

July 2026

Centre for Death and Society



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NEW DONOR COALITION FOR INNOVATION IN END- OF-LIFE CARE SURVEY

Take part in the survey

[here](#)

PHD & ECR WRITING DAYS

CDAS is arranging a series of writing days to help PhD students and early-career researchers to focus on writing and connect with fellow death scholars

Directors Note

Welcome to our July 2026 newsletter, which for us in the UK is the end of the academic year. We're already planning for next year and are looking forward to kicking it off with our rescheduled Long Death of Hitler seminar with Caroline Sharples on 17th September, and then not one but TWO professorial inaugural lectures by CDAS members. These are public lectures that newly appointed professors are invited to give. In September Kate Woodthorpe will be delivering hers on 'We all know how this ends: how death can help us make the most of life' and in October John Troyer will deliver his entitled 'Death! Exciting and new'. We hope you will be able to join us for both, either in Bath or online.

Taking us through the summer (for us in the UK!) we also have a series of writing days for PhD students and ECRs, organised by CDAS PhD student Catriona Brickel. These are a chance for people to join together in Bath, to write, meet and get to know each other. We hope some of you can make it. Full details are overleaf.

As always, thank you for all your support for CDAS. We love this community and are hugely grateful for all your contributions, sharing and amplification.

Until September

Kate and Naomi

Upcoming events

CDAS events

25th July: Mudlarking Festival at Southwark Cathedral with Dan O'Brian

17th September: The Long Death of Hitler

Sept/Oct CDAS member professorial inaugural lectures

CDAS community events

25th July: Death, Grief and Belief presents: Spiritual Bypassing: Counselling and Support Perspectives

16th September: Suicide Bereavement UK's 15th international hybrid conference in Liverpool

11th-13th October: 4th International Death Literacies Symposium

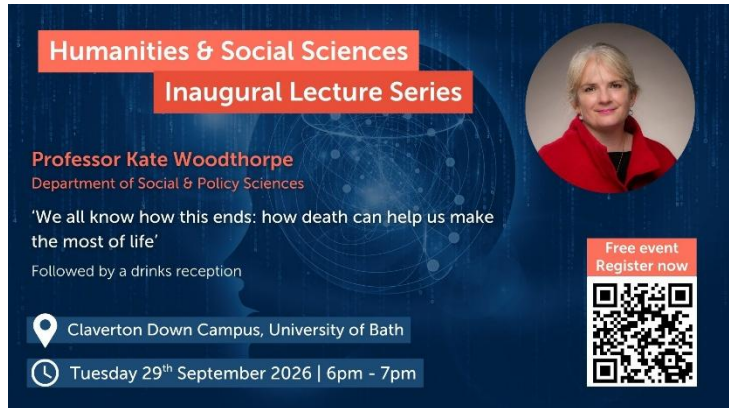
20th November: Virtual Cemeteries Colloquium



CDAS News

Professorial inaugural lectures

We are delighted to share that we have not one but TWO professorial inaugural lectures planned for the autumn, first for CDAS co-director Kate Woodthorpe on 29th September and then on 15th October for former CDAS director John Troyer. Both lectures will be hybrid so you can join us in person in Bath or online. Details of Kate's are below, and John's will follow in September.



The poster features a dark blue background with a faint globe and network lines. At the top, two orange boxes contain the text 'Humanities & Social Sciences' and 'Inaugural Lecture Series'. Below this, the speaker's name 'Professor Kate Woodthorpe' is listed, followed by her affiliation 'Department of Social & Policy Sciences'. A circular portrait of Professor Woodthorpe is on the right. The lecture title is 'We all know how this ends: how death can help us make the most of life'. Below the title, it says 'Followed by a drinks reception'. At the bottom, a location pin icon indicates 'Claverton Down Campus, University of Bath' and a clock icon shows 'Tuesday 29th September 2026 | 6pm - 7pm'. A QR code is in the bottom right corner with the text 'Free event Register now' above it.

