

Centre for  
Death & Society  
(CDAS)



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**

# Centre for Death & Society

## March 2026 Newsletter

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## **Director's Note**

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Welcome to our March newsletter where we're really proud to share some of the work we've been doing over the last month, spanning diverse topics areas related to death and loss, and people from around the world.

This month has seen visits to and from the UK, the progression of some of our large research projects, team building, public walks and lectures, publication success and recognition. We've also received lots of enquiries and applications from people wanting to become a visiting member of CDAS, all of which indicates to us that our field is thriving and there is still much work to be done.

As ever, this issue of the newsletter details many calls and events within the wider CDAS community. Within CDAS, our next seminar is on conspiracy, memory, and learning from the past with Caroline Sharples, author of the newly published [The long death of Adolf Hitler: an investigative history](#). We hope you can join us for what will undoubtedly be a very resonant talk and discussion, given recent world events.

After this seminar we look to our Beatrice Godwin Memorial Lecture in May and annual conference in June, details of which for both will be shared in the next few weeks on social media and the next newsletter. The conference programme has now come together and we've informed everyone who submitted an abstract of the outcome. Thank you to everyone who did – we received three times as many abstract submissions as we could accommodate, so inevitably we've had to make some tough decisions. To those of you who will not be presenting this time, we hope you will still be able to join us for what promises to be a really engaging few days. Our conference is all online so we hope that makes it affordable and feasible for as many of you around the world to participate.

As always, please continue to share your news with us and we will do our best to amplify it on social media and via the newsletter, where and when we can.

Until next time  
Kate and Naomi



## ***Bereavement Network Europe and CDAS seminar***

Thank you to Dr Georgie Akehurst from the University of Edinburgh for doing our co-hosted webinar with BNE on the Impact of Traumatic Death on Social Networks. The recording of the webinar is now on our webpage, to listen back to in your own time.

## ***Visiting Prof Ylva Hard af Segerstad visits Bath: public lecture and walk***



In March we welcomed [Professor Hard af Segerstad](#) from the University of Gothenburg to Bath for a research visit, where she gave a public lecture at the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institute on Digital Remains.

As part of her visiting we hosted an in person Death and Crime Walk around the city, led by its creator and visiting fellow Molly Conisbee. This is a FREE podcastable walk around the city, where you can learn about Bath's past of disease, dying, murder and sex work. If you'd like to do the walk next time you are in Bath you can find it [here](#).

## ***Uganda trip: Death during Famine***

During this last month the PI (co-director Naomi Pendle) and Co-I (Martin Ochaya) of the 'Death during Famine' project met in northern Uganda with South Sudanese refugees and other team members. We held focus groups, made recordings for the forthcoming Bitter Harvest podcast and hosted a South Sudanese artist who is working on visual representations of our findings.



## ***Congratulations to visiting fellow Laura Towers***

Well done to Laura, who's paper on the impact of the death of a sibling has been nominated by the Sociology journal for the SAGE Prize for Innovation/Excellence! You can view the full list of nominees [here](#).

And the paper that has been nominated can be found [here](#).

## ***Living at Home project visit***

We were delighted to welcome Lucia Crowther from the University of Bath for a week long visit, where there were multiple team building meetings with project members of the team based at Bath.

L-R: Diana Teggi, Elena Vasiliou, Kate Woodthorpe, Lucia Crowther and Alison Borgelin



## ***Previous visiting PhD student Yong Hao's review on public health***

Yong Hao is now a faculty member with the social work department at the National University of Singapore. Recently she presented on a review of the public health model of bereavement support. The model was developed by Professor Samar Aoun and her colleagues in 2012. The model inspired a number of local or regional versions, including the organisation of the European Grief Conference and the development of the Irish Adult Bereavement Care Pyramid. The presentation and the panel discussion, chaired by Professor Aoun, have been recorded and made available on YouTube.

