Individual paper presentations

200 years of talking to children about death – saving souls to saving minds: from exposure to protection

Maggie J Jackson

This paper looks at how the language used in children's books over the last 200 years has shifted from a focus of the need for exposure to death to protection from the very notion and also tracks how this is also seen in English Education Legisaltion since schooling became compulsory.

80 and 40 Years On – The Symbolism and Politics of Japan's August Losses

Christopher Hood

August in Japan sees the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the country's surrender, and the world's deadliest single plane crash, JAL123. This paper looks at the way that the events are remembered and the way in which politicians are involved in the events.

A closer look at regional differences in euthanasia practices in the Netherlands

Wieke Ligtenberg

This paper aims to gain insight in the differences between euthanasia practices in high-incidence regions and low-incidence regions, by looking at (potential differences in) a) patient characteristics; b) timelines and the process of euthanasia; c) the setting in which euthanasia takes place; and d) morally relevant themes.

"A note unsaid": Uncovering the phenomenon of silence associated with childhood death & dying

Sydney Campbell

The death of a child represents one of the worst human experiences possible. While millions of children and youth around the world die each year, experiences of childhood death and dying remain largely silenced. In this talk I will explore this "unspeakable" phenomenon.

'A Part of Me Died': Exploring Pet Loss and Grief in the Digital Sphere

Adriana Teodorescu

This study examines how pet loss is represented on social media, exploring grief expressions and the evolving cultural status of pets. It highlights social media's role in shaping mourning rituals, normalizing pet grief, and fostering artistic yet normative narratives about loss and human identity.

A Refuge for the Bad Death: The Politics of Class at a Conservation Cemetery in Rural New England

Sasha Kramer

This paper examines if a conservation cemetery in rural New England is spurring a new form of politicized mourning in the U.S., what the cemetery reveals about bereaved working-class families, and what it offers them in the wake of stigmatized losses.

Addressing the Educational Gap: The Need for Formal Death Education in Deathcare Professions

Mateus Eduardo Romão & Kate Woodthorpe

Deathcare practitioners' roles can impact their personal and professional quality of life, but they are often not trained to cope psychologically with their duties. This panel will discuss to what extent education might decrease the holistic impact of their professional activities.

Affective Liminality: Grief across political and ontological borders

Zohreh Bayatrizi

Grief and immigration are both liminal states, which one can learn to navigate but never completely transcend. This paper looks at how these two liminal states intersects among immigrants who are haunted by the politics of their homelands.

Algorithmic Afterlives: The Digital Dignity of the Dead on TikTok

Nilou Davoudi

This paper examines how AI-generated content depicting deceased individuals on TikTok raises ethical concerns about the digital dignity of the dead and the rights of their survivors. It explores how such content exposes new vulnerabilities, leading to novel privacy and accountability challenges.

"All That Modern Science Knows:" Embalming, Segregation, and the Politics of the Corpse in Mississippi, 1906-1930

Jennifer Ford

This paper will explore the politics of embalming in early twentieth century Mississippi, specifically investigating the impact of racial segregation upon resulting laws. It will also address the legacies of the early regulations upon the state's death culture, as well as their larger significance.

Ancestors, Comrades, and Individuals: The Politics of Commemoration in Contemporary Urban China

Huwymin Lucia Liu

This paper explains the politics of commemorating the dead in urban China. After China adopted a market economy, ordinary people in Shanghai rejected the state's promotion of personalized funerals. Instead, they preferred commemorating the dead as comrades and ancestors in the same ritual.

An Imaginary of Algorithmic Violence: The Story of Molly Russell in the UK Online Press, 2019-2024

Paul Benjamin Ord-Szymaniak

A thematic analysis of 298 online news articles published between 2019 and 2024 in which is narrated the "death-by-algorithm" of Molly Russell in 2017. A contribution is made to empirical literature on the socio-technical imaginary, and to the theorisation of algorithmic power.

Art as a catalyst for ethical reflection on death, postmortem procedures/practices and curation of human remains in museums

Halina Suwalowska

This article examines the role of art in addressing complex ethical issues related to postmortem procedures and human remains in museums. Through an exploration of interdisciplinary projects the article highlights how art can engage the public in dialogue about the ethical dimensions of death.

Aside the cemetery, a distinctive laboratory for public policies for ecological transition: Strasbourg city and metropolis as an example of gaps in the ecological transformation of a territory and its cemeteries

Marie Fruiquiere

Through the example of the City and Eurometropolis of Strasbourg (France), the paper aims to highlight stakes relating to the inclusion of cemeteries into a political project and its policies for the ecological transformation of the territory.

Authorship, Data and the Techno-Affective Contours of Digital Afterlife

Anu A Harju & Sade Kahra

This theoretical paper examines post-death data in the context of digital afterlife and asks what implications authorship, as a concept and an empirical category, has for politics of remembering and the techno-affective contours of digital afterlife.

