto:cdas@bath.ac.uk).

## **Loss and Resilience – Policy themes and challenges within Aging, Dying and Bereavement.**

“CDAS has been invited to run a flagship symposium as part of the 51st Annual Conference of the British Society of Gerontology Conference on the 6th-8th July 2022. The theme of this year’s conference is Better Futures for Older People – Towards Resilient and Inclusive Communities.

The title of the symposium session is Loss and Resilience – Policy themes and challenges within Aging, Dying and Bereavement. The symposium will focus on the gaps between gerontology and bereavement research. 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. Our symposium will explore how themes of loss and resilience are framed within UK policy and how they play out in practice. CDAS members will reflect on their current research. The session will include three brief presentations from Dr Chao Fang on bereavement in later life; Dr Diana Teggi on end-of-life care in care homes and Dr Jeremy Dixon on safeguarding people living with dementia. Our panel discussion will then focus on overlapping themes and challenges for policymakers. Our panel will also include Rachel Burns – Senior Social Worker and Safeguarding Lead at Dorothy House Hospice Care who will highlight the challenges that end-of-life practitioners face. The session will take place on Wednesday 6th July. The session will be chaired by Baroness Neuberger.

Details about the conference can be found at [Welcome :: British Society of Gerontology \(britishgerontology.org\)](https://www.britishgerontology.org/). The conference is being run by the University of the West of England but will be hosted online.

## **CDAS ‘Meet the Members’**

### **George Gumisiriza**

Click on the image to watch the video!

Meet the Members: CDAS 2022

Introducing...  
**George Gumisiriza**  
PHD Student



#CDASinConversation  
@cendeathsociety



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## CDAS COMMUNITY NEWS

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### ***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](#).

### ***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](#).

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# CDAS COMMUNITY EVENTS

## Suicide Bereavement UK's 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference

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

**DATE:** September 22<sup>nd</sup> 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

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## *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](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* 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

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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)

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

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

*To unsubscribe, please email [cdas@bath.ac.uk](mailto: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](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](mailto: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](mailto: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)**