

Centre for
Death & Society
(CDAS)



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

Centre for Death & Society

October 2025 Newsletter

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Director's Note

Hello everyone and welcome to our October 2025 newsletter. Whether you have been subscribing to this newsletter for a month or 20 years, we are as always very pleased to have you reading this and sharing your news with us.

Here in the UK it is the start of the new academic year and there is a real boom in activity. This issue of the newsletter details what we have been up to, including talks and podcasts, publications and more. Earlier this month we held a 'welcome back' day for CDAS members, which included a public talk by visiting fellow Ed Kirton-Darling (thanks Ed!). It was really good to see everyone in person to kick off the new year, our 21st!

We are especially pleased to share this month some excellent research funding news, with Kate Woodthorpe's major ESRC study on living with advanced progressive illness at home starting this month, and the University of Manchester recruiting for a researcher to work on a project on death administration (led by Prof Kate Reed, with Kate Woodthorpe the Co-Investigator). Both of these projects will take place over the next three years and expand CDAS's research and impact on inequality and relationality at the end of life and after death. Full details of the researcher post are available at the end of this newsletter.

We are also very pleased to share two upcoming CDAS events – a panel discussion on death during conflict on the 13th November and, as part of the UK's National Grief Awareness Week, a webinar on decolonising bereavement. The first is a hybrid event, the second online, and both are free to attend, and we hope you can join us for what will be really interesting and, we expect, challenging discussions. We are also sharing lots of events that are coming up in the next few months within our wider community, and as always welcome you sending us info for us to share.

Finally, we welcome our new PhD student Jo and as we are moving into the season of PhD funding, we invite you to consider doing a PhD with us. If you have an idea for a PhD project that you would like to do with CDAS please have a look at our video on doing a PhD with us [here](#) or read up on how to contact us [here](#). We have a really vibrant PhD community of both full time and part time students, supervised 'in house' by CDAS academics and with our colleagues across the South West Doctoral Training Partnership (our main PhD funder). We also welcome enquires about professional doctorates and PhD funding from commercial organisations who may have a great idea for a project that would help their business.

Thank you all for your continued support for the centre and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Kate and Naomi



CDAS Welcome Back Day

Earlier this month we held our welcome back for CDAS colleagues, with food, conference planning and lectures. Thank you to all who came, including a great student turn out at the end of the day for University of Bristol Law School's Ed Kirton-Darling's public lecture on investigating the deaths people who are homeless.



We have another in person day coming up on 13th November, which will feature a hybrid seminar on death in conflict. Details of that seminar are later in this newsletter.

Welcome to new PhD student Jo Owens

We are delighted to welcome new student Jo Owens to CDAS, where she will be studying for a PhD on self-disclosure in therapeutic settings, supervised by Kate Woodthorpe. Welcome Jo, we hope you have a really enjoyable few years with us.

Research funding success!

Co-director Kate Woodthorpe has been successfully awarded nearly £1m by the ESRC to commence a three year study on living with advanced progressive illness at home. Working with an interdisciplinary team across Hull, York, Durham, and Cardiff, the project will explore how housing and tenure shapes the experience of reaching the end of life at home, and what home means to people at this point in their lives. Well done to Kate and the team for securing the funding and we look forward to learning more about the study as it progresses.



Find out more about the study [here](#).

The Death Studies Podcast DDD episode out now



Created by our visiting fellows Renske Visser and Bethan Michael-Fox and featuring many people from CDAS, the latest episode of the Death Studies Podcast comes straight from the International Death, Dying and Disposal Conference held in August in Utrecht. Listen to it [here](#).

More-than-human loss writing workshop

Co-Director Naomi Pendle, Jesse Peterson (CDAS Visiting Fellow, University of Cork), Christopher Lyon (CDAS Visiting Fellow, University of York), and Sarah Bezan met at the University of Cork to finish a special issue proposal on more-than-human loss and to work on future research ideas. For those who are interested in being involved in the special issue, a call for abstracts will follow soon.



New writing project announced

Our Visiting Professor Gayle Letherby has announced a new CDAS writing project on Auto/Biographical Reflections on Death and Loss Across the Lifecourse: a writing project, supported by visiting fellows Bethan Michael-Fox and Tamarin Norwood, and co-director Kate Woodthorpe. Full details of the project and a call for participants are later in this newsletter, under ‘calls’.

Congratulations to Helen Frisby in her new appointment

CDAS Visiting Fellow Helen has recently been appointed Hon. Secretary of The Folklore Society. Congratulations to Helen!

New blog from Visiting Fellow Imogen Jones

This new blog from Imogen looks in to the need for a corpse desecration offence in England and Wales and how there is movement towards meaningful reform. You can read it in full [here](#).