Baggage for the Beyond: The significance and subtle politics of contemporary 'grave goods' in the UK

Jennifer Riley

Grave goods are a widespread, meaningful manifestation of contemporary funeral 'personalisation,' but they are also complex and contested. Drawing on emerging results from an ongoing UK-based study, this paper suggests grave goods are both reflections of people and polysemic political realities.

Being Deathworthy: The UK Government and Media's Role in Industrializing Black Death at Sea

Helidah Ogude-Chambert

This paper explores how Blackness was discursively and affectively constructed as "deathworthy," focusing on U.K. media and immigration policies during the European refugee crisis. It argues that these representations helped legitimize the UK and EU's imperial border regimes and Black deaths at sea.

Bereavement and Bad Theology: A Toxic Cocktail

Terri Daniel

This presentation examines how certain religious beliefs can complicate the mourning process. We will review current research to help clinicians identify toxic theologies, and explore therapeutic tools and healing practices to help grievings reframe fear-based cosmologies and disemowering images of the divine.

Biometrics in the Face of Death: The Changing Scopes of Facial Recognition and Dead Body Identification

Mareile Kaufmann

Facial Recognition Technologies are increasingly used for dead body management in war situations. This begs a fundamental question: how do bodies become subject to death when identified by FRTs? Three case studies give insight into how big tech solutions interfuse instances of living and dying.

Blue Death Studies: Theorising the Water-Corpse Interface

Kate Falconer

In this article, we theorise a blue death studies approach, which highlights possibilities for rethinking death as 'watery' and mobile rather than sedimentary and sedentary. We apply this theorisation to liquid and frozen deaths, underscoring the ir/retrievability of matter and meaning in death.

Border burners in Europe: The other-than-dead narratives

Yousra Sbaihi

I argue that the mobilization of Moroccan border burners' successful illegal migration journey through the Mediterranean retrieves a anterior necropolitical state of living that renders physical death less horror-inducing. Death is then related to social disenfranchisement and political repression.

Boundaries of Goodbye: Navigating Legislation and Practice in Crematoria
Anneminne Frère
This study explores how crematoria interpret and implement decrees governing cremation, focusing on the social and legal boundaries that shape the current cremation practices. While kinship norms have broadened, non-human relations remain excluded, exposing hierarchies in whose wishes are honored.

Caring for the Unclaimed: Migration and Post-mortem care in Turkey's Borderlands
Marlene Schäfers
This paper explores postmortem care practices at Turkey's largest unclaimed cemetery, where migrants who died crossing the Turkey-Iran border are buried. It examines how acts of care—by locals, migrants, and municipal workers—challenge the effects of border securitization and systemic abandonment.

Children: the missing people of Death Studies?
Renske Visser & Karin Murris
Research on children's perceptions of death and dying often appear absent in Death Studies. This paper critically examines the current literature and theories around children and death and highlights the importance of involving children's own ideas in future research

'Closure is for Cupboards': Troubling the Closure Mandate & Grief Aversion through Accidental Activism
Chris Bobel
Based on interviews with 70+ "accidental activists"—bereaved individuals who channel their pain into purpose-- I demonstrate how their activism not only prevents future tragedies, but also serves as a potent survival strategy that refuses closure of the grieving process.

Community Archaeology & Burial Landscapes in New Perlican, Newfoundland and Labrador

Robyn S. Lacy

Through community burial archaeology, this paper explores development of burial spaces within New Perlican, Newfoundland and Labrador, which has seen settler occupation for nearly 400 years. Working collaboratively with local heritage group, public archaeology steered the direction of the project.

Community Archaeology and Gravestone Preservation in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

Robyn S Lacy & Ian C Petty

This paper will discuss ongoing conservation efforts to preserve historic burial grounds in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, in collaboration between Black Cat Cemetery Preservation and a variety of heritage associations, municipalities, and parishes.

Comparative Study of Mortuary Work in Transnational Alevi and Sunni Muslim Funeral Practices: Mediating Identities and Power Dynamics in Vienna's Diverse Society

Ahmet Ekren

Drawing from a multi-sited comparative ethnographic study of the Alevi and Sunni Muslim funeral industries in Vienna, this project investigates the roles of funeral and mortuary operators as mediators between transnational Alevi and Sunni Muslim families and sovereignties at various scales.

Controlling the afterlife: state propaganda and a seer of the dead in socialist Hungary

Agnes Hesz

Through the analysis of a documentary film and the following media coverage about a popular seer mediating between the living and the dead, the paper shows how Hungary's socialist regime strove to reshape people's ideas about the afterlife and their relationship with the dead.

Dead Bodies' Agency and Women's Role in Subversion of Patriarchy: The Politics of Death in Contemporary Iran

Hajar Ghorbani

This paper explores how dead bodies, through death rituals, redistribute agency to Iranian women—historically marginalized by patriarchy—transforming them into agents of political and social change.