PhD and ECR writing days

CDAS is arranging a series of writing days over the summer months to help PhD students and early-career researchers to focus on writing and connect with fellow death scholars. They will be delivered **hybrid**, with an in-person cohort meeting to write together at the University of Bath campus and others joining online.

Open to all who consider themselves an early-career researcher, the writing days will take place from **9:30am to 4:30pm on, Thursday 23rd July, Thursday 20th August and Friday 18th September**. In-person attendees will also enjoy **lunch and after-work drinks** together. You are welcome to attend all writing days, or simply choose the days that work for you. If you'd like to join, please email CDAS PhD student, Catriona Brickel (cb2795@bath.ac.uk) who is organising these days for us.

New Donor Coalition for Innovation in End-of-Life Care Survey

Visiting fellow Ivor Williams is working with [Purposeful Ventures](#) and [Zinc Innovation Partners](#) on a new donor coalition for innovation in end-of-life care, and we're gathering perspectives from across the field (and deliberately) beyond it.

They've built a survey that takes about 10 minutes, and they would really value the perspectives of the CDAS community on it. Whether folks work sits in end-of-life care, funding and philanthropy, healthcare innovation, or systems change, their vantage point is exactly what we want to test our thinking against.

The fuller picture is below, but the ask is simple: add your perspective and pass it to anyone who should be included. **Complete the survey here:** <https://airtable.com/appifgv2dc96aCkuy/pagLwcfGFBu6tqjYP/form>

News from CDAS Visiting Fellow Kate Sugar

Kate is pleased to confirm that in June Dorothy started the IN-TALK study. This is a 24-month project funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) under its Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB) Programme (Grant Reference Number NIHR209649). The aim of the IN-TALK study is to co-produce a hospice intimacy support toolkit to help healthcare professionals in initiating and responding to conversations about intimacy needs with people receiving hospice care in England. The project is currently in set-up.

Along with her research team colleagues, Kate also held a NIHR Palliative and End of Life Care National Forum webinar: What does a research-active hospice look like? -Spotlight on Dorothy House Hospice (June 2026). More information and the video can be found [here](#).

University of Cambridge Centre for Science and Policy Fellowship Day

This month co-director Kate Woodthorpe was invited to the University of Cambridge for their 41st Fellowship Day, where she presented on 'Dying and Death beyond Medicine'.

CDAS Writes

In the last month we held a creative writing online workshop (7am UK time!), facilitated by Visiting Professor Gayle Letherby. Attended by people around the world, we spent time together to write fiction about death, dying and loss, as a way to convey ideas, learning, reflections and impact. Thank you to all who joined us for such a genuinely global collaborative and supportive workshop.

GW4 workshops

Thank you to everyone across the South West of England/Wales region who joined us over the course of three workshops to explore how we might network, coordinate and collaborate more effectively. Currently there are multiple research centres and groups, and large funded projects, working on dying, death and grief across our region and we're looking at ways in which we can work together more effectively.



If you're connected to this geographical region and want to learn more or be involved as plans progress, please email us at cdas@bath.ac.uk.

A huge thanks goes to Fi Alexander, who supported the events behind the scenes.

Living at home with advanced progressive illness

Kate Woodthorpe's ESRC study on reaching the end of life at home has received full NHS ethical approval and is moving into the fieldwork stage. This month the project team met with other researchers across the UK who are working on various projects on dying at home, to find ways to coordinate the projects and future events. If you are working on this topic and we missed you, please get in touch with Kate to be involved: k.v.woodthorpe@bath.ac.uk

CDAS Events

Visiting Fellow Dan O'Brien giving talk at the Mudlarking Festival

Dr Dan O'Brien will be talking at the at Mudlarking Festival at Southwark Cathedral on 25th July.