About the webinar:

Public Health Model of Bereavement Support 14 Years On: Use, Misuse, and Opportunities  
Are we getting bereavement support right? Join us for a thought-provoking webinar that challenges how the Public Health Model of Bereavement Support has been used since 2012. We'll explore whether this influential model has been applied as intended and examine growing tensions around the psychologisation and professionalisation of bereavement support. If you've questioned whether our current approaches truly serve bereaved families or wondered how bereavement support could evolve, this session offers fresh insights and practical considerations. Access the webinar [here](#).

## ***Visiting Research Fellow Dr Christopher Lyon publishes piece in The Conversation***

Dr Christopher Lyon and his University of York colleague Dr Jonathan Gordon recently published a piece in The Conversation. '[The Black Death's counterintuitive effect: as human numbers fell, so did plant diversity](#)' highlights recent research showing that the falling human population during the plague years led to much disused agricultural land and lower biodiversity, helping to demonstrate that certain kinds of human land use, in this case extensive agriculture, can improve biodiversity measures. This work challenges assumptions in modern conservation thinking such as rewilding initiatives always leading to better biodiversity outcomes. This research holds valuable lessons for how society imagines living on Earth with rapidly changing ecosystems from climate change, pollution, and land use, and the close relationship between human population, land use, and ecology.

## ***Teaching in Italy***



Following University of Pavia PhD student Mateus Romao's visit to Bath last year as a visiting PhD student, CDAS director Kate Woodthorpe was invited to teach about funeral trends and online mourning at the University in February along with the founder of [NIMO](#) (The Italian Network on Death and Oblivion) Georgio Scalici.

## ***NIHR Palliative Research Incubator***

Also this last month, Diana Teggi and Kate Woodthorpe did a webinar for the Palliative Research Incubator on 'The Value of a Sociological Perspective on Palliative Care'. The recording of the event will be available soon on the [Incubator's website](#).

## CDAS EVENTS

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### ***The long death of Adolf Hitler: the negotiation of memory over time- 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 6:00-7:00pm***

Marking the publication of Caroline Sharple'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.

Free tickets to the event can be found [here](#).

### ***Bach and Mortality festival- 16<sup>th</sup> April, 10:15am-17:00pm***

Alastair Comery is speaking at the Bach and Mortality festival which has a theme of music and mortality. He will be discussing music in life and death- exploring how music, woven through everyday life, helps people sustain identity, connection and meaning in the dace of death and bereavement.. More information about the event can be found [here](#). Tickets can be purchased [here](#).

### ***Picturing the Dead: Spirit Photography c.1860-1940 with CDAS Visiting Fellow Helen Frisby- 21<sup>st</sup> April, 7-8:30pm***

Hosted by the folklore society. Mortality, religion, folklore, art and technology collide in this history of spirit photography during the period c.1860-1940.

This talk explores the curious history of spirit photography; whereby, in a distinctly Victorian technological twist upon much older ghost beliefs, deceased 'extras' mysteriously returned to haunt photographs of their loved ones. The craze for spirit photography peaked in Britain after the 1914-18 Great War, but had been conclusively debunked by 1940. Or had it ...?

On one level the story of spirit photography is one of fraud, profiteering, and exploitation; however it also highlights the human capacity for ritual creativity in the face of grief and loss.

Please note that this presentation includes examples of spirit and postmortem photographs.

Tickets £6.00 (£4.00 for Folklore Society members with the Promo Code)

Every ticket sold helps to support the work of The Folklore Society

Tickets can be found [here](#).

# CDAS COMMUNITY NEWS

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## *Participate in a study on digital goodbyes*

Title of study: Digital Goodbyes: Meaning-making, connection and disconnection at the End of Life During COVID-19

*Would you like to share your experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic?*

My name is Annabel Howell, and I am doing a PhD study as part of the COVID-19 and University of Hull sponsored and funded research project Digital Goodbyes: Meaning-making, connection and disconnection at the End of Life During COVID-19. I'm inviting you to take part in this study if:

Someone close to you died during the pandemic and you were unable to be with them in person, and you had to say goodbye using technology such as video calls

OR you were previously a healthcare worker during the pandemic, who helped someone say goodbye to a loved one using digital technology.