Death & dying in the queer family

Polly E Maxwell

This paper will discuss findings from two studies that explore key concepts and definitions of family at the end of life. It will detail an analysis of family categorisation in UK palliative and end of life policies, and primary data from a survey on LGBTQ+ family forms and care practices.

Death by (Data) Politics: County-Level Approaches to the Opioid Crisis in Upstate New York

Nilufer Akalin

This article highlights the importance of quality data in addressing the opioid epidemic. It examines how government failures in data collection on stigmatized populations hinder effective policy responses, forcing community-led interventions that are later co-opted by officials.

Death by Regulation for Nature's Funerary Advocates? The case of the German Green Death start up "MEINE ERDE"

Jana Paulina Lobe

Internationally, new disposal techniques are meeting a growing demand for sustainable burial options. In Germany, restrictive legislation hinders the introduction of innovative alternatives such as human composting. By examining the company MEINE ERDE, this paper asks: Can too much regulation kill?

Death in a Foreign Land: Turkish Exiles in the U.S. and Reimagining Sacred Time

Kim Shively

This paper examines how members of the Turkish Gulen Movement – many of whom are exiled from Turkey for political reasons and live in the United States and other countries – have created new interpretations of exile and new practices to deal with the prospect of death and burial in a foreign land.

Death in the Geriatrics Conference: Appreciating the Multiplicity of Death and Dying in Medical Research and Practice

Luke Alan Stalley

In this talk I craft an ethnographic patchwork of what death and dying are made to be in geriatric medical research and practice. I suggest that appreciating the normative messiness of this multiplicity offers a more care-ful scholarly orientation to medicine's fraught relationship with mortality.

Death of the Self: Grieving Past and Future in the Caring Present

Zhaoxi Zheng, Emma Kirby

This paper explores the loss of and grief over selfhood amongst informal carers. Findings from interviews with carers suggest caregiving is often at cost of the erasure of carers' past and future selves: a slow death resulted by biopolitical violence and institutional neglect of care.

Death on campus: a decolonial walk around the mcgill campus

Eyup Ozkan

This paper examines five sites at McGill University, contrasting visible colonial sculptures with unmarked Indigenous graves. Through themes of medium, chronology, and reaction, it critiques McGill's colonial legacy, revealing how death underscores the need for decolonization on campus land.

Decolonising and enabling anatomy education: Sociocultural determinants and psychosocial implications of cadaveric dissection in medical schools

Suhad Daher Nashif

This presentation explores how medical students' sociocultural backgrounds shape their cadaveric dissection experiences. Using ethnographic methods in UK medical schools, it examines psychological, spiritual, and professional impacts to promote equity and inclusion in anatomy education.

Decolonizing 'Awareness of dying': Experience from Bangladesh

Ilias Kamal Risat

This presentation explores "awareness of dying" in Bangladesh, contrasting family-centric caregiving with Western models emphasizing patient autonomy. Based on interviews and ethnography it advocates for culturally sensitive palliative care that honors diverse understandings of a "good death."

Decolonizing Death for Indigenous Communities

Katie Clary

This paper explores how state-recognized tribes confront colonial pasts in death traditions under US Law with Waccamaw Indian People of South Carolina as a case study. The Waccamaw are not federally recognize, so face challenges including an inability to practice traditional burial and death rites.

Deepfaked Dead - A Critical Analysis

Johanna Sumiala

This paper approaches digital afterlife from a perspective of deepfaked dead. With case study illustrations, the authors provide an analysis of the realisations and workings of deepfakes and their related digital afterlives and discuss them against the present-day synthetic media landscape.

Defining the places of burial: what now makes a cemetery a cemetery?

Julie Rugg

In reviewing 'What makes a cemetery a cemetery' (Rugg, 2000), this paper finds the need to expand the frame of site types. The paper also evidences the emergence of fuzziness and hybridity between site types, associated with characteristics of Bauman's 'liquid modernity'.

Designing for End of Life: Bridging the Personal, the Universal, and the Political

Galina Arbely

Design education on death confronts taboos and inequalities, reclaiming death as vital to life. It bridges personal and political dimensions, exposing inequities, amplifying voices, and fostering compassion. Design becomes a tool for equity and change in how we live, die, and remember.

Disposable Bodies: Migrant Deaths and the Politics of Exclusion

Lel Khalesimoghaddam Ghaen

This paper examines the neglect of migrant deaths at Europe's borders, exposing how EU border regimes absorb migrant deaths as sources of legitimation. It explores how unacknowledged deaths reinforce state power and perpetuate exclusionary notions of national identity.

Donkey hides, human lives: The politics of death in a cultural quest for youth

Tamlin Watson

Examining the donkey skin trade, we explore the complexities of what the politics of death may mean in socially stratified, culturally disparate societies. For those chasing status at any price, to the marginalised communities finding death commonplace, and for the donkeys with no agency to choose.