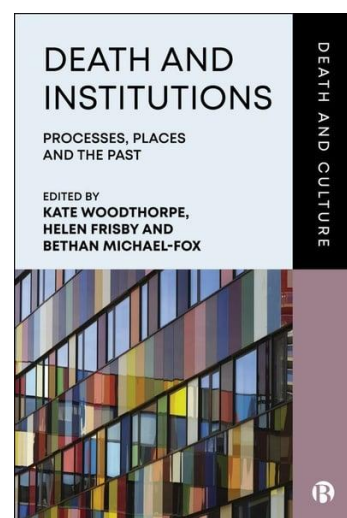
Death and Institutions reviewed

Our recent edited collection *Death and Institutions* (Woodthorpe, Frisby and Michael-Fox, 2025), published in the Bristol University Press Death and Culture Series, based on our 2022 annual conference theme, has been well reviewed by CHOICE:

“This collection reflects the great disciplinary diversity of editors Woodthorpe, Frisby and Michael-Fox whose expertise lies in sociology, history, English and media studies. Drawing on scholarly work from a wide variety of countries and from diverging historical periods, the editors have chosen a fascinating array of selections demonstrating the interplay between cultural institutions and death. Thanatology students will find many stimulating and thought-provoking viewpoints on the interplay between cultural institutions and death in this diverse collection.”

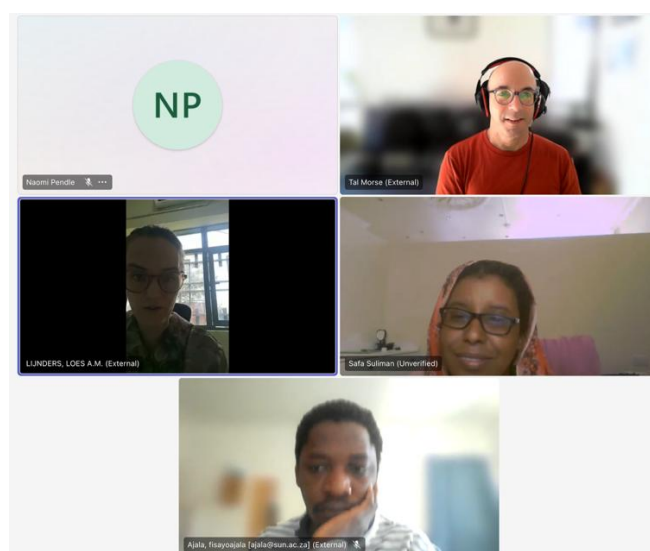
W. Feigelman, Nassau Community College, CHOICE Reviews, by the American Library Association

The book is available to order here: <https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/death-and-institutions>



Death during conflict writing workshop

Work has continued on our special issue on death during armed conflict. CDAS Visiting Fellow Tal Morse's brilliant idea of online writing workshops has allowed us to continue to work together across countries and continents. The special issue will include people currently living and working in six different countries. Do come to our hybrid event on the 13th November to find out more.



Research with Impact

Kate Woodthorpe's work on funeral policy has been showcased by the University as part of its latest research with impact campaign, available [here](#).

New Podcast Episode with Molly Conisbee

Joining Dave Powell on a recent Your Brain on Climate is Molly Conisbee - author of [No Ordinary Deaths](#), a social history of how we've lived and died through the generations. Molly says we can learn a huge amount about how societies choose to live by how they deal with death - and why coming to terms with the fact that we will all (probably) cark it might lead us to do better by the climate in the here and now.

We learn how our relationship with death, the afterlife, and messy mortality, has changed hugely over the years. When we're ever more botoxed and scared of aging, and billionaire-backed scientists are actively trying to cure death, are we running ever more away from the most human - and beautiful - thing of all? You can listen to the podcast [here](#).

Spotlight on George Gumisiriza at the University of Bath for Black History Month

In his PhD study, George reviews Africa's oldest death practices, whilst addressing inequalities in this area of research. Traditional African attitudes to death stem from cultural belief systems that view the human life course as cyclical, not linear. Rituals and ceremonial practices maintain connection between the living and the dead, as well as the soil and landscape. But talking about or planning for your death is taboo. However, as Africa and the rest of the world change, attitudes to death and dying will inevitably change too.

You can read more about George's work [here](#).

Former visiting PhD student Mateus Romão and's new paper on Medically Assisted Suicide in Italy

Mateus Romão's new paper on "Medically assisted suicide in Italy after regional law No. 16/2025: Perspectives, challenges, and the need for psychological support and specialized training for healthcare professionals" has been published in *Medicine, Science and the Law*.

This paper discusses the recent landmark decision in Tuscany, the first Italian region to regulate medically assisted suicide, and reflects on the psychological, ethical, and practical challenges this poses for healthcare providers. Drawing on international experiences, we argue for the inclusion of structured psychological support and specialized training as essential components of a sustainable and ethical end-of-life framework. You can read the paper in full [here](#).

