

June 2026

Centre for Death and Society



[CDAS News](#)

[CDAS Events](#)

[CDAS Community News](#)

[CDAS Community Events](#)

[Calls Jobs](#)

[Contact us](#)



Highlights

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

NEW CDAS FELLOWS

We have four new CDAS visiting fellows/professors

JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Directors Note

Welcome to our new look newsletter, where as always we share our news, events and activities from the wider community.

Our big news this month is our upcoming conference (join us!) and our welcome to new visiting fellows/professors. Our visiting colleagues play a critical role in the Centre's activities and reach, and we are delighted to welcome four new colleagues from around the world this month. We are also very pleased to announce that CDAS will be hosting Professor Emma Kirby from UNSW, Australia, in the academic year 2026-2027 as the recipient of the University of Bath David Parkin Visiting Professorship. Emma will bring to CDAS a huge wealth of experience, insight and energy, and we cannot wait to have her with us.

As ever, please keep us informed of what you are up to and we will do our best to share it. We'd also welcome your feedback on this newsletter format, for better or worse!

Until next time

Kate and Naomi



Upcoming events

CDAS events

17-19th June: [CDAS conference 2026-](#)
Death and Power

CDAS community events

8th July: Wolfson Palliative Care Research
Centre Biennial Conference

9th July: The Ethics of Body Disposal

11th July: Initiation to Accompaniment at
the End-of-Life

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

20th November: Virtual Cemeteries
Colloquium

CDAS News

CDAS Conference

There is still time to get your ticket for the 2026 CDAS Conference. Held over three days, with two free evening events, we are looking forward to seeing you and hearing from all our speakers from around the world.

[Centre for Death & Society \(CDAS\) Conference 2026: Death and Power](#)

Welcome to CDAS!

Welcome our new visiting fellows/profs, Kate Sugar, Ivor Williams, Amelia Derr and Mike Brennan. All are joining us for three years to work together on areas of shared interest. Kate will be working with Kate Woodthorpe on local research in end-of-life care, Ivor will be working with Diana Teggi on death design and innovation, Amelia Derr will be working with Kate Woodthorpe on anticipatory grief, and Mike will be working with Kate Woodthorpe and our visiting prof Gayle Letherby and visiting fellow Bethan Michael-Fox on our CDAS writing initiative work. Welcome to CDAS everyone and we hope you enjoy your time with us!

Clare Gitting's Books

This month we were very grateful to receive a gift of part of Clare Gittings' personal collection, kindly donated by her partner Malcolm. We are very pleased to be adding these to our library, many of which are (not surprisingly if you knew Clare!) on the arts and visual culture. Thank you, Malcolm, and Clare, for this generous donation, and to Sarah for helping to transport them to their new home.

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 26th June, 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 the 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.

PhD student Chloe Moody has had the scoping review, as part of her thesis lit review, published!

Well done to PhD student Chloe Moody who has had her article with Jeremy Dixon called 'The First-Hand Needs of Informal Caregivers of People Living With Dementia, in Residential Care Settings: A Scoping Review' published in *Health and Social Care in the Community*.

Abstract: Dementia is a terminal condition often requiring palliative care delivered in residential care settings. While informal caregivers are pivotal in care-based decision-making, they have higher rates of physical and mental illness than informal caregivers of people with other terminal conditions. Identifying the needs of informal caregivers of people living with dementia (PLwD) is essential to mitigate these risks and develop effective support systems.

The full paper can be read [here](#).

Professor Emma Kirby is coming to CDAS!

We are thrilled to announce that [Prof Emma Kirby from UNSW, Australia](#), has been awarded the University of Bath David Parkin Visiting Professorship for the 2026-2027 academic year. Emma will be joining CDAS for two extended visits in autumn 2026 and spring 2027, and we will be planning events and activities around her visit. Please get in touch with CDAS if you'd like to be involved in planning for these, as we're keen to make the most of Emma's visit.

Visiting Professor Lucy Easthope publishes new book and article

Come What May is available in paperback and is available for purchase [here](#).

