



Centre for Death & Society

Newsletter

February 2021

[Director's Note](#)

[CDAS COVID Resources](#)

- [Publications](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Calls for Papers](#)

[CDAS News](#)

[CDAS Community News](#)

[Events](#)

[Call for Papers](#)

Director's Note

February 2021

And we are off and running with organising the 2021 CDAS Conference. Many thanks to everyone who responded to the e-mail message sent out by Research Managers Rachel and Alice, checking on interest in still being part of the 2021 conference.



As of right now we are assessing how many people plan on participating in the conference in June and what kind of Zooming we will need to organise. In March and April, we will announce draft schedules and do our best to work with the many different time-zones colleagues find themselves in. It looks as if the conference will take place over a series of days starting the week of June 07 in order to avoid piling all the presentations on top of each other. This will also facilitate more possibilities for people to discuss the different presentations with each other. The entire June 2021 conference will be an experiment (much like this past year) but Team CDAS will do everything we can to make sure the conference works.

I am also very pleased to announce that CDAS will soon start a series of ongoing ***Alive & In Conversation*** events reflecting on this past year. Each event will be available online via Zoom and also recorded for posterity. Further details including dates/times and where to sign-up for the ***Alive & In Conversation*** events will be posted in the newsletter and on all the CDAS social media channels.

Finally, I would like to draw everyone's attention to a new article in the publication *The Conversation* by CDAS colleague Dr. Hannah Rumble and Professor Karen West at the University of Bristol. It is a timely piece on grief and bereavement during COVID-19.

[What we've learned about bereavement during the pandemic](#)

Dr Hannah Rumble has written for The Conversation with Professor Karen West, on their research into the experience of bereavement during the pandemic.

CDAS COVID-19 Resources, Events and Updates

Our [Centre for Death and Society \(CDAS\) team members](#) curate a monthly collection of resources relating to the effects of Covid-19 on death and society.

We include guidance relating to Covid-19 for:

- grief and bereavement support;
- funeral practices;
- social policy implications.

These resources are both written work produced by CDAS staff and general information on Covid-19 from other organisations. All the resources will be listed on our website [here](#).

February 2021 Covid-19 Information

Publications

[BBC Newsnight](#): Interview with CDAS Associate Lucy Easthope on managing COVID-19's impact.

[Free to read short commentaries](#) in Dialogues of Human Geography on initial Covid-19 impacts including:

Maddrell A. (2020) '[Bereavement, grief, and consolation: Emotional-affective geographies of loss during COVID-19](#)', *Dialogues in Human Geography*

Event Information

FutureLearn Free Courses

FutureLearn is offering a number of free online courses in themes related to Covid-19. Visit their [website](#) to find out more.

Call for Papers, Information & Funding Proposals

Call for Papers: The Disruption and Regeneration of Death during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Special Issue for *Anthropology Quarterly*

Anthropology has long framed death as a crisis, both within an individual's life trajectory and for the existential continuity of the community. In the tradition of scholarship following Hertz (1960), mortuary and funerary rituals are framed as a site of collective action mounted in response to crisis. They are transformative and curative in their ability to shepherd the dead into new worlds or remake them into new kinds of beings; to provide psychological comfort to the bereaved; and to stitch back together social worlds in the absence of the dead. But what happens when death rituals themselves face crisis?

Over the past year, the Covid-19 pandemic has not only threatened human life and livelihoods, it has disrupted and radically reshaped experiences of dying, body disposal, grief, and memorialization around the world. The implications of these changes are still emerging, but popular media and industry voices point to their potentially devastating consequences. At the same time, communities around the world have responded to Covid-19-related restrictions with great creative energies, generating new ritual practices and new applications of technology.

Anthropologists recognize the capacity of death rites to transform bodies, souls, and social relations, but they have generally been less attentive to what happens when death ritual itself is disrupted or how it is transformed (see Simpson 2018). Nor has anthropology substantively engaged with the experiences of those carrying out the labours of contemporary death care (but see Arnold et al. 2018; Howarth 1996; Suzuki 2000).

Contributions to this Special Issue will examine how disruptions to practices around death brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic challenge, extend, or transform anthropological understandings of death ritual and its place in uncertain times. Contributors will draw on original ethnographic research conducted with death care workers, religious communities, and mourners in diverse locations around the world.

Full details of the CfP including submission details can be found [here](#)

The Special Issue is co-edited by Dr Hannah Gould and Professor Tamara Kohn, DeathTech Research Team, School of Social Political Sciences, The University of Melbourne.

To apply, please submit the following to hannah.gould@unimelb.edu.au by **March 5th 2021**:

1. Authors names, email addresses, and affiliations
2. An abstract of 300-500 words

CDAS NEWS

Recent publications

What we've learnt about bereavement during the pandemic

CDAS Associate Dr Hannah Rumble has written for [The Conversation](#) with Professor Karen West on their research into the experience of bereavement during the pandemic.