A series of talks

Following the completion of her study into deceased people's wishes and family disputes at the end of life Kate Woodthorpe has been on a tour of professional associations to share the findings, with recent talks at the National Association of Pre-Pay Funeral Planners, the Society for Allied and Independent Funeral Directors, the Association of Anatomical Pathology Technologists, the Institute for Civil Funerals and later in October at the Finders International Conference.

If you'd like to find out more about this research and to see if a talk on it would be of interest to you and your colleagues, please email Kate directly on k.v.woodthorpe@bath.ac.uk.

Death during conflict: what can we learn from the aftermath of death in the wars in Gaza, South Sudan and Ukraine?

5pm on the 13th November, online and in person in 3 East 3.5

Sign up [here](#)

Join us for a panel discussion with papers by **Yumna Masarwa** (Associate Professor and the Director of the School of Art, American College of the Mediterranean, France) and **Naomi Pendle** (Co-Director of CDAS, University of Bath), hosted by **Oliver Walton** (Centre for Development Studies, University of Bath) and with **Isaac Waanzi Hillary** (University of Durham) as a discussant.

All armed conflicts are synonymous with excess mortality, and all deaths during armed conflict can have significant psychological, political, social and moral impacts. They can also provide a 'window' (in Verdery's language (Verdery, 1999)) into the real politics of contemporary armed conflict. Graves, or their absence, can become sites of repression and resistance. Undignified or unfulfilled post-death rituals can leave people 'ungrievable'. Ghosts can stalk the landscape demanding memory and justice. Objects associated with loss can become emotive and politically provocative. Paying attention to the aftermath of death gives us insights into the power, politics and social impact of these conflicts. Tal Morse (CDAS Visiting Fellow), Ajala Fisayo (CDAS Visiting Fellow) and Naomi Pendle (CDAS Co-Director) are editing a special issue on death during armed conflict. This panel draws on papers for this special issue.

'Decolonising' 'grief'? Death and its continuing aftermath in the UK today: What do 'we' 'know' and how? (Part 1)*

Tuesday 2nd December 7-8pm GMT, online

Sign up [here](#)

Asking what we know about death and its continuing aftermath raises issues about what counts as 'knowledge', what is 'known', and how it is known, in regard to lived experiences of human mortality and death's continuing aftermath in the everyday relational lives of the living - more generally referred to as 'bereavement and grief'. There is increasing recognition of the extent to which existing 'knowledge' about 'bereavement and grief' is dominated by perspectives and experiences from affluent Anglophone Minority world countries, rooted in coloniality/modernity and Whiteness. But, in seeking to address this dominance, the depth and breadth of what 'decolonising' may mean in response is profound and complex, not least in terms of the need to situate this work in ways that take account of particular geopolitical contexts.

In 2023 the CDAS conference hosted two panels exploring these topics, leading to three publications** in the special conference issue of the journal *Mortality* in May 2025. This webinar, organised with the [Centre for Decolonising Knowledge in Teaching, Research, and Practice](#) at the University of Bath will build on and extend this work to continue the discussion about what ‘decolonising’ might mean and what is ‘known’ in regard to ‘grief’ in the contemporary UK, framed more broadly as death and its continuing aftermath (Ribbens McCarthy, Woodthorpe and Almack, 2023). The discussion will consider the implications of the powerful historic and ongoing processes and patterns of coloniality/modernity, addressing its significance for the Whiteness of what counts as ‘knowledge’ of death and its continuing aftermath, its significance for diverse lived experiences across time and generations, and the limitations this creates for all.

Panel speakers:

Foluke Taylor – writer, *therapist, philosopher of the feels <https://foluketaylor.com/>

Samira Ben Omar – Community Organiser; [Space Maker](#); Co-Founder [Community Voices: Conversations for Change](#)

Jane Ribbens McCarthy – relational sociologist; Visiting Professor, CDAS, University of Bath; Honorary Associate, The Open University; Visiting Fellow, University of Reading. <https://profiles.open.ac.uk/jane-mccarthy>

Chair and discussants:

[Ana Cecilia Dinerstein](#) - Professor of Political Sociology and Critical Theory, University of Bath, Centre for Decolonising Knowledge in Teaching, Research and Practice (DECKNO)

[Maria Jose Ventura Alfaro](#) – Research Associate, Institute of Policy Research, and member of the DECKNO community.

* This is the first webinar of a two part collaboration between the University of Bath and The Open University. Part One is hosted by the University of Bath, building on and extending the first article below, Hamilton et al. Part Two will be hosted by Open Thanatology at The Open University early in 2026, building on and extending the second article below, Stedmon et al.

**** Decolonising the aftermath of death in UK contexts: theoretical approaches, institutional ‘constraints’, and everyday experiences.** Hamilton, S., Keenan, J., Pusey, L., Ribbens McCarthy, J., Stedmon, J., & Taylor, F. (2025). *Mortality*, 30(2): 466-88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2025.2458588> Available on request from Jane McCarthy.