We all know that at some point in life, we will experience pain, uncertainty and loss. Widowhood, redundancy, a life-changing diagnosis, pregnancy loss, or a global pandemic. So how can we weather the storms, and cope with whatever comes next?

No one can answer this better than Lucy Easthope, an emergency planner whose job is to support survivors of major disasters. She has been there after countless earthquakes, fires and floods. Time and again she has watched how people rebuild: the work, the pitfalls and the fragile joy. In *Come What May*, she distils for us what she has learned about how to carry on during and after terrible times.

Through poignant stories and hard-won wisdom, she offers a roadmap for resilience in the face of adversity. She explains what shape the recovery journey might take, how to triage your life in an emergency, how to plan for 'the slump' (also known as the lasagne phase), how to take stock of what has happened to you, how to watch out for 'learned helplessness', and what good (and bad) help looks like.

Lucy has also published an article on intimacy, rites and nuances with Thomas Osborne and Katherine Sleeman. This is a video article that approaches the issue of voluntary assisted dying through the lens of a moderated discussion. The video article can be viewed [here](#).

Visiting Professor Gayle Letherby involved in new podcast episode and project

Alongside Charlotte Dixon and Penny Shepherd, Gayle was part of the episode 'Childless at the End of Life: What Nobody Tells You' for the Full Stop Community. You can listen to the episode [here](#).

Gayle was also a participant in the [Pregnancy Endings Project](#) which is part of the bigger Feminist Miscarriage Project feministmiscarriageproject.org led by Victoria Browne and Susie Kilshaw.

Publication on Feminism and Visual Culture: Focus Issue 'Dead Women and Gendered Death in Visual Culture' for *MAI: Feminism and Visual Culture*

Co-edited by Devaleena Kundu, CDAS visiting fellow Bethan-Michael-Fox, and CDAS visiting fellow Khyati Tripathi, 'Dead Women and Gendered Death in Visual Culture' dives into the factors behind the deeply gendered representations of death and dead bodies in visual culture. In a world dominated by the visual, the female dead body is glamorised and eroticised for consumption. This focus issue examines the various ways one negotiates with visual representations of femininity in death and the intersectional politics at work behind representations frequently divesting the female body of its agency even in death. The issue features scholars from across the globe with contributions exploring subjects such as fetishisation of female corpses, necrophiliac fantasies, spectrality and haunted bodies, feminist necropoetics, gendered deaths and wartime propaganda, and female suicides. The issue invites readers to critically engage with the question of looking and consuming gendered representations of death and dying in visual culture.

MAI: Feminism and Visual Culture is open access, and you can find more about the focus issue here:

<https://www.maifeminism.com/dead-women-and-gendered-death-in-visual-culture/>

Visiting fellow Philip Olson publishes in Journal of Health and Human Services Administration

The article is titled 'Death Becomes a Government Capacity Issue: Big Questions for Local Government Death Management'.

As local governments in the U.S. are largely responsible for managing death, questions emerge about organizational capacity losses for a public service that is everywhere yet often unknown and unseen. While mass fatality events and pandemics might bring death front and centre, it abounds each day in land use questions, death investigation infrastructure, public personnel and resource allocation, training, leadership, and more. In this invited commentary, we introduce the death management capacity to frame a series of big questions facing the practice of local government death management while also setting a future-looking research agenda all guided by a practitioner co-author.

You can read the full article [here](#).

Visiting Professor Elaine Kasket part of consultation on a declaration for protecting the dead in the digital era

Prof Patrick Stokes at Deakin University is heading up a multinational, multidisciplinary consultation on a declaration for protecting the dead in the digital era — as a digital death scholar and Visiting Professor at CDAS, Elaine is a part of this project.

The eventual declaration will provide an expert-informed position on how digital remains and posthumous data should be protected in light of emergent technologies. There's an ongoing survey, which we're keen for people to complete; responses will inform the development of a declaration that we hope will be globally relevant.