"Mudmento Mori" Foreshore finds and the history of death

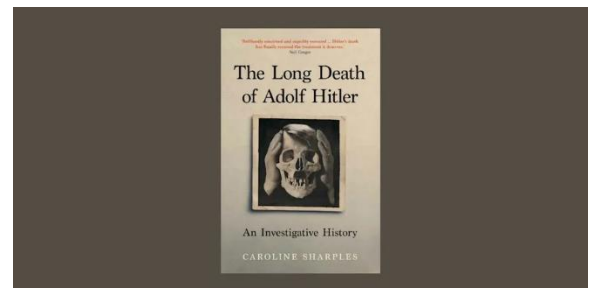
Mudlarking finds are a fascinating window on the lives of Londoners throughout history, but they can offer insight into how London has experienced and understood death. The talk explores how objects preserved by the Thames mud illustrate the experience of mourning, changing symbols of death and the importance of preparing for one's own end. For information and tickets for the whole [event](#).

The Long Death of Adolf Hitler: the negotiation of memory over time

17th September 7pm – 8pm BST

Online, sign up [here](#)

Join us for our rescheduled seminar to mark the publication of Caroline Sharples' new book 'The Long Death of Hitler: an investigative history'.



Marking the publication of Caroline's new book '[The long death of Adolf Hitler: an investigative history](#)' this CDAS seminar explores the vacuum of myth and survival conspiracies that resulted from there being no witnesses to his death nor public display of his body. At a time in the twenty first century when conspiracy is rife, in this seminar in conversation with Germany history and memory specialist [Professor Bill Niven](#), we will reflect on how memory is created and contested over time, and what we can learn from the case of Adolf Hitler.

CDAS Community News

Manchester Based Exhibition on Respectful Disposal

Donated bodies, imported into the UK for biomedical research, ultimately reach industrial incinerators - but who performs this disposal work, and how?

Building on Mark Shtanov's PhD work, Respectful Disposal explores the overlooked intersection of biomedicine and waste infrastructure through large format drawings and three-dimensional objects. Zooming into infrastructural rituals through an architectural lens, the exhibition asks broader questions: How do people become materially disposable? What infrastructural labour does our healthcare system depend upon?

RESPECTFUL DISPOSAL
25 & 26 July 2026, midday - 5pm
Saan1 gallery, 5 Kelvin Street, Manchester M4 1ET

EXHIBITION WITH FREE ADMISSION

Donated bodies, imported into the UK for biomedical research, ultimately reach industrial incinerators - but who performs this disposal work, and how? The exhibition uses drawings from Mark Shtanov's PhD to explore the overlooked intersection of biomedicine and waste infrastructure.

MORE INFO:
QR CODE

MANCHESTER 1824 Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research
USI Sustainable Futures no.balsa www.no.balsa.com

DRAW YOUR RESEARCH

Churchill Fellowship report, Dialogues About Dying, has now been published on the Churchill Fellowship website

A healthcare mediator explores conversations about death and dying in India, South Africa and Peru, and develops a communication framework to build trust and prevent conflict in culturally diverse palliative and end-of-life care settings.

The report is freely available to read and download via the Churchill Fellowship website:

<https://churchillfellowship.org/ideas-experts/ideas-library/dialogues-about-dying/>

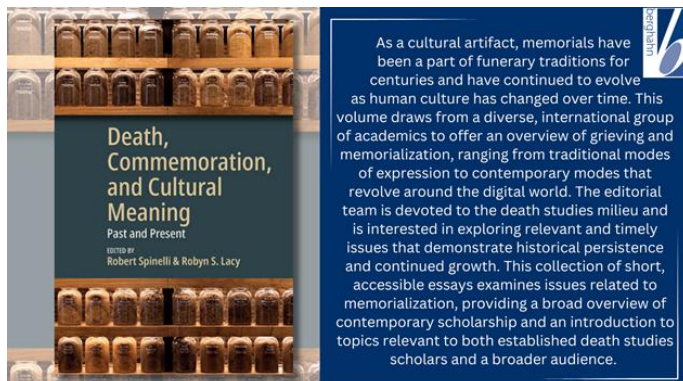
Arabella Tresilian also recorded a short video introducing the Six Rs framework, which you are very welcome to watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huvUIQEd-Ks>