*What is the purpose of the study?*

My study is about how people used technology such as phones, laptops or tablets to stay connected at the end of life during the pandemic- and what those experiences meant to them. I want to understand:

- What these moments were like for you
- How you made sense of them
- And how they affected your grief, your emotions and your process of saying goodbye.

Your story can help us learn more about digital technologies and how they can support people in difficult times, how they could supplement being in person in certain circumstances- and how it may affect grieving and closure when someone dies.

For more information, contact: [a.howell2020@hull.ac.uk](mailto:a.howell2020@hull.ac.uk)

***Share your perspective on the use of AI and Greifbots in Bereavement***

Are you curious about the intersection of technology, grief, and remembrance? We are conducting a study on AI holograms and bereavement and we would like to hear from you.

What is the study about?

We are exploring how AI-powered griefbots and holograms might influence the grieving process. Could they bring comfort or potentially prolong grief? How might different cultures, religions, and identities respond to these technologies?

If you are studying social work, social care and/or health sciences, this is a chance to share your perspective and contribute to a conversation that is shaping the future of grief, technology, and memory.

For more information, scan the QR code

**Participants Needed**

# Perspectives on the use of AI & Griefbots in Bereavement

**Thanatology Research Lab**

Are you studying social work or health sciences?

You are invited to participate in an in-depth online, recorded interview focusing on students' views and perceptions about the role of AI in coping with death, bereavement and grief.

**Express Interest Form**  
<https://forms.office.com/e/FXAWWrOgFd>

PI: [Panagiotis.Pentaris@gold.ac.uk](mailto:Panagiotis.Pentaris@gold.ac.uk)

## *New podcast episodes*

Check out new episodes on podcast [Transforming Grief, One Conversation At A Time](#). If you are interested in being a guest please reach out to Dr. Jessica Thomas: [JessicaThomas@lclark.edu](mailto:JessicaThomas@lclark.edu)

## *The Emotional Journey: Dancing Through Grief and Bereavement Experiences Healing The Inner Self - Dance Workshop Guide.*

Cindy Ly has created a guide to support wellness within bereavement. Apart from being a very useful and meaningful tool, this is a good way in which we can use our Bath-Western partnership to share resources and spring-board further discussions.

You can access the guide [here](#).

## **CDAS COMMUNITY EVENTS**

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### ***Contested decision-making about life-sustaining treatment for adults after catastrophic brain injury- Thursday 19 March, 17:45 to 19:30pm***

Is current law and practice fit for purpose and how can we work together to make it better?

Speaker: Professor Lynne Tuner-Stokes

Location: EP Abraham Lecture Theatre and Online

More information about the talk can be found [here](#).

All welcome, but registration is recommended. Register here to book a seat at the lecture or to receive the online link if joining virtually.

The lecture will be followed by a short drinks reception in the Stables Bar.

### ***Public inaugural lecture at University of Bristol- 24<sup>th</sup> March, 17:30pm***

On 24<sup>th</sup> March at 5.30pm Lucy Selman will be giving a public inaugural lecture as Professor of Palliative and End of Life Care at the University of Bristol.

For full details, see [here](#).

Attendance and refreshments are free but please register at the link above.

The lecture will also be live-streamed - details of how to access the livestream will be posted on the Eventbrite page in due course. You do not need to register to view the livestream.

### ***Christien Klaufus presents her new book- "Life and Death in Latin American Cities"- 25<sup>th</sup> March, 12:00-13:30pm***

We warmly invite you to this book talk on 25 March, organized by the Centre for Urban Studies. Dr [Christien Klaufus](#) will present her latest book, "Life and Death in Latin American Cities", in which she explores the intricate dynamics between the living and the dead in six Latin American cities.

University of Amsterdam, Roeterseilandcampus - building B/C/D - Room B5.12  
urbanization, legacies of violence, neoliberal policies and alternative spiritual practices.