‘If I break your leg, you won’t ask me to fix it for you’: innovative explorations in ‘decolonising’ UK bereavement services. Stedmon, J., Hamilton, S., Pusey, L. D., & Ribbens McCarthy, J. (2025) *Mortality*, 30(2): 489-509. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2025.2451080> ***Open Access***

Contemporary responses in Africa to the aftermath of death: developments and decolonising challenges Antonia Nannyonga-Tamusuza, S., Evans, R., Klass, D., Okoth, H. O., Pendle, N., Ribbens McCarthy, J., & Riek, J. J. (2025). *Mortality*, 30(2)355-76

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2025.2477611> **Open Access**

Cited reference:

Ribbens McCarthy, J., Woodthorpe, K. and Almack, K. **The aftermath of death in the continuing lives of the living: extending ‘bereavement’ paradigms through family and relational perspectives (2023)** *Sociology*, 57(6) pp. 1356–1374.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00380385221142490>

CDAS COMMUNITY NEWS

New Special Issue of Illness, Crisis and Loss out now

This special issue on Public Dying and Public Grieving, edited by Michael Brennan, features amongst others papers on celebrity illness memoir, pregnancy loss, grief activism, TikTok and a paper on writing strategies by CDAS’s very own Gayle Letherby, Bethan Michael-Fox, Tamarin Norwood and Kate Woodthorpe.

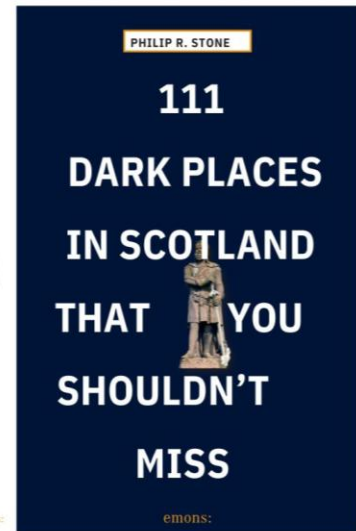
To access the journal special issue, which includes many open access (ie. free to access) papers, have a look [here](#).

New book by Phillip R. Stone

Explore the mysterious death of a libertine prince. Ponder the enigmatic disappearance of ‘three dead men’. Delve into the deadly clan rivalries that led to massacres. Uncover historic maritime tragedies. And reflect on the sorrowful fate of those accused of witchcraft.

Explore the Untold Side of Scotland Scotland is famed for its castles, whisky and wild landscapes – but it also holds stories of tragedy, resilience and remembrance. In 111 Dark Places in Scotland That You Shouldn't Miss, you'll uncover a powerful side of the nation's history through sites tied to death, disaster and the macabre. This unique guide to dark tourism explores how painful heritage – marked by suffering, conflict and cultural trauma – shapes our understanding of identity and

memory. Visit the guardhouse of Britain's bloodiest valley, reflect on the families shattered by Scotland's worst fishing disaster, and pay tribute to the victims of the deadliest mass shooting in British history. From nuclear bunkers and tragic engineering failures to witchcraft trials and battlefields, each place reveals stories that are as unsettling as they are illuminating. Across cities, small towns, and remote landscapes, these 111 sites invite you to remember, reflect, and find meaning in Scotland's darker past.



CDAS COMMUNITY EVENTS

Good Grief, this hurts! 2025 – Growing Up and Grieving

16th October 10am – 12pm E. Australia ST

Good grief, this hurts! is a **free**, annual educational event aimed at building community capacity and practical awareness about grief, loss, death and bereavement as experienced by children and young people. The event is an opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills in supporting a child or young person who is grieving.

In 2025, the *Good grief, this hurts!* webinar will explore how children and young people experience and express grief. We'll unpack the unique challenges they face, the ways grief evolves as they grow, and how adults can offer meaningful support.

The webinar is open to **anyone** in the community who is caring for a grieving child or young person. We warmly welcome to this forum – family members and friends, teachers, guidance counsellors, healthcare providers, private counsellors/psychologists and community-based youth focused organisations.

Registered participants will receive a link to join the live event in October 2025. In the event of your inability to attend live webinar, a recording will be shared with you afterwards.

Sign up [here](#).

Launch of new end-of-life resources with Bristol Memorial Woodland

23rd October 2025

Please join us for an afternoon of conversation and insight as we launch two exciting new booklets, brought to you by North Bristol NHS Trust, Bristol Memorial Woodlands Trust and Gentle Dusk, covering planning for end of life, funerals and bereavement.

The event will include insightful talks including

- Professor Steve Hams MBE, North Bristol NHS Trust- Partnership Working and Quality in End of Life Care
- Lisa Thomas, North Bristol NHS Trust- Advance Care Planning
- Mirelle Herbert Hayden, Gentle Dusk- Practical and emotional Support when someone dies

Guests are invited to join us for refreshments and will be able to take copies of these resources away with them, for use within their organisations.