CDAS Community News

Difficult Death: Challenging Cultural Representations of Death, Dying and the Dead in Media Culture – Call for Chapters

We're very proud to say that former CDAS PhD student Dr Renske Visser is an editor for a new and exciting volume on representations of death, dying and bereavement in the media. Please see the call for chapter abstracts on [page 9](#).

'What a Lovely Send Off : Planning a Meaningful Funeral'

Free online workshop hosted by Poetic Endings will take place on Tuesday 23rd February at 7.30pm and again on Tuesday 30th March at 7.30pm.

In this workshop, we'll go through everything you need to know about funerals. By sharing stories, insights and practical advice, we hope you'll discover that funerals can be meaningful, personal and cost-effective.

To secure a place on the 23rd February you will need to register on Eventbrite via our website - <https://www.poetic-endings.com/events/what-a-lovely-send-off-planning-a-meaningful-funeral> and to register for the 30th March you will again need to register on Eventbrite via our website - <https://www.poetic-endings.com/events/what-a-lovely-send-off-planning-a-meaningful-funeral-march>

Anthropology of Aging by Off the Beaten Track

Fourth edition of the Anthropology of Aging unit, which will take place during the Off the Beaten Track field school in the summer of 2021 in Gozo, Malta.

“We look into the anthropology of aging while offering a social, scientific, and ethnographic exploration of this phenomenon. This is done throughout the session by means of personal experience and individual research, collaborative discussions and collective analysis of specific aspects of aging.”

More information can be found on the website: www.anthropologyfieldschool.org

Please feel free to contact mirjam.bussels@xpeditions.be if you have any further questions.

Before I Go Solutions® Accredited Intensive Training in End of Life Plan Facilitation

Applications from every country are invited for the next intake of this online course to become a licensed facilitator.

As a result of Covid-19, this accredited course has been re-organised and is now available in an Intensive format, over 3 months. Divided into 3 parts, you begin with creating your own end of life plan. Part 2 covers the practicals of doing death differently, and part 3, the practicing of facilitating others in both an offline and online setting.

It will be primarily of interest to health professionals, counsellors, coaches, educators, celebrants or others interested in helping people to prepare well for a good end of life, no matter how it happens, and to take this planning beyond the conversation stage to getting decisions taken and written down.

By the end of the course, graduates will be able to successfully support others in creating their own plans. Ongoing mentoring and support resources are then available.

For more information, see <https://beforeigosolutions.com/big-training-intensive/>

Events

Upcoming Down to Earth training: February - May

[Mastering the Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment | 11 February](#)

Help your clients successfully apply for the Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment to help them pay for a funeral. For workers in advice, benefits rights, social work and the funeral industry.

[Making charity applications for individuals | 10 March](#)

There are hundreds of charities giving grants to individuals, but it can be hard to know who to apply to and whether your claim will be worthwhile. Learn about who to approach, how to find them, and what makes a strong application.

[Let's talk about funerals | 15 April](#)

Some conversations aren't easy, and conversations about funerals can often be challenging, or even actively avoided. But there are ways for us to start having more positive conversations about funerals.

[Raising money for funeral costs | 13 May](#)

Gain skills and knowledge to better support your clients in this new practical and interactive online workshop from Down to Earth. For those supporting and advising people who have a funeral to arrange, this practical workshop enables you to support your clients better to find funds to meet the cost.

All online, all £40 per place



Evidence-based Suicide
Bereavement Training

Evidence-based • Evaluated • Engaging • Effective

Postvention Assisting those Bereaved By Suicide

Postvention Assisting those Bereaved By Suicide (PABBS), one day training is evidence-based and evaluated suicide bereavement training and has been informed by a three-year study, conducted by Dr. Sharon McDonnell and her team, at the University of Manchester. Funded (£243K) by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and the first of its kind internationally.

This training will help those implementing:

- the suicide prevention strategy (locally, regionally and nationally);
- developing postvention services;
- NICE postvention guidelines in the community and custodial settings; and
- key objectives in the NHS Long term plan etc

For training availability dates visit the website:

<https://suicidebereavementuk.com/pabbs-training/>

Over 150 testimonials: <https://suicidebereavementuk.com/testimonials>

Cost: £299 +VAT per person

Please note, we also deliver in-house training, upon request, across the UK.

For more information or to register contact: Paul Higham

Email: paul.higham@suicidebereavementuk.com, Tel: [01706 827359](tel:01706827359)

Call for Papers

Call for Chapters for Edited Collection

Difficult Death: Challenging Cultural Representations of Death, Dying and the Dead in Media and Culture

Deadline: Monday 1 May 2021

You are invited to submit 300-word abstracts for the forthcoming edited collection provisionally titled *Difficult Death: Challenging Cultural Representations of Death, Dying and the Dead in Media and Culture*. The interdisciplinary collection seeks to examine a range of representations of and engagement with death and dying across different media and cultural forms including film, television, new media, journalism, performing arts and literature. With a media and cultural studies focus, the collection will examine some of the difficulties and challenges of representing death, dying and the dead whilst also exploring 'difficult' and 'challenging' representations of these subjects as important objects of analysis in themselves. We welcome contributions from all disciplines and approaches and from those working within and beyond academia.