Publication of “Death, Commemoration, and Cultural Meaning: Past and Present”

This publication was edited by Robert Spinelli and Robyn S. Lucy. As a cultural artifact, memorials have been a part of funerary traditions for centuries and have continued to evolve as human culture has changed over time. This volume draws from a diverse, international group of academics to offer an overview of grieving and memorialization, ranging from traditional modes of expression to contemporary modes that revolve around the digital world. The editorial team is devoted to the death studies milieu and is interested in exploring relevant and timely issues that demonstrate historical persistence and continued growth. This collection of short, accessible essays examines issues related to memorialization, providing a broad overview of contemporary scholarship and an introduction to topics relevant to both established death studies scholars and a broader audience. The link to the book can be found [here](#).



Marie Curie announces new Research Grants Scheme – Care close to home, in and out of hours - opening 2 June for projects up to £150,000.

The theme is closely aligned with Marie Curie's mission to close the gap in end-of-life care, priorities identified by people with lived and professional experience in the refresh of the palliative and end of life care priority setting partnership with the NIHR James Lind Alliance, and the UK Government's current policy focus of shifting care from hospital to community.

This research call seeks to produce evidence to support positive, scalable change in how care is delivered close to home - both in and out of hours - so that more people can receive high quality, coordinated palliative and end of life care where and when they need it.

Expressions of interest open 2 June, and close 17 July.

Further details, how to apply and key dates are available on [this webpage](#).



CDAS Community Events

The conference on Death, Grief and Belief presents: Spiritual Bypassing: Counselling and Support Perspectives- 25th July- Online

Religious belief as a strategy for coping with painful life events can be both helpful and harmful; positive religious coping has generally been found to support healthful outcomes, while the negative form has been linked to increased distress.

Spiritual bypassing is described as a form of negative religious coping in which religion or spirituality is used as a psychological defence mechanism to avoid facing painful situations. The term was coined in the mid-1980s by John Welwood, a Buddhist teacher and psychotherapist who described it as a coping device through which people use spirituality as a defence mechanism.

DETAILS AND REGISTRATION HERE:

<https://deathgriefandbelief.com/2026-symposium-on-spiritual-bypassing/>

Contact:

office@deathgriefandbelief.com

Suicide Bereavement UK's 15th international hybrid conference in Liverpool- 16th September

Suicide Bereavement UK's 15th international hybrid conference is going to be our biggest and boldest yet.

Theme: Suicide Bereavement: Silence Isn't Always Golden

Date: 16th September 2026

Venue: Titanic Hotel, Liverpool (and online)

Time: 9:00am – 4:30pm

To view our interactive flyer and to register [Click here](#).

4th International Death Literacies Symposium- 11th-13th October 2027 CHANGE OF DATE

The upcoming 4th International Death Literacies Symposium is set to take place at the Institute of Palliative Medicine in Kerala, India.

To ensure that everything runs smoothly and is organized on time, to allow for sufficient time to plan and book, and to steer clear of other international events, we decided to move the date of the event to **11-13 October 2027!**

Considering the growth of the event, we have also decided to launch a call for abstracts in September of this year, so keep an eye out for that. Abstracts with a focus on research, practice (including the arts and community programs), policy and advocacy will be encouraged!

As in previous events, we will ensure opportunities for early career researchers to present their work and receive feedback from the group. A specific channel for abstracts will be provided for those interested in doing so.

Please make sure to put these dates in your calendars and share with your networks.

Visit the [event website](#) to view Saif Mohammed's welcoming message and to find more information very soon!