Thursday 23rd October, 2pm- 4pm, Bristol Memorial Woodlands, BS35 3TA

For more information, see [here](#).

It Feels Like This: An Immersive Exhibition about Grief

25th October 2025

If you live in the Bristol area, please join us on 25th October at an immersive exhibition about grief, organised by Good Grief Festival intern and filmmaker Isis Blake.

Unit 8, Bristol, BS2 9PG

While everyone will experience grief, our society often sees bereavement as something we should 'get over' quickly. 'It Feels Like This' is a small, immersive exhibition that invites people to slow down and make space for grief. Organised by our fabulous Good Grief Festival intern Isis Blake as part of Bristol's Festival of Social Science, it brings together a small group of artists and community partners to provoke the senses and open up conversations about death and grief.

Tickets and more information can be found [here](#).

Kate Reed's inaugural lecture on the sociology of life, death and bereavement

Start or end of life? Advancing the Sociology of Life, Death & Bereavement

Tuesday, 29 October 2025, 4-5pm, Reception from 5-6pm

In person at University of Manchester or online
Free, but registration required via [Eventbrite](#)

Join Professor Kate Reed for her inaugural lecture at which she will be using insights from her award-winning book *Understanding Baby Loss* and her ESRC-funded project on death administration and hidden inequality to problematise the boundary between life and death, offering unique sociological insight into some of the most taboo and sensitive issues surrounding death and dying.

NOTE: Kate is leading the death admin project at the University of Manchester, that involves CDAS, and for which a job is advertised at the end of this newsletter!

Death café-style workshop

8th November 2:30-5:30pm



Help shape the way we talk about death and dying

An informal, death café-style workshop hosted by

The University of Exeter

More info and
registration
available here!



Drop in any time
and stay as long
as you like

<https://creativeconsultation.eventbrite.co.uk>

08 November 2025 | 14:30-17:30

The Workshop, Exeter Phoenix, EX4 3LS



Economic
and Social
Research Council

Palliative research incubator workshop

11th November 2025, 9.30am – 4pm GMT

Location: Newcastle University and online

Registration Link: [Priorities to Projects: Palliative Research Incubator Workshop Tickets, Tue, Nov 11, 2025 at 9:30 AM | Eventbrite](#)

We are excited to share our first in-person FREE event to support **early and mid-career researchers**—both clinical and non-clinical—who are building a career in palliative and end of life care research.

Held in collaboration with the **NIHR Research in Palliative and End of Life Care North-East (RIPEN)** Partnership and other regional partners, the workshop is ideal for those exploring or preparing applications for **pre-doctoral, doctoral, or postdoctoral fellowships**.

The focus of the day is on **turning national research priorities into fundable, collaborative projects**.



Palliative Research Incubator Workshop

From Priorities to Projects: Turning National Research Priorities into Fundable Research

Who is it for?
Early (including at Masters-level) and mid-career researchers who are either clinical or non-clinical and from any profession/discipline

What you'll gain?

- Support generating individual or collaborative research ideas
- Insight into 2025 Palliative Research Priorities
- Practical tools/techniques for formulating research questions
- Opportunities to connect with peers and mentors
- See the Eventbrite page (below) for more exciting details

Travel Bursary
We are offering a travel bursary to a small group of attendees, see the booking page (below) for more details

Newcastle University
Tuesday 11th November
9:30-16:00

BOOK NOW

NIHR National Institute for Health and Care Research

RIPEN Palliative Research Incubator

Newcastle University

Loss and Learning: Navigating Grief at University

13th November 2025, 12pm – 1pm GMT

When her mother died while she was at university, Melanie Wolff felt like she was hit by a ‘hurricane’ of frustration, pain and other feelings that she struggled to name. Bereaved university students can find it difficult to manage their grief alongside academic and social pressures, especially if living away from home for the first time. There are approximately 280,000 bereaved students in the UK every year, so what are the best ways to support grieving students and reduce their sense of isolation?

This panel will explore the challenges of grieving at university – and consider ways to improve support for students and staff. It will be facilitated by Anna May, who founded the Student Grief Network after the deaths of her brother and dad, and is now Head of Grief Programmes with Kaplan International. She will be joined by Nivaetha D., a recent psychology graduate who wrote her dissertation on the experiences of bereaved international students; and Theo Silberston, founder of *Life After*, a podcast sharing the stories of young adult griever. Both Nivaetha and Theo experienced loss while studying at university.

The panel will also launch the Higher Education Bereavement Framework, a brand-new tool to improve bereavement support developed by Anna May in collaboration with university students and staff.

More information and how to book can be found [here](#).