The book talk will be followed by a Q&A, with author Christien Klaufus and discussant Karen Paiva Henrique (GPIO/UvA). The conversation will be chaired by Carolina M. Frossard (GPIO/UvA & CUS co-director). Please sign up [here](#).

## ***Within and Without therapeutic mindful photography training***

Dr. Jessica Thomas is excited to announce that her next [Within & Without™ therapeutic mindful photography training](#) is open for registration! Discounts available for students and those in need of assistance. Please use the [application link to apply](#) for the April training. Review this [page for more details](#) and reach out to Dr. Jessica with any additional questions: [MindfulPhotoGrief@gmail.com](mailto:MindfulPhotoGrief@gmail.com)

### **APRIL 2026 8-hr Intro training schedule**

**Where:** Virtual

**When:** April 10th 9am-11am PT

April 17th 9am-11am PT

April 24th 9am-11am PT

May 1st 9am-11am PT

## ***Good Grief Festival***

### ***17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> April***

We're delighted to announce the Good Grief Spring Festival (17–19 April), a series of conversations exploring grief, resilience and hope.

Across the weekend we'll bring together a remarkable group of speakers, including Julia Samuel MBE, [David Kessler, FACHE](#), Joseph Coelho OBE, [Dr Lucy Hone](#), Prof [Mary-Frances O'Connor](#), [Camille Sapara Barton](#), Dr [Frank Anderson](#), and [Liz Gleeson](#).

The programme will explore topics such as:

- 🌱 The science of resilience
- 🌱 The stories and rituals that help us through loss
- 🌱 Trauma and intergenerational grief
- 🌱 The role of nature and landscape in healing
- 🌱 Life-limiting illness

The festival includes 10 online events (free to attend) and a special in-person performance in Birmingham.

Our speakers draw on both professional expertise and personal experience of grief, offering thoughtful, honest perspectives on living with loss.

If you work in healthcare, education, research, the arts, or community support — or if grief has touched your life — we'd love you to join us.

✨ Registration is now [open](#).

## ***Palliative Care Research Conference- 4th June 9:30-16:00***

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June | Dorothy House Hospice, Winsley | 09:30 – 16:00

We're delighted to invite you to our second collaborative Palliative Care Research Conference, hosted at Dorothy House Hospice in Winsley. This event brings together leading researchers and practitioners to share the latest insights, innovations, and best practices in residential and community settings within palliative care.

Why attend?

- Keynote talks from experts in the field
- Poster presentations and oral abstracts
- Interactive Q&A panels
- Networking opportunities
- Free parking & lunch provided!

Tickets: Early Bird: £70 (limited time)

General Admission: £85

[Reserve Your Spot Now](#)

Call for Abstracts:

Submit your abstract for poster and oral presentation consideration by Friday 27 February 2026.

Email completed forms to [research@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk](mailto:research@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk)

## ***Cremation and Burial Communication and Education Conference and Exhibition- 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June***

Join us for the Cremation & Burial Communication & Education Conference and Exhibition which is returning to the Hilton Southampton - Utilita Bowl 2026. Be sure to mark your calendars and join us for this important event!

The Cremation Society and the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities are delighted to be working together again to bring you this year's CBCE.

2025 sees another year of challenge for the burial and cremation sector, as the ever increasing complexity and diversity of death care requires innovation from all involved in funerals. CBCE covers the main topics relevant to all professionals within the sector and as the only CPD accredited educational event in the calendar this is a must attend for those wishing to stay ahead in their respective field.

Keynote topics include Law Commission updates, Environmental Permitting changes, technological innovation, and educational updates to help meet your continuing professional development objectives. There is also an opportunity to grow your network and visit the exhibition to discuss the latest products and services with all the leading sector providers.

More information can be found [here](#).

***Biennial Conference: Meeting the Challenges in Palliative Care: Data, Delivery and Diversity- 8<sup>th</sup> July 2026, 9:30am-16:00pm***

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- 9<sup>th</sup> 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

If you have a paper or idea that you feel would fit this theme and would like to present at this online workshop, please submit the title and an abstract [via this link as well](#). IDEA is

committed to interdisciplinary applied ethics and so academics and professionals from other disciplines and related industries are encouraged to submit relevant abstracts for this event.