Don't Fear Nibowin: The Politics of Death in Anishinaabe Communities

Niiyokamigaabaw Deondre Smiles

This paper will speak on how the concept of death plays into Anishinaabe modes of governance and land relations. Rather than viewing death as the terminus of political life, I argue that a whole new set of political relations are unlocked by death.

Do we have a moral obligation to opt for eco-friendly forms of body disposal?
Sarah Carter-Walshaw
The environmental cost of common approaches to body disposal are greater than many people realise. With more eco-friendly post-death options becoming available, do we have a moral obligation to opt for these alternatives for ourselves or for others?

"Drawing Bridges": Sketching Out Ways to Extend Digital Death Methodologies in Human-Computer Interaction and Computer Science
Denise Lengyel, Gabriella Di Feola & Ylva Hård af Segerstad
In Digital Death, distinctly different research philosophies meet. Compared to Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Human-Computer Interaction and Computer Science are less accepting of lived-experience reports and lack adequate ethical policies. We reflect on this, sketching-out ways forward.

Dying away from home: Older adults' perspectives and practices of death and dying in the context of place transitions in China
Huiyuan Pang
The study explores how rural-urban resettlement influences older Chinese adults' perspectives and practices regarding death and dying. Despite living in a new urban setting, their home place continues to significantly shape the end-of-life experiences of these older migrants.

Dying for Reform: Funeral Funding in a Privatised System
Lucy Walton
Exploring the interplay between the political, social, and economic, this paper will demonstrate how the burden of funeral costs has shifted from the public to the private realm, creating an inequitable system where access to funeral services is determined by an individuals socio-demographic status.

"Economy Coffins" and the Contingent Ethics of Corpse Disposal

Chris Cusack

This paper explores so-called "economy coffins", focusing on the questions they raise regarding the economics and ethics of corpse disposal. It compares their use during the Great Irish Famine with their role within Habsburg emperor Joseph II's burial reforms, as well as how their use is remembered.

Effigy: On femicide and the nation

Ellen Marie O Sullivan

This paper explores the politics of femicide within the context of Ireland as a nation, focusing on femicide and the border between the North and the Republic.

Equality in death? Past and current claims for postmortem justice

Camille Collin

This research addresses inequalities in post-mortem treatment of marginalized groups. By examining historical and modern demands for dignified death practices, it offers a critical claim for equality in death.

Exit pursued by a bear: Paddington's polysemic political power as the 'new grim reaper'

Matthew Hilborn & Jennifer Riley

Paddington Bear's curious promotion to cosy contemporary Grim Reaper is profoundly political. This paper argues that his emblematic yet contentious embodiment of 'Britishness' exemplifies how death can provoke (re)negotiation of national identity in transnational, vernacular, 'memetic' culture.

Experiences with Death and Dying Among Academic Hospital Employees

Renske Kruizinga & Els van Wijngaarden

Radboudumc organized a "Week of Openness About Death" to address the topic of dealing with death. A survey-based study was conducted to explore hospital employees' experiences. Pre-liminary results show barriers in having conversations about death and respondents express the need for more support.

Exploring Ideas, Attitudes, and Understandings of the Afterlife Among Alternative Spiritual People in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Tina Ivnik

The presentation will explore how involvement in alternative spirituality has transformed the perspectives on the afterlife among spiritual people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Additionally, it will examine how that influenced their views on death, dying, and experiences of contact with the dead.

Exploring Social History Through the Lens of Death Announcements (1950-2009)

Murat Ergin

Obituaries can serve as a data source for examining societal patterns. This study examines close to 300,000 obituaries over a 60-year period to identify transitions regarding the symbolic manifestations of secularism and religiosity, focusing on hierarchies, personalization, and status symbolism.

From Archives to Emotions: XR and Art for Exploring Death and Grief in Cultural Heritage Institutions

Gabriella Di Feola & Ylva Hård af Segerstad

This paper explores the use of extended reality technologies in combination with arts-based methods and personal narratives as immersive tools for approaching and exploring grief and loss in a cultural heritage institution.

From bare life and necropolitics to a feminist care ethic: ageism in the COVID-19 pandemic and future directions

Bethany Simmonds

I discuss the life and death decisions related to the 'care' of older people in the UK, during decades of neoliberalism, Austerity, and the COVID-19 pandemic, then present the imperative to politically reframe care systems using feminist care ethics.

From Grief to Stewardship: Expanding Care Ethics Beyond the Personal

Kalin Pak

I explore the example of human composting as a reimagining of care as a practice that extends beyond the home, and its potential to create a relational network that connects human mourning to environmental care.

From life to rest: Jewish burial customs in Finland
Dora Pataricza
This paper presents the comprehensive rituals on the journey from life to rest in the Finnish Jewish community.