5th Annual Lifting The Lid International Festival of Death and Dying

14th - 16th November 2025

The full programme, and various ticket options, are now available for the 5th annual Lifting The Lid International Festival of Death and Dying. 14 - 16 November.

We're at a moment where people no longer want to hand over all conversations about death and dying to institutions. They want to be active participants, to plan, to share, to be heard. Talking about these things now is part of reclaiming our agency and recognising that death is not just a medical event — it's a human, communal, creative one.

Lifting The Lid is an international, creative, and supportive space where people from all walks of life — professionals, artists, and anyone curious — can explore (over 72 hours) death and dying together and leave feeling connected. If you would like to join us online this year to continue these vital conversations please see the event site for tickets and the full schedule with international time zones [here](#).

Grief in Higher Education: a framework for improving support

19th November 12pm GMT

Research suggests that at least 10% of students will experience a significant loss during their time at university, and 24% of staff have been bereaved in the past year. So why is no one talking about grief? And why is support still so limited?

This session will introduce the HE Bereavement Framework, a new resource by [The Student Grief Network](#) based on in-depth research and hundreds of conversations with students and staff.

The framework outlines the impact of grief within Higher Education and provides practical steps for improving support, drawing on five key themes: policy; training; support service; crisis response; and communication.

The session will be led by Anna May, founder of The Student Grief Network and Executive Head of Kaplan International Grief Programmes; in collaboration with Hanne Bakelants, a postdoctoral researcher at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB).

Sign up for your ticket [here](#).

Values at the End of Life: The Logic of Palliative Care

November 19th 2025 16:30-17:30PM GMT

Please join us for our next event on 19 November 2025, 4.30 - 5.30 pm (UK time), via zoom. Register via [Eventbrite](#) to receive a link to attend.

Roi Livne will be talking about his book, [*Values at the End of Life: The Logic of Palliative Care*](#).

About the book: Over the past fifty years, “the end of life” has become the center of extensive economic, policy, ethical, and medical discussions in the U.S. Health economists measure and evaluate its cost; ethicists debate the morality of various approaches to “end-of-life care”; policymakers ponder alternative “end of life”-related policies; and clinicians apply a specialized approach (hospice and palliative care) to treat patients whom they diagnose as being at “the end of life.” This talk summarizes much of the argument of “Values at the End of Life” (Harvard University Press, 2019). It analyzes the proliferation of conversations on “the end of life” as emblematic of a peculiar moment in human history. Ours is a period where modern growth stagnates and the main challenge developed societies face becomes delineating the limits of human agency and governing populations within these limits. Drawing on a combination of historical and ethnographic analysis of the work of palliative care clinicians in three California hospitals, I follow how the limits of what can be done, medically and financially, to prolong life are communicated to severely ill patients and families. I use this empirical case to flesh out different dimensions in the concept of economization, which has recently attracted much theoretical attention in economic sociology.

About the speaker: Roi Livne is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Michigan. An economic sociologist at heart, he studies everyday economic life and its intersections with morality. He has written about death and capitalism, the techno-politics of sovereign debts, and the first months of COVID-19. Presently, he is writing about the moral economy of pricing hospital care in the U.S., the notion of finitude in social theory, and the concept of economization.

Cemetery Research Group virtual colloquium

21st November

The programme for the third virtual colloquium for the Cemetery Research Group is now live, featuring Ruth Toulson as a keynote speaker. Full details of the colloquium can be found [here](#).

Opening Conversations On Assisted Dying, Death and Grief

November 25th 2025 from 5-7pm

The event will feature a short lecture and then a reflective death café to foster conversations. Jointly hosted by The Open University and the University of the West of Scotland, including Prof Erica Borgstrom, Dr Rhona Winnington, and Moira Dale.

Registration via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/opening-conversations-on-assisted-dying-death-and-grief-tickets-1566498752939>

Tickets are free, and light refreshments will be provided. The event is suitable for the general public.

Registration closes 18th November 2025.

The Rituals of Death and Dying in Medieval England: c.500-c.1550

25th November 18:30PM

This is an online charity fundraiser. Dr Helen Frisby explores how the medieval age made sense of mortality in ways both familiar and alien to us.

For our medieval ancestors, death was a normal part of everyday existence. In this talk, historian Dr Helen Frisby, author of the Shire book [*Traditions of Death and Burial*](#), will draw upon a wide range of artistic, liturgical, material culture, and antiquarian evidence to explore relationships between the living and the dead in the period from the Dark Ages to the early Reformation.

Some of our medieval forebears' customs around mortality, such as sin-eating, seem strange and even unsettling to our contemporary sensibilities. Yet in their rituals are also some threads of continuity which connect the present day to the past. In unpicking and tracing these threads over the centuries, Helen explains why funerals mattered in the middle ages, and why they still matter today.

More information and how to book can be found [here](#).