The deadline for abstracts is 9am Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026.

If you have any questions, you can reach the event organiser Dr Sarah Carter-Walshaw at this address: [s.carter-walshaw@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:s.carter-walshaw@leeds.ac.uk)

***Suicide Bereavement UK's 15<sup>th</sup> international hybrid conference in Liverpool:  
16<sup>th</sup> 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.](#)



## ***Call for abstracts: Palliative Care Research Conference***

We are pleased to invite abstract submissions for the Palliative Care Research Conference, taking place Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026, from 09:30–16:00 at Dorothy House Hospice, Winsley, Bradford-on-Avon Wiltshire.

This year's conference focuses on using research to optimise care in residential and community settings, and we welcome contributions from researchers, practitioners, clinicians, students, and others working to improve palliative and end-of-life care.

We invite abstracts for both poster and oral presentation consideration.

Submission deadline: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026

How to submit: [Palliative Care Research in Community Settings Thursday 4th June 2026 - Abstract Submission](#)

You are encouraged to submit work related to (but not limited to):

- Innovations in palliative or end-of-life care
- Research influencing best practice in community or residential settings
- Patient-centred outcomes and lived experiences
- Quality-improvement or service-evaluation projects
- Collaborative, interdisciplinary, or implementation research

Poster presenters will be eligible for poster prizes, and all accepted presenters will have opportunities to discuss their work with delegates, researchers, and practitioners.

## ***Call for Contributions: Workshop on Grandparental Bereavement***

The Centre for Ageing and the Life Course, with support from the School of Law and Social Justice Research Development Funds, University of Liverpool, is hosting a hybrid workshop on *bereavement following the death of a grandparent* in mid-to-late June (exact date confirmed by the end of March) at the University of Liverpool.

We invite researchers and practitioners from sociology, psychology, gerontology, youth studies, family studies, and bereavement support to contribute. The workshop will run from 10:00 to 16:00, featuring a keynote and 3–4 short presentations (around 20 minutes each) in the morning, followed by small-group discussions and a strategic roundtable in the afternoon to shape a shared research agenda.

Why Contribute?

- Address a significant gap in bereavement research, particularly the developmental and relational impact on young adults
- Shape conceptual and methodological directions for this emerging field
- Build an interdisciplinary network and contribute to a shared research agenda and future funding applications

#### Practical Information

- No registration fee
- Travel and accommodation are not covered, but online participation is welcome

If you are interested in presenting or contributing, please contact Dr Chao Fang ([chao.fang@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:chao.fang@liverpool.ac.uk)) and Dr Laura Soulsby ([L.K.Soulsby@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:L.K.Soulsby@liverpool.ac.uk)).

### ***DDD18 Host Call Now Open***

The Association for the Study of Death and Society (ASDS) warmly invites proposals to host the 18th Death, Dying and Disposal (DDD18) Conference, to be held in September 2027. We are seeking hosts who can offer a compelling academic theme, a vibrant and inclusive environment, and strong administrative foundations in line with the criteria set out in the Proposal Form.

We particularly encourage prospective hosts to view this not as a fixed or fully formed submission, but as the beginning of a collaborative process with ASDS Council. We very much welcome informal conversations in advance of submission and would be delighted to discuss early ideas, practical questions, or developing concepts. Please feel free to contact the ASDS Secretary at [deathandsociety@gmail.com](mailto:deathandsociety@gmail.com) to arrange an informal discussion.

Completed proposals must be submitted by Friday 1st May 2026 at 17:00 (GMT).

Please follow this link for more information:

<https://deathandsociety.org/death-dying-and-disposal-conferences/>

## DDD18 Host Call Now Open



ASDS warmly invites proposals to host the 18th Death, Dying and Disposal (DDD18) Conference, to be held in September 2027.