Emotionally Challenging Research: Impacts, Coping & Proactive Interventions workshop 2026/27

Researchers embark on explorations of diverse topics, aiming to deepen our understanding of the numerous issues impacting individuals in today's society, a journey that often leads them into the more disturbing and distressing aspects of the human experience (e.g. war, death, violence, crime, poor mental health, poverty).

This training workshop guides participants in the use of the resources on our Researcher Wellbeing Project webpages. The webpages are designed as a practical toolkit, providing resources and guidance to support researchers, managers and institutions in managing the emotional aspects of their work and progressing towards a strategic approach to researcher wellbeing and emotionally challenging topics.

Our upcoming online workshops will be held on:

Wednesday 4th November 2026 - 9.30 to 13:00 (staff)

Thursday 5th November 2026 - 09:30 to 13:00 (student)

Tuesday 9th February 2027 - 09:30 to 13:00 (student)

Wednesday 24th February 2027 - 12.30 to 16:00 (staff)

Book tickets [here](#).

Learn more about the Researcher Wellbeing Project [here](#).

Virtual Cemeteries Colloquium- 20th November

The second Virtual Cemeteries Colloquium will take place on 20th November 2026 and the call for paper is now open. We invite papers on places and practices relating to disposing the dead including burial, cremation and other technologies. Papers are expected to fall within social science and humanities disciplines, demonstrate theoretical engagement and include empirical data. Each paper will have a thirty-minute time slot: presenters are expected to speak for around twenty minutes, to allow time for questions.

We encourage submissions from around the world, and panels will be organised to accommodate a range of time zones. All presentations must be in English. As always, with the Colloquium, this is a particularly supportive environment for postgraduate students and postdocs.

Please submit your abstract using the google form [here](#). The deadline for submission is 2nd October 2026. The event is free to attend, and tickets will be available via the CRG website from 9th October.

CDAS Community Calls

Death and the Chatbot: The Thanatology of Artificial Intelligence

Editors: Robert Spinelli (rspinelli@ncis.org); Kaylee Alexander (kaylee.alexander@utah.edu); Justina Sumilova (justina.sumilova@protonmail.com)

Deathbots, griefbots or thanabots are chatbots based on the digital footprint of the deceased that offer mourners the possibility to ‘talk’ to their loved ones after their death. This Artificial Intelligence–based thanatechnology raises several philosophical and psychological questions as well as technological ones. The rapid adoption of AI tools has coincided with a rise in AI-based resources for death mediation and grief consolation, and the questioning of mortality’s limitations fosters an emphasis on existential questions that do not have a ready precedent. Chatbots—be they designed as bespoke, small language models or more widely available large language models (LLMs)—might reproduce or mime the language, vocal cues, or aesthetic presence of the deceased, allowing for a kind of uncanny digital afterlife. Such tools thrust death’s liminality into sharp contrast, adding stress to philosophical questions of identity and humanity. While the existence of AI-powered deathbots may seem somewhat innocuous, their simulation of those recently and long deceased presents questions of ontological disruption and existential crisis.

Approaching the intersection of death and the adoption of technologies that effectively supplant human connection with disembodied technological surrogates, this collection seeks to examine philosophical and technological issues pertaining to deathbot tech and the humanistic concerns explored in traditional death studies. We are seeking contributors from the interdisciplinary fields of thanatology, philosophy of science, media studies, digital humanities, and information sciences to explore the implications of AI and its impact on the autonomy of the bereaved and the deceased, the bereavement’s individualization, and the therapeutic potentials of AI, for better or for worse. This collection seeks to cast a wide net for topics, as the effects of AI seep their way into many fields that overlap with each other and share a collective concern for the potential subsuming of the human experience.

Suggested topics may include the following:

- (Post)humanism and human enhancement
- Technological interventions in grief therapies
- Limitrophy and AI
- Life prolongment, simulation, and artifice
- Deathbots and digital obsolescence
- Digital afterlives
- Disenfranchised grief
- Algorithmic bereavement, mourning, and grief therapies
- Meontology of AI
- Autothanatography
- Digital hauntology

Please submit chapter proposals (300–500 words), CVs and brief author bios (50–80 words) to the editorial team by August 31, 2026.