Accommodating the Dead

Materialities, Rituals and Technologies

A new book series from Routledge

Editors: Dr Brenda Mathijssen, Rijksuniversiteit, Groningen (NL) and Dr Julie Rugg, University of York (UK).

Accommodating the Dead will publish works explore the evolving and multifaceted subject of the dead body, and the diverse ways in which humans engage with it. The dead body has an undeniable thereness but can evade direct scrutiny. This series will provide a sharper focus on responses to the materiality of human remains. The dead body demands care, treatment, placement, and ritual. Responses to these demands evolve over time and are shaped by religion, politics, science, and economics. The book series will engage with these responses, creating a coherent yet multifaceted commentary on the core subject.

Book proposals are sought that critically interrogate foundational concepts, including what it means to be "dead," what constitutes a "dead body" in funerary practice, and how disposing the dead can and should be understood in different social, legal, and technological contexts. The series seeks monographs and edited collections that are single- or multi-disciplinary and invites submissions from across the globe.

For further information contact:

Brenda.Mathijssen@rg.nl & julie.rugg@york.ac.uk

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Unsung Heroes in Death Care, A Global Analysis

Editors: Drs. Kami Fletcher & Bulelwa Maphela

During the COVID-19 outbreak and its immediate aftermath, we saw death care professionals thrust from the margins to the center. In Ghana, pall bearers went viral for showing how significant ornate last rites are to guiding loved ones to the ancestral plane. In the United States, death doulas made TIME's "Top 100 Photos of 2022" as well as received a featured article. Even still, they were positioned as last responders, appropriately titled since they were last to receive PPE. The social and cultural value of their work to our communities, our nations, our world went unnoticed. These professionals play a critical role in our communities and do not appear in the developmental agenda. They remain as unsung heroes.

There is an urgent need to start appreciating the work done by these unsung heroes in the death care sector - globally. This volume aims to highlight the contributions of death care professionals - the funeral directors, the embalmers, the mortuary workers, the death doulas; and others death care workers - who all play a critical role in supporting bereaved families and communities during the period of losing a loved one. These death care laborers, as individuals and as group, play vital roles in the care and support of the deceased and their families, yet often go unnoticed or underappreciated in broader narratives about death and dying. This international call aims to attract scholars, researchers, and practitioners from around the world to submit abstracts that explore the experiences, challenges, and contributions of death care professionals.

Suggested themes

- The role of death care professionals in supporting bereaved communities.
- The role of government in supporting the death care professionals.
- The impact of death care work on the mental state of the professionals in the death care industries.
- Societal and cultural perceptions of death care professionals across time and space
- Historical and contemporary perspectives on death care practices.
- Comparative country practices in the death care activities. Innovative and best practices in death care work.
- Challenges affecting sustainability of the death work and within the death care professional circles.
- The role of death care workers in removing trauma in communities and treating the unbereaved.

Editors are asking all interested to please send in a 300-word abstract as well as a working bibliography (primary and secondary sources), no later than August 1, 2026 to kamif2311@gmail.com and bmaphela@uj.ac.za.

For all other queries concerning our volume, please do not hesitate to reach out through the same channels.

The 300-word abstract must include:

- Perspective contributors' name, affiliation, job title
- Essay's (working) title
- Clear argument/thesis statement

Auto/Biographical Reflections on Death and Loss Across the Lifecourse: a writing project

Call for expressions of interest

I am delighted to announce a new project 2025-2027 (in the first instance) focusing on *Auto/Biographical Reflections on Death and Loss Across the Lifecourse*. The project will result in a publication – initially online – that will include creative writing pieces (e.g. fiction, memoir, poetry...) up to 3,000 words accompanied by up to 1,000 words of personal and academic (theoretical and methodological) reflection and if wanted images. Submissions can focus on the writer's and/or others' (including respondents') experience.

Topics might include, but are not limited to, babyloss and child death, children's grief, loss of parents, partners, friends as an adult, reflections on one's own mortality.

The writing process will be supported by one-to-one meetings and communication, group discussion and writing workshops. Myself – Gayle Letherby – and Bethan Michael-Fox, Tarmarin Norwood and Kate Woodthorpe will provide editorial and other support across the life of the project.

Anyone interested in the project, anyone with an idea for an entry, anyone who wants to know a bit more please contact Gayle at gayle.letherby@plymouth.ac.uk by **Monday November 17th 2025**.

Gayle Letherby, Visiting Professor, CDAS

Call for chapters: Dark tourism

We invite contributions to an edited volume, "Dark Tourism Rituals and Micro-Rituals: Performance, Negotiation and Meaning-Making" (Channel View Publications), edited by Dr. Daniel H. Olsen and Dr Nitasha Sharma.

This book will foreground ritual as a vital lens for understanding dark tourism, exploring commemorative practices, micro-rituals, performative storytelling, healing and transgressive rituals, ecological mourning, and digital memorialisation.