**Completed proposals must be submitted by Friday 1st May 2026 at 17:00 (GMT)**

Find the form on our website:

<https://deathandsociety.org/death-dying-and-disposal-conferences/>



## ***Invitation to contribute: Thanatos special issue 2026***

Every year Thanatos launches a special issue in the field of thanatology on a timely theme that calls for attention. This year, we welcome scholars from diverse disciplines to collaborate on the 2026 special issue, which focuses on “death and ecology”.

There are two possible categories of articles to which authors can contribute. Peer-reviewed original research articles (max. 8000 words) and discussion papers (3000 words) that comment on or elaborate on some aspects of the special issue theme in an academic or societal manner.

The research articles are sent to two external reviewers, the discussion papers are reviewed by the editorial board. For this special issue, we welcome papers from both scientific and artistic research perspectives that touch upon death, grief, and ecology. The theme of ecology can be broadly interpreted as relating to questions of sustainability in social and/or “natural” environments. Here, ecological crisis can refer to different aspects of the contemporary polycrisis, which tend to be entangled in multiple ways with death and destruction.

Submission deadline for full articles to be considered for the special issue is the 10th of May.

More information about the journal and the submission guidelines can be found at <https://journal.fi/thanatos/information/authors>.

Papers in English and Finnish languages are welcome! Any questions about the issue, please get in touch via [thanatos.fdsa@gmail.com](mailto:thanatos.fdsa@gmail.com).

## *Call for research participants*



### **Call for Research Participants**

I am looking to interview people who believe their sibling/s died by suicide to learn more about, and raise awareness of, sibling suicide bereavement.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age and bereaved more than 3 months ago.

**All participants will be reimbursed for their time.**



For more information, please contact Dr Laura Towers (lead researcher). Email [laura.towers@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:laura.towers@manchester.ac.uk)

## *Call for papers for the 27<sup>th</sup> Cemeteries Colloquium- 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026*

The 27<sup>th</sup> Cemeteries Colloquium will be taking place on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at the University of York, UK. We are now seeking abstract submissions. The Colloquium is an essential forum for the discussion of new and emerging cemetery scholarship and is multi-disciplinary, accepting papers from across the humanities and social sciences. The Colloquium has an emphasis on discussion, and its international and interdisciplinary nature makes the meeting particularly thought-provoking.

Papers will each be given a timeslot of 30 minutes.

The deadline for abstracts is 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

Please send your abstract using [this link](#). If you have any questions, contact Julie Rugg at [julierugg36@gmail.com](mailto:julierugg36@gmail.com)

## *The European Grief Conference - Call for Abstracts Open for EGC 2026 in Oporto & Bereavement Network Europe 7<sup>th</sup> webinar*

**The European Grief Conference 2026 Call For Abstracts Is Now Open.**

EGC welcomes a broad range of abstracts on bereavement and grief-related topics with a focus on research, education/policy or practice aligned to levels of the public health model of bereavement. For the 2026 conference we especially welcome abstracts aligned with the conference theme: Bereavement, grief, and loss: Responding collaboratively to local and global challenges.

Full details on the abstract call are available here <https://europeangriefconference.org/call-for-abstracts>

The European Grief Conference will be held in Porto, Portugal, September 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 2026.

Save the date for the third European Grief Conference 9th-11th September 2026 in O'Porto, Portugal. Read more: <https://europeangriefconference.org/>

### ***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](mailto:janine.marriott@arnosvale.org.uk)

Check out the programme of events at [arnosvale.org.uk](http://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 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](mailto:kamif2311@gmail.com) and [bmaphela@uj.ac.za](mailto: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

## 2-Year Limited Term Appointment

### Department of Thanatology

King's University College at Western University, situated on the traditional territories of the Anishnaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples, invites applications for a **2-year Limited Term Appointment in the Department of Thanatology**, effective July 1, 2026, subject to budgetary approval.