The editors will review all submitted proposals and notify applicants of their status by September 15, 2026. Accepted chapters should be approximately 7,000 words (including notes and bibliography), and first drafts of completed manuscripts will be due by March 31, 2027. All chapters will be subject to the peer review process; proposal acceptance does not guarantee publication.

Expected publication in late 2027 or early 2028.

The Everyday Heritage and Afterlives of Asylum Burial Grounds in Britain and Ireland

27th October 2026, online

Workshop Convenors: Alana Harris (King's College London) and Julie Rugg (University of York and Director of the Cemetery Research Group)

The Stone Bench in the Asylum at Saint-Remy, Vincent van Gogh, 1889

This one-day, online workshop seeks to bring together scholars and community historians, policy makers and heritage activists who are committed to the reconceptualization of asylum burial grounds, memorialisation activism, and historical analysis of their afterlives.

We welcome academic papers and short communications around the following themes:

- the history of particular asylum burial grounds and memorialisation strategies;
- methodological innovations in life history, family history, and genealogical research developed through research on asylum thanatology;
- challenges to 'authorised heritage discourses' by the asylum burial grounds, including broadened historical listing and inclusion narratives, with implications for local and national heritage policy and activism; and
- debates about the maintenance of disused cemeteries, and their reuse or development, following the Law Reform Commission's *Burial and Cremation: Final Report* (March 2026).

Proposals for 20-minute papers (consisting of a title, 300-word abstract and 50-word author biography) should be forwarded to alana.harris@kcl.ac.uk by 14th August 2026. Accepted speakers will be notified by the end of that month.

2027 ADEC Conference - Submit your proposal for Concurrent Sessions and Poster Presentations

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

March 18-20, 2027

Submissions open: Monday, June 8, 2026

Submissions Close: Tuesday, September 1, 2026, at 11:59pm EST

Notifications of Acceptance will begin in November

Suggested Topics for the 2027 Conference

Our goal is to have diverse and broad representation in our programming. We invite proposals in your area of interest and expertise, welcoming the breadth of knowledge in our community. Feedback from our past conference highlights the following areas that participants are interested in hearing more about. This is informational and does not guarantee that abstracts related to these topic areas will be chosen.

- Suicide Loss
- Role of rituals and ceremonies
- Trauma informed grief care
- Grief of individuals with special needs
- Care for the terminally ill and dying
- Supporting veterans at end of life
- Spirituality and grief
- Working with children in schools
- Attachment informed grief therapy

- Anticipatory Grief
- Perinatal loss
- Grief considerations for the Latinx community
- Experiential and somatic approaches in grief
- Supporting grieving communities
- Digital Afterlife, Grief and Mourning
- Disenfranchised and Marginalized Grief

Collective trauma and global grief

Death and grief in Nordic childhoods

Research on children and death is limited. Historically, children have been underrepresented in Death Studies, a field that has mainly examined grief, bereavement, dying, and death from adult perspectives (Borgstrom & Visser, 2025). Understandings of children, childhood, and the place of death within childhood have changed over time. Contemporary Nordic welfare states — characterized by high living standards, safety, and political stability — are shaped by long life expectancy and medical advances that reduce mortality. In these contexts, death is often positioned as the opposite of childhood. This distancing reflects Western ideals of childhood as a protected space centred on play and learning, free from hardship. However, death is a ubiquitous presence in Nordic childhoods, in multiple ways. Given the current lived realities of climate change, extinction, wars and other conflicts, and death as depicted in the media, more scholarly attention to this topic is warranted, both in the Nordic countries and beyond.

In this call for abstracts, we invite scholars to contribute to a special issue on death and grief in Nordic childhoods. We aim to compile an interdisciplinary, practice-oriented special issue, encouraging contributions from anthropological, sociological, pedagogical, historical, medical/healthcare, ethical, artistic, philosophical, psychological, and phenomenological perspectives.