Examples of rituals and micro-rituals in dark tourism include - ghost walks, zombie parades, and horror tours that ritualize death and fright as performance; silent observances and walking pilgrimages; lighting candles at Auschwitz to honor Holocaust victims; "grassroots memorialization" (i.e., leaving offerings at spontaneous shrines and creating impromptu memorials, often after sudden or traumatic deaths); leaving pebbles or flowers on memorial plaques; tying ribbons at bombing memorials; taking photographs; whispering in solitary confinement cells and ritualistically photographing themselves inside during prison tours; glacier funerals; memorials and mourning ceremonies; bell-ringing at Pearl Harbor; war re-enactments; and leaving notes, cards, flowers, or holding events at celebrity graves and burial sites (such as leaving lipstick kisses on Marilyn Monroe's crypt).

Studying these rituals and micro-rituals helps us understand how individuals and groups

negotiate mortality, morality, mourning, memory, and identity in a globalised, mediatised world. We welcome theoretical, empirical, comparative, and methodological chapters (5,000–6,000 words) that examine how rituals and micro-rituals shape visitor experiences, memory, and meaning-making at sites of death, trauma, and atrocity. Abstracts (max 300 words) are due 5 December 2025.

Please send your abstracts to Dr. Nitasha Sharma (nitashar.iu@gmail.com) or Dr. Daniel Olsen (dholsen@byu.edu).

If your research explores ritual, performance, memory, or meaning-making in dark tourism, we'd love to hear from you!



CALL FOR CHAPTERS

Dark tourism rituals and micro-rituals: performance, negotiation and meaning-making

Themes

- Commemorative rituals
- Funerary & mourning rituals
- Rituals of geopolitical memory
- Rituals of fear and the paranormal
- Embodied rituals of pilgrimage, endurance, and penance
- Counter-memory rituals
- Violence and punishment as spectacle
- Therapeutic and trauma-healing rituals
- Rituals for beyond the human (Animal death rituals, rituals of ecological mourning)
- Folkloric and mythic rituals
- Religious, spiritual and esoteric rituals associated with death
- Spontaneous grassroots rituals or rituals of emergent commemoration
- Rituals in the digital realm
- Ethically ambivalent and transgressive rituals
- Educational, aesthetic and curatorial rituals
- Storytelling, performances & re-enactments

Important Dates

Date	Event
5 th Dec 2025	Abstract submission
10 th Jan 2026	Notification of abstract acceptance
31 st May 2026	Draft chapters
16 th Aug 2026	Chapter revision and edit
Oct 2026	Final submission of book to publishers

Editors

Dr. Nitasha Sharma
University of Alabama, USA
Dr. Daniel M. Olsen
Brigham Young University, USA

For more information on the themes and submission guides, email: nitashar.iu@gmail.com or dholsen@byu.edu

University of Sussex Call for Papers- Socio-Legal Studies Association

We are now accepting submissions for both paper and poster presentations for this year's conference, welcoming contributions from SLSA members and non-members.

The Health Law & Bioethics stream welcomes papers on any aspect of healthcare law and ethics, broadly defined. We encourage contributions from postgraduate and early-career researchers, as well as scholars from other disciplines—if your work engages with health, law, or ethics, we'd love to hear from you.

Some of the questions we hope to tackle include:

- Are current legal or medical definitions of death (brain death, cardiopulmonary, information-theoretical) still viable?
- How do disability rights, palliative care, and costs shape end-of-life law reform?
- How should law respond to mass death in crises and conflicts?
- What duties exist regarding digital remains and AI's shaping of death?
- How do we regulate 'immortality' services?
- How should law handle contested burials and symbolic uses of the dead?

Both streams offer a fantastic opportunity to share research, engage with vibrant scholarly communities, and contribute to discussions shaping the future of health law, bioethics, and socio-legal studies of death.

Deadline for paper proposals: Thursday 18 December 2025

Submit papers and posters here: <https://lnkd.in/eBkmemwZ>

7th All Island Children's Palliative Care Conference-Abstract submission now open

Abstract submissions are now being accepted for the 7th All Island Children's Palliative Care Conference, which will take place in the Limerick Strand Hotel on 23-24 April 2026.

The sharing of knowledge, innovation, and expertise is at the heart of this conference, and we warmly invite you to submit your research and contribute to the shared learning focus.

Abstracts are welcome for both oral and poster presentations, aligned with this year's theme: *"Stronger Together: Fostering Resilience and Diversity in Children's Palliative Care."* For full submission guidelines and details are available [here](#). Deadline-Monday, 10 November 2025.

For queries regarding the conference programme or abstract submission, please contact info@cpcc.ie.



Contact Us

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Web: www.bath.ac.uk/cdas

Facebook: www.facebook.com/centrefordeath

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13222099/>

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

CDAS Videos:

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