People can currently feedback in two ways:

By contacting Pat Stokes on patrick.stokes@deakin.edu.au, and/or

by filling out the survey here: <https://form.typeform.com/to/EMw4FwuB>

New book series launched: Studies in Death and Literature looking for submissions

Under the editorship of Dr Nicholas Taylor-Collins (CDAS Visiting Fellow), Anthem Press are pleased to announce the inauguration of a new book series, Studies in Death and Literature [[here](#)].

The international editorial board invites proposals on a range of intersecting topics, and generously welcomes literary-critical approaches, creative-critical writing, and narrative nonfiction.

Proposals can be for a monograph (mid- and full-length), edited collection, handbook, course book or essential introductions written by scholars for a general audience.

CDAS Events

2026 Annual Conference: TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE

The [Centre for Death and Society \(CDAS\)](#) Conference 2026 will look at the relationships between death and power. It will take place online, allowing people from anywhere in the world to join us and explore this fascinating topic.

In all its forms, power is central to the human condition, people's relationships to others, the planet's future, and how endings are experienced. Theorised across many, if not all, disciplines, power is inherent in professions, care, associations with others, policy and politics, perspectives and approaches, rationales and logic. Whether it is something possessed or negotiated, practiced, or rejected, power in all its guises is part of life, and of death.

The conference will feature nearly 100 speakers from 24 countries to explore these juxtapositions and the many and varied ways death and power intersect.

There will be keynote sessions, research paper discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions, hosted by a wide-ranging selection of speakers and contributors.

If you are unable to join us for the whole three-day conference, free tickets are available to attend the two evening sessions

- Wednesday 17 June: [Power in Health and Care research: a case for epistemic injustice](#)
- Thursday 18 June: [Agency and empowerment through embodied grief companionship](#)

Please note: Full ticket holders will have access to these sessions.

[Centre for Death & Society \(CDAS\) Conference 2026: Death and Power](#)

CDAS Community News

New podcast launch- Memento Morbid

Each episode features a conversation with artist and curator Joanna Ebenstein, openly discussing a subject we should certainly all discuss more: death.

Guests so far have included Academy Award Nominated actor Paul Giamatti, certified witch Pam Grossman, and writer and designer Leila Taylor.

It is made by Overcoat Media, an award winning UK based audio company (the ones who made the British Podcast of the Year 'A Positive Life' with superstar Sam Smith), in collaboration with Morbid Anatomy, a New York based organisation whose mission is to get us talking about mortality.

A recent episode includes CDAS member and Professor John Troyer. You can listen to this episode [here](#).

The current issue of the Journal of Religion, Film and Media explores death

The current issue of the [Journal of Religion, Film & Media](#) comprises articles on death across various media and formats, such as Instagram, video games, TV series and Disney films. The individual articles explore, in different ways, whether and to what extent the media can serve as a way of coping with death, loss and grief, or even as a source of comfort, or whether they tend to have a disillusioning effect.

Sharon Mallon is new Editor-in-Chief of Illness, Crisis and Loss

As one of her first initiatives in the role, Sharon is pleased to be working alongside Guest Co-Editor Dr William McGowan to launch a Special Issue on AI, Loss and the Future of Death. AI has transformed so many aspects of her academic life already, and this call emerged from some of the papers she saw presented at the CDAS conference last year and ongoing conversations with colleagues. She is hoping to contribute to the ongoing debate about the ways in which these changes are likely to impact on death, grief and all experiences of loss.

We are currently inviting proposal submissions (250–400 words). The full call for papers can be found [here](#).

The Special Issue on Responsible Technology for Death and Dying is now out with seven papers published and more to come

This special issue aims to explore the multifaceted impact of "DeathTech" and the Digital Afterlife Industry on grief processes, mourning rituals, and cultural conceptions of death. By promoting RRI approaches, we seek to inform future technological developments to maximize psychological benefits and minimise harm. You can read the full issue [here](#).