We invite both early-career and experienced scholars to submit an abstract. We also encourage co-authorship and welcome contributions from scholars new to childhood studies to broaden our interdisciplinary horizons. The abstract should include a title and be approximately 200 words. Articles are welcome in Scandinavian languages (Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish) and in English. Articles are subject to a double-blind peer review process. Please read the journal's general guidelines here: <https://tidsskriftetbarn.no/index.php/barn/guidelines>

Important dates

1 September 2026: Deadline for submission of article abstracts

1 October 2026: Invitation sent to potential paper contributors

1 January 2027: Deadline for submission of article manuscripts

Autumn 2027: Publication of special issue

Abstracts should be sent to: barn@ipl.ntnu.no. Please include author name(s), affiliation(s), and contact information. **More information can be found [here](#).**

Special Issue of Mortality: Hauntology

Editors: Robert Spinelli (rspinelli@ncis.org); Katie Clary (mclary@coastal.edu)

Abstract: 'It affects and bereaves it in advance, like the ghost it will become, but this is precisely where haunting begins. And its time, and the untimeliness of its present, of its being 'out of joint.' To haunt does not mean to be present, and it is necessary to introduce haunting into the very construction of a concept. Of every concept, beginning with the concepts of being and time. That is what we would be calling here a hauntology.' By Jacques Derrida (1994) *Spectres of Marx, the state of the debt, the Work of Mourning, & the New International*, translated by Peggy Kamuf, Routledge

Working with Derrida's definition, this special issue will examine the ways in which the past remains a constant specter in the present. Although the term of hauntology itself implies a preoccupation with the paranormal, its meaning stretches into the realm of metaphysics and existential philosophy. When approaching the multilayered and interdisciplinary field of death studies, a discussion of hauntology as applied to history, archaeology and the broader social sciences is a path open to many interpretations pertaining to questions of mortality, ontology and the general desire for things to be other than they are. The goal of this special issue is to conduct a survey of the field of hauntology to understand how the framework can apply to humanistic research methodologies and how the concept applies to our understanding of the ways in which what has past maintains a shadow in the present.

Suggested topics may include:

- Haunted houses, spaces, landscapes
- Dark Tourism
- Cemetery Studies
- Nostalgia and extremism
- Memory and trauma
- Neuroplasticity and identity
- Slavery and cultural silences
- Ritual and death practice and memorialization
- Commemoration of the dead
- Death and museums, libraries, or archives
- Geopolitics, genocides, and/or decolonization

Proposals between 250 and 500 words, CVs and brief author bios (50-80 words), should be submitted to Robert Spinelli (rspinelli@ncis.org) & Katie Clary (mclary@coastal.edu) by September 15, 2026.

The editors will then review all submitted proposals and notify applicants by October 1, 2026. Articles should be approximately between 5,000-6,000 words, and first drafts of completed manuscripts will be due March 15, 2027.

Call for speakers at Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust

Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust runs a regular talk series for the public online and sometimes in person and we have a wide range of talks that are broadly on the themes of death, dying, interment, bereavement, human remains, and cemeteries (and anything else we think fits). As a charity, it is a way for us to make a small income for the continuing care of the site, spread the word about Arnos Vale Cemetery and share research and knowledge to a non-academic audience. We welcome the suggestions for presentations of around 45-50 mins from a wide range of speakers and disciplines. We are creating the 2026 programme at the moment and would love to hear from any researchers who'd like to share what they are interested in or working on. A number of previous talks have been delivered by CDAS staff, visiting fellows, and students but we are interested in presentations from all sorts of disciplines, research areas and levels of study.

If you are keen to support us, then contact janine.marriott@arnosvale.org.uk

Check out the programme of events at arnosvale.org.uk

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 centre. 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 labourers, 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

Contact us

Email: cdas@bath.ac.uk

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