Gendered Pathways: Syrian women and the repatriation of the Dead across the Lebanon-Syria border
Foroogh Farhang
This paper traces the story of Asma, a displaced Syrian woman in Lebanon, who embarks on a cross-border journey to repatriate her deceased brother's body to their besieged Syrian hometown, to showcase political exile, illegal migration, and the informal economies that thrive in war-torn landscapes.

Geography of the post-genocide agency of the dead
Mirjam EAM Mencej
Based on field research, my presentation will discuss the agency of those killed in the genocide of the Muslim population in 1995 in relation to specific places in the post-war region of Srebrenica.

Grief at a distance - The role of agency and physical presence
Tram Thi-Bao Nguyen
This paper provides an examination of migrants' grief at distance during the pandemic and how the social and cultural context influence migrants' grief at a distance.

Grief Politics: COVID-19-related Loss and Collective Action in Brazil
Natashe Lemos Dekker
Brazil is one of the countries most heavily affected by Covid-19. Based on ethnographic fieldwork and in-depth interviews with people who lost relatives due to Covid-19 in Brazil, and who have become politically active as a result, this paper discusses how grief is transformed into political action.

Grief Squatting and Wreaking Havok in a Digital Safe-Haven for Bereaved Parents

Ylva Hard af Segerstad

This study examines how an impostor infiltrated a closed Facebook group for bereaved parents, exploring the impact of grief squatting and RIP trolling. It highlights the boundary work by moderators and members to restore the group as a vital support resource.

Grieving inside: the experience of supporting bereaved women during and after incarceration

Julia Spiti

Using a hermeneutical approach, this project seeks to deepen understanding of the experience of professionals and volunteers supporting bereaved women during and after incarceration, particularly when their grief stems from the death of someone significant outside of the prison context.

Hell Through a Child's Eyes: How Children Engage with and Are Affected by the Idea of Eternal Damnation

Zhaoxi Zheng & Martina Bottazzo

This paper presents a preliminary exploration of how children engage with the concept of Hell, the diverse impacts of exposure to Hell-related narratives on their development, and addresses the possible ethical implications of teaching such narratives to children.

Identifying multi-disciplinary research themes for palliative and end-of-life care from public engagement survey data

Erica Borgstrom & John macartney

A presentation showcasing five palliative and end-of-life care research areas identified for social science and humanities research using James Lind Alliance data.

"If we don't meet here again, we'll meet in the great beyond:" End of Life Care and Volunteerism in Canada

Melina A Economou

People with terminal illnesses can be described as living in "prognostic time," a period in which they negotiate complex medical care, grapple with their political and economic roles in society, and form intimate social bonds with hospice volunteers as they continue living while dying.

In the wake of a boat: The politics of mourning the 18th of April 2015 shipwreck

Giorgia Mirto

On April 18, 2015, a vessel shipwrecked between Libya and Italy, killing over 1,100 people. This paper analyzes the "translation" of its human and material remains—the stages of exhumation, naming, wake, and burial—revealing through their political lives how actors claimed ownership over mourning.

Indigenous Insiders and Anglo Outsiders in Australian Burial Disputes

Kate Falconer

This paper examines the ways in which Indigenous cultural claims are received by courts deciding burial disputes in Australia. In doing so, it inverts the privileged 'inside' and marginalised 'outside' dichotomy to explore how the politics of death can effect legal change.

Inequality in life leads to inequality in grief: findings from a study on urban Indigenous experiences of grief and bereavement

Audrey Rose Medwayosh

This paper looks at the political underpinnings that influence urban Indigenous grief's disenfranchisement.

Interdisciplinary Evaluation of the Law on Assisted Dying in Austria: Methods and Initial Insights of the multi-year Project

Klara Doppler & Julia Fischer

Presentation of the mixed-methods research design used to study the implementation of the new assisted suicide framework in Austria across all affected groups, including an introduction of preliminary results.

Intermediaries between the physical and spirit worlds: a study of the figure of the medium in an Australian Spiritualist group
Charlotte Tribouillois
In Spiritualist discourse, death is described as a passage from the physical world to the spirit world. As an intermediary between worlds, the medium bridges them by giving voice to the deceased and transcending the limits of social relationships. In Spiritualist mediumship, death fosters the reunion of worlds by extending planes of existence.

Interrogating the personal in religious funerals
Vikki Entwistle & Jennifer Riley
The 'personalisation' of funerals, emphasising individualisation and choice, is often seen as a secular phenomenon. This paper illustrates how funeral provision in diverse cultural and religious traditions can be 'personal' in ways that warrant more ethical and political attention.

"It feels like my mother": Experimentally-Induced After Death Experiences (ADEs)
Courtney Applewhite
This presentation introduces a novel approach to the study of experiences of presence of deceased loved ones, or after death experiences (ADEs). Using mixed methods from cognitive neuroscience and qualitative research, we discuss preliminary results and ethical considerations.