Help is at hand is out of print: a call to action from Dr Sharon McDonnell

Help is at Hand — the professionally printed guide for people bereaved by suicide in England — has been out of print for several weeks, with families now being told to rely on the Z card version or download the guide themselves.

These booklets provide practical support and hope at the darkest moments and can help save lives. Replacing them with an inadequate substitute to save money is deeply short-sighted and risks causing real harm, particularly given that many people bereaved by suicide are themselves at risk of dying by suicide.

Those bereaved by suicide are often overwhelmed, isolated, and struggling to cope. They should not face additional barriers to accessing information and support at a time of intense distress and heightened risk.

People bereaved by suicide deserve better. We must push for these guides to be professionally printed and made available again immediately. Dr Sharon McDonnell has contacted key people within government and hope this decision will be reversed. She will keep the community updated.

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](#).



New articles on death dying and Bereavements in Israel Affairs

One article concerns Health and Victimology – a discipline evolution based on three Generational Research Communities. The paper presents the evolution of 'Health and Victimology' as a disciplinary research field. By monitoring a range of studies perceived as pertaining to this field, it aims to create a specific historiography, evolution and most of all a division into Generational Research Communities for this specific field. You can read the full issue with other articles [here](#).

CDAS Community Events

Wolfson Palliative Care Research Centre Biennial Conference- 8th July 2026, 9:30am-16:00pm

Meeting the Challenges in Palliative Care: Data, Delivery and Diversity

Hear about new and engaging evidence to support your practice and research

Registration is now open. More information can be found [here](#).

Online workshop: The Ethics of Body Disposal- 9th July

Following the success of last year's event, IDEA The Ethics Centre at the University of Leeds is pleased to announce the return of the online workshop event: The Ethics of Body Disposal. This event will be held online on Thursday 9th July 2026 (timings tbc but last year the event ran 10am-3:15pm UK time).

Deciding what should be done with our own bodies or those of a loved one after death can be difficult decisions with sometimes significant ethical implications. Deciding what to do, what you would like to be done, and what others should be permitted to do, raises a number of ethical questions – at this workshop, we would like to offer a space to explore and discuss some of these.

Such questions might include:

What responsibilities do we have to the dead and to the living in making body disposal decisions? How might any such moral obligations differ when we are making decisions for ourselves or others? Would ignoring the wishes of the deceased be morally wrong? Should their wishes be honoured even if it might offend others in society? Should laws restrict what we can and cannot have done with our own bodies after death and if so, how? Should body disposal decisions be made with the interests of others still living, even those unknown to the deceased, in mind? In disagreements over arrangement for disposal of a loved one's body, what principles should guide how to move forwards?

This list is not exhaustive but is meant to be indicative of some of the issues and questions that can be raised by this topic.

You can [register to attend this workshop through this link](#); this will be a free event.

Initiation to Accompaniment at the End-of-Life- 11th July

In collaboration with Spanish Cooperative the Art of Good Living: www.elartedelbuenvivir.es, we are organising in Nottingham a 1-day workshop on the 11th of May titled: Initiation to Accompaniment at the End-of-Life.

Initiation to Accompaniment at the End-of-Life is a 1-day intensive training program followed by a 2hrs group online session. It has been created for anyone who wishes to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to accompany others and how to do so in a more conscious, humane, and transformative way. It is designed for those seeking to support a loved one, as well as for professionals in the social, healthcare, educational, or therapeutic fields, and anyone interested in their own personal growth and how to support others dealing with loss and grief.



This is an innovative training program developed by a team of experts with extensive experience in death, dying and end-of-life care, scientific research, and mental health. It integrates contemporary knowledge with ancestral techniques and a secular, accessible, and respectful way to engage with spirituality.

Tickets and more info [here](#).

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](#).

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.

Calls

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 19 June 2026.

Accepted speakers will be notified by 3 July 2026.

Call for papers: 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 centered 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](#).

Call for contributions in 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

Details

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 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

Contact us

Email: cdas@bath.ac.uk

Web: www.bath.ac.uk/cdas

Facebook: www.facebook.com/centrefordeath

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

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

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