King's University College is affiliated with Western University a large, world-class university. King's students enjoy learning in smaller classes led by outstanding faculty on a small, beautiful campus while enjoying the experiences of being part of a comprehensive university. As a Catholic university, King's emphasizes the value of each individual and the importance of social justice. Faculty, employees and students from all faiths and backgrounds are welcome. Respect for the human person is behind our commitment to diversity, accessibility, social justice and to building the common good. King's is home to approximately 3500 full- and part-time students from across Canada as well as 35 other countries.

King's University College is situated in London, Ontario. With a diverse population of over 530,000 people, London is currently the 11th largest city in Canada and offers its residents and visitors big-city appeal mixed with small-town charm. To learn more about London, please visit <https://www.ledc.com>.

#### DESCRIPTION:

Thanatology at King's University College focuses on the complex personal, relational, social, political, historical, cultural, ethical, and medical contexts found in the interdisciplinary fields of Thanatology and critical death studies. We emphasize the intersectionality of race, gender, culture, location, class, and ability among other axes of identity in order to deepen our understanding of dying, death, bereavement, loss, grief, and mourning. Our approach to death education prioritizes attention to research, interdisciplinary teaching, cross-disciplinary events, community engagement, and death scholarship.

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

The successful candidate will bring/have doctoral-level graduates with research, expertise, and training in Thanatology-related areas. Applicants should be able to demonstrate a comprehensive and interdisciplinary understanding of end of life issues, current trends,

demonstrate awareness of the various sociological, political, and ethical underpinnings related to the experience of death, loss, and grief, as well as knowledge of current research and trends in the field. Preference will be given to individuals with specific academic preparation and/or certification in Thanatology (i.e., CT/FT) and previous experience teaching in Thanatology-related areas.

A commitment to excellence in undergraduate teaching is expected. Demonstrated evidence of high-quality teaching at the university level in classroom, community and/or virtual environments, experiential learning, curating and/or producing digital learning resources and assessments using a range of tools and technologies from course design through to delivery will be an asset.

Applicants must have fluent written and oral communication skills in English.

### **SALARY RANGE:**

The academic rank will be determined based on experience, and the salary will be set in accordance with the Collective Agreement in effect at the time of hiring. The starting base annual salary (effective May 1, 2026) is \$111,334, plus experience increments for each year of experience to a maximum as outlined within the Collective Agreement. Actual Salary will be commensurate with qualifications, experience, and assigned academic rank.

### **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:**

Applications should include the following, ideally packaged into a single PDF.

- 1) Cover letter that explains how the candidate's qualifications align with the job description and the department, as well as how they will contribute to equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization;
- 2) curriculum vitae;
- 3) short statements of research and teaching interests;
- 4) evidence of effective and innovative teaching, including teaching evaluations;
- 5) copies of a maximum of three publications or dissertation chapters; links to other papers
- 6) the names and contact details of three academic referees (we will request letters for only those candidates who are considered for the interview stage)

**These materials should be submitted electronically no later than March 27, 2026.**

For any questions regarding the position please contact:

Dr. Eunice Gorman

Chair, Department of Thanatology

King's University College

[Thanatology.Chair@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Thanatology.Chair@kings.uwo.ca)

We thank all applicants; however, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted to arrange an interview.

**Job Availability:** This posting is for an existing vacancy.

Tags: Critical death studies, loss, grief

*The College is committed to advancing the Catholic intellectual tradition and welcomes faculty, staff and students from all faiths and backgrounds. King's University College is committed to Employment Equity and welcomes applications from qualified individuals, including persons of all genders and sexual orientations, persons with disabilities, Indigenous persons, and racialized people.*

*King's University College is committed to recognizing the dignity and independence of all and seeks to ensure that persons with disabilities have genuine, open and unhindered access to the College's employment opportunities. If you require an accommodation during the recruitment process, please contact Human Resources at [HR@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:HR@kings.uwo.ca) or 519-433-3491 for assistance.*

*All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply, however, Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority.*

[www.kings.uwo.ca](http://www.kings.uwo.ca)



## Contact Us

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

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