(In)visible Deathscapes: Cemeteries and Mass Graves in Post-War Prijedor, Bosnia-Herzegovina
Petra Hamer
The Municipality of Prijedor, in northwestern Bosnia-Herzegovina, is infamous for crimes committed between 1992 and 1995. War victims were buried in mass graves or graveyards and are now seen as political agents, their materiality and immateriality significantly influencing civil society.

Israel's Perpetual Burial Challenge – A Stakeholders' Perspective

Danna Unmani

Examining stakeholders' views on Israel's perpetual burial challenge in the present and their perception of an ideal future. This analysis is based on both integrating and contrasting interview outputs with policy legislation and other materials.

It's good to talk: The benefits of discussing funeral wishes in advance

Ruth Bickerton

Talking about funeral wishes in advance can help prevent organisers going into funeral debt. Knowing wishes gives 'permission' to the organiser to not necessarily make high-cost choices and also provides comfort in fulfilling wishes. These conversations need to be encouraged across society.

James Baldwin on Death Denial and White Supremacy

James K Rowe

Despite renewed interest in James Baldwin's writings on race, his focus on the role of death denial in shaping compensatory drives for supremacy has been largely overlooked. For Baldwin, addressing existential fear is crucial to effective anti-racist praxis.

Jane Eyre's Necropolitics

Jolene Zigarovich

While Jane Eyre seemingly ignores the origins of her inheritance and the violence and exploitation associated with it, Zigarovich argues that Bertha Mason triumphs in the end, her trauma manifested in a reversal of imperial violence.

Juggling Care and Commerce: Business and Care logics in the Dutch Funeral Industry

Martin Hoondert & Joost Verhoeven

The focus in this presentation is on funeral directing companies in relation to institutional logics. Based on semi-structured interviews with Dutch funeral directors, we discuss the relationships between the so-called business logic on the one hand, and the care logic on the other.

Killing the immortal Tree: Contrasting human and olive life and death temporalities to generate better landscape relations
Efe Cengiz
I critically examine how plans for making sustainable and climate resilient olive plantations disregard the unique characteristics of olives' vital temporalities. I show how the oscillatory lifecycle of olives, in comparison to the teleological human death, can inform better Land relations.

Lived experiences of Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD) among bereaved families in Quebec
Jean-Thomas Chouinard
After 10 years of legalized euthanasia in Quebec, new contexts for end-of-life rituals have emerged, reshaping socialization around death and grief. This study examines the experiences of bereaved loved ones, exploring how these rituals convey meaning and shape identity through personal narratives.

Living with the Dead: Hauntology, Ontology and the 'Politics' of Death
Salman Hussain
This paper ethnographically examines the lived experiences of death and grief in Pakistan and proposes a rethinking of the relationship between the dead and the living—conceiving both as existing within a shared ontological space or reality.

Meaningful Deathscapes: Worldview minority cemeteries in Finland (MeDea)
Auli Vähäkangas
The "Meaningful Deathscapes: Worldview minority cemeteries in Finland" (MeDea) project collaboratively studies the meanings that members and leaders of religious and non-religious worldview communities give to their own burial grounds.

Multispecies Mourning in Contemporary Everyday Aesthetic Practices

Nele Buyst

Looking at contemporary everyday aesthetic practices through the lens of ecological mourning can help to exemplify an ethics of care for the web of relationships we are part of.

Muskrats, Beavers, Crayfish: Politics of death in the management of invasive and protected species in Dutch waters

Sam van der Lugt

Why are some animals tolerated while others are killed? We compare how three differently classified species—muskrats, beavers, and crayfish—are managed in Dutch waters. We conclude that classification is a context-dependent phenomenon that shapes the politics of multi-species cohabitation and death.

Navigating NAGPRA: Politics of Repatriation and Native American Identity in North America

Sydney James

This paper will discuss the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), examining the impact of the Act on collaborations between archaeologists, museum professionals, and Indigenous communities in the U.S. It will also discuss and explore solutions to some of its challenges.

Necromobility: Necro/Sovereign Power and the Securitization of Dead Body Transportation and Forensic Autopsies in the Turkish-PKK Conflict

Erdost C. Akin

This article explores the politics of mobility of dead bodies, and forensic autopsies in the Turkish-PKK conflict. It examines the functions of necro/sovereign power in the 'pre-burial' stage, showing how it reduces the Kurdish Question to terrorism and (re)produces Kurdistan as an internal colony.

On Board with the Dead: Necropolitics and Civil Deathcare in the Mediterranean Border Death Regime

Sarah Spasiano

The article focuses on deathcare practices of Search and Rescue NGOs on board their ships. The array of practices include material hands-on care work, visibilization and complex decision-making. By analyzing disobediant care practices of dead bodies, necropolitical structures become perceptible.

On Friendship with Death in Buddhist Philosophy and Practice: A Decolonized Perspective

Janaka Jayawickrama

This presentation explores Buddhist views on death as part of life's impermanence, emphasizing mindfulness, compassion, and preparation. Meditation on death fosters spiritual growth, reduces attachment, and inspires a meaningful, compassionate life by embracing death as a natural process.