Context

Death and dying are difficult to avoid both in the global media and in popular culture. At times the representation of death, dying and the dead can be especially challenging for viewers. Yet at other times it can offer solace, escapism, or provoke engagement with mortality. Penfold-Mounce (2018) has examined how different popular cultural texts can promote both 'safe' and 'provocative' morbid spaces for engagement with death and the dead. For those who create cultural texts, ranging from novels to journalism to film and television, how to engage with and represent death, dying and the dead also represents particular challenges. Often, texts can themselves be challenged by those who engage with them for the difficult, revealing or problematic ways that they represent death. For example, as Luckhurst (2016) has argued, the representation of the living dead in zombie horror can be read as a form of social realism with its own necropolitics (Mbembe, 2003). From depictions of real or 'natural' death in documentary, journalism or narrative to dramatic depictions of violent deaths and the (un)dead in literature, film and television, there is ample

opportunity to explore the ways in which death can be represented in difficult ways, can raise difficult questions, and can be difficult to engage with in media and culture.

Writing on death spans and transcends all academic disciplines, though much writing has recently found a locus in the developing field of Death Studies. Within Journalism Studies, more might be written about the interactions with death that many journalists encounter and must, as part of their career, prepare for. From the 'death knock' to reporting sensitive and traumatic events, investigations into this aspect of reporting tend to offer ethical guidance (see Luce, 2019) rather than a full exploration of the area. More research and discussion has taken place around photographic journalism and its encounters with death, with Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003) and Barthes' *Camera Lucida* (2000) offering widely cited explorations of the effect of photographic representation of the traumatised, dying and the dead. There are also photographers noted for their work in this area including Joel-Peter Witkin, Andreas Serrano (Morgue Series), Luc Delahaye and Robert Capa, all who have explored death through the camera lens.

Contributions

Contributions might focus on:

- Representations of death and the dead in film, television and new media that can be read as 'challenging', or that might benefit from being 'challenged'
- The challenges of reporting on death and dying
- The ways media can shape and inform responses to death and dying
- Cultural engagement with and representations of deaths often positioned or perceived as especially 'difficult' or 'challenging' (suicide, migrant deaths)
- Representations of ageing as a 'problem' in ways that conflate ageing and death
- The representation of difficult choices around euthanasia and palliative care

At this stage, we have initial interest from two global publishers and will be submitting a full proposal once chapter abstracts have been collated. Authors will be contacted by 1 June to confirm whether their chapter has been selected and will be kept informed throughout the process.

300-word abstracts along with a brief biography of no more than 150 words should be sent to difficultdeadbook@gmail.com by 1 May 2021.

Please send any queries to difficultdeadbook@gmail.com

Paper Invitation: Special Issue “Working with Death: Psychosocial Risks and Protective Factors at Work among Funeral Industry Workers”

In the [International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health](#)

In this Special Issue, we invite authors to contribute with research that examines funeral operators' work conditions, with attention to risk and protective factors of wellbeing and of health at work. Papers investigating the role of compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress, compassion satisfaction, exhaustion, coping strategies (e.g., humor), stigma, and emotion management among operators of the funeral industry will be especially welcome.

Special Issue: Working with Death: Psychosocial Risks and Protective Factors at Work among Funeral Industry Workers

Deadline: 31 March 2021

Website: https://www.mdpi.com/journal/ijerph/special_issues/Working_with_Death

Postgraduate Bioethics Conference 2021 - call for abstracts

24th June 2021 - 25th June 2021. School of Law and Social Justice Building, University of Liverpool.

Deadline for submission of abstract: 23:59 28th February 2021

This conference will now take place virtually over two half days.

The University of Liverpool is excited to welcome delegates and presenters to the annual Postgraduate Bioethics Conference. The theme of PGBC 2021 is 'Voices and Values in Bioethics'.

Bioethical principles can provide a steer on the most contentious of issues, and we see bioethics being deployed in the courtroom, in clinical practice, in policy, in academic thinking, and in decision-making at the level of the individual. Our theme invites papers that discuss how bioethical principles are interpreted and applied in different settings and disciplines, and the conflict or coherence between interpretations.

For example:

- Why is value placed on certain principles over others?
- Whose voice is most prominent?
- How can voices that have traditionally been marginalised help to enrich our understanding of bioethics?
- What can the voices of bioethics learn from one another?

It also welcomes papers that use theories such as feminist theory, queer theory, and disability studies to disrupt traditional assumptions of bioethics, and provide a new voice on bioethical issue and values.

The conference welcomes applications from both postgraduate research students and postgraduate taught students to present a paper, poster, or take part in a soapbox debate.

For more information on abstract requirements and to submit an abstract, please visit:

<https://www.postgradbioethics.com/pgbc-2021>

Visit the [CDAS website](#) to view a full calendar of events

Contact us

Email: cdas@bath.ac.uk

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/centrefordeath

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