On Waves and Wakes: Navigating the Mediterranean Deathscape Towards More Democratic Futures

Mareike Gebhardt

Referring to M. Foucault and A. Mbembe, the paper introduces the notion of thalasso-power as a technology to govern 'migrant others' through water. With a postcolonial and feminist lens, it focuses on wake and waves to unpack both thalasso-power's necropolitics and sites of haunting resistance.

Online simulations of death education to attend children's disenfranchised grief

Rivi Frei-Landau

Childhood bereavement can profoundly affect child development, yet children's grief is often disenfranchised. The study explored the outcomes of integrating simulation-based death education, related to childhood bereavement, in an undergraduate course in the service of grief literacy.

Ordinary Necropolitics: Finding the State in Private Grief in Singapore
Ruth E Toulson
In Singapore, few laws govern the treatment of the dead, yet funeral rites and forms of grief come to reflect state policies on identity, language, and love. This paper explores how grief comes to align with state narratives, revealing the mechanisms for ordinary necropolitics.

Palliative sedation: a buffer against neoliberal thanatopolitics?
Jonathan Lambaerts
End-of-life treatments (such as euthanasia) have been recognised as forms of biopolitics. In response, they have been discredited. This leaves unanswered the question of how to deal with unbearable suffering. Could palliative sedation be an answer?

Participatory research in two Orthodox Christian cemeteries in Helsinki, Finland: A methodological perspective
Helena Kupari
This paper discusses methodological issues involved in using participatory methods to study the significance of cemeteries for Orthodox Christian minority communities. It addresses, for example, the social and cultural status and internal power hierarchies of the communities under study.

Perception of Individuals Living with Multiple Sclerosis on Medical Assistance in Dying
Loralee Herter & Mir Nabila Ashraf
This qualitative exploratory study aimed to better understand the perspectives of individuals living with multiple sclerosis (ILMS) regarding end-of-life planning, including medical assistance in dying (MAID).

Pet Online Eulogies: Giving Voice and Visibility to Animal Loss and Grief
Leanne Downing & Larissa Hjorth
This paper examines pet eulogies on social media, highlighting their role in challenging norms prioritizing human loss. It explores the political and cultural implications, revealing how digital platforms expand notions of grief, visibility, and who or what is considered mournable.

Philosophical animism, post/age wo/anderings and ontological tact

Karin Murris & Joanna Haynes

This paper demonstrates how philosophical animism brings Indigenous epistemologies and children as philosophers together. It proposes that conversations on death and dying are 'post/age'. Examples of disruptions of the adult/child binary that speak directly to the politics of death are included.

Placing Non-religious Death: Negotiating Secular Deathscapes in a Postsecular Society

Helena Krohn

The study explores the complex dynamics surrounding non-religious death practices and spaces within Finnish society. In a postsecular society where religious and secular elements coexist and intersect, I examine how non-religious deathscapes are produced, managed, and continuously negotiated.

Policy-Practice Gap in English End-of-Life Care: Insights from examining how the Ambitions framework has been used

Erica Borgstrom

Theorising the policy-practice gap in end-of-life care by seeing implementation as a multistage process of understanding, interpretation in relation to context and experience, and potential action.

Politics of death in Palestine: Martyrdom and ritualcide

Nina Gren

This paper investigates the politics of violent death in Palestine. Building on ethnographic fieldwork, I explore how Palestinians under Israeli occupation, manage violent politicised deaths when their possibilities to uphold both political practices and traditional rituals are limited.

Postmortem Life: Bodies, Thanobots and Feminist Immortality

Stacey Pitsillides

This paper explores cellular and digital bodies, introducing a new category between life and death: Postmortem Life. It breaks away from technology mimicking humanness into new materialist feminist biopolitical power to explores a lively ecology of bio-technological Postmortem Life.

Power, Consumerism, and the Commodification of the Deathcare Industry: A View From Historic New Orleans, Louisiana

Kerry L. Boutte

Using historical data, this paper explores notions of power bias as represented in the deathcare industry in New Orleans from the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, as well as, contemporary manifestations of socioeconomic power imbalances through cultural appropriation.

Pushing for Personhood: IVF Embryos and the Death Politics of US Antiabortion Movements

Risa Cromer

Embryos made through in vitro fertilization, frozen, and stored in tanks have become strategically enrolled in the US antiabortion movement's death politics focused on the radical goal of redefining legal personhood, which bear major consequences across sexual and reproductive healthcare.

Queerness and politics in end-of-life care

Panagiotis Pentaris

Gender and Sexually Diverse (GSD) older people experience political tensions in the frameworks of policy and practice in end-of-life care in England. This paper reports on such findings.

Recovering the Death from Elsewhere: Forced Disappearance and Popular Sanctification in Colombia

Lizeth Ortiz-Carreño

This paper examines the politics of death in Colombia by focusing on forced disappearance, the handling and recovery of victims' bodies, and popular sanctification practices in local cemeteries, as ways of making sense of life and resisting decades of internal armed conflict and structural violence.

Redesigning respectful disposal: Rethinking incineration of anatomical specimens through participatory design approaches

Mark Shtanov

To challenge the biopolitical regimes of defining respect towards human remains in clandestine and technological environments, the article uses participatory workshops with specialist focus groups to redesign the current approaches to the disposal of anatomical specimens at the UK waste incinerators.

Reforming Death Care Policy in the United States: Addressing funeral poverty and advancing environmentally conscientious deathcare
Philip R Olson
Radical reform of U.S. public death care policy is required to address two major problems: funeral poverty and the need to increase and track the use of environmentally conscientious disposition methods. The political bases of three proposed policy revisions are reviewed, interpreted and compared.

Regional differences in attitudes towards end-of-life care for people with dementia in the Netherlands
Janieke Bruin
This paper focusses on end-of-life care (including euthanasia) for people with dementia in the Netherlands. It aims to gain insights into 1) existing attitudes towards and-of-life care for people with dementia in the Netherlands and 2) regional differences in these attitudes.

Relatively represented. Analyzing family considerations in the politics of dying
Julia Fischer & Klara Doppler
Shedding light onto the politics of dying, our qualitative study revealed that family members of patients lack adequate political representation - which leads to policies that do not account for the real-world implications of end-of-life care.

Resilient complexity: Moral experiences of seriously ill young people in the United States
Andrea St.Hilaire
By viewing pediatric palliative care in the United States through the lens of a complex adaptive system, the relational intricacy of moral experiences of seriously ill young people can be better appreciated. The insights can help providers to further support ill young people and foster resilience.

Rethinking Refusal: Sudden Death as a Necropolitical Event
Tanya Zivkovic
This paper considers the social and political contexts of untimely death and draws on theoretical framings of necropolitics to rethink how and why families refuse organ donation.

Reversing a vanishing: using creative arts to counter the mid-century mandated forgetting of stillbirth

Sarah Clement

This autoethnographic paper draws on postmemory theory to explore how creative arts (poetry, fiction, and visual art) can belatedly commemorate the 'vanished' stillborn babies never seen by their parents and buried in unknown unmarked graves during the mid-twentieth-century in the UK and elsewhere..

Revisionism and Social Forgetting: Mass Death from the 1918 Influenza to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Paige Gavin

How does the United States memorialize mass death due to disease? This paper will examine the historical, political, and social patterns of past disease events in parallel with the COVID-19 pandemic through the lens of revisionism and social forgetting.

Rituals for whom? Distinguishing between Mental and Physical Illness Ritual Behaviour in Euthanasia

Iline Ceelen

People in the Netherlands seeking euthanasia for mental illness and those with physical diagnoses exhibit distinct end-of-life rituals. One involves elaborate planning to ease loved ones' burdens and justify the decision, while the other focuses on personal processes of dying without explanation.

Small Politics in the 'Death Class' – Enquiring about death in a primary school classroom

Inka Laisi

This paper offers a preliminary analysis of a 'Death Class' in which Finnish children's ideas about death and dying were examined.

Supraconfessional inter-municipal cemeteries: A new government initiative in multicultural Luxembourg

Sonja Kmec

We present preliminary results of a study launched by the Luxembourg Home Office in 2024 into the feasibility of supraconfessional cemeteries. It builds on findings and best practices identified by the internationally comparative HERA project "Cemeteries & Crematoria as Public Spaces of Belonging".

Systemic Neglect for People Experiencing Homelessness with Life-Limiting Illnesses: Explicating Equity-Focused Palliative and End-of-Life Care from the Perspectives of Service Recipients and Providers

Courtney R. Petruik

I examine the "politics of death" through an equity lens for people experiencing homelessness with life-limiting illnesses. By interviewing this group and their providers, we highlight systemic neglect and actionable insights for providers and policymakers to support equitable care for this group.

"Teen sluts don't grieve": how the politics of abortion healthcare shapes the bereavement experience across the lifespan following adolescent perinatal death

Caroline Lloyd

The findings from my research with women who had experienced an adolescent perinatal death revealed themes of political/societal stigmatisation from procuring a termination after these events, and resultant disenfranchised grief across the lifespan.

The Affect of Haunting: Gender, Industrial Work, and Postindustrial Memory in Taiwan

Anru Lee

Through the story of 25 unwed factory women who died in a ferry incident in 1973, I interrogate how the affect associated with an industrial structure of feeling is mobilized to create subjects and practices commensurable with capital accumulation in Taiwan's current postindustrial economy.

The Double-Faced Nature of Digital Solidarity in Death: Ecuadorian stories of repatriation and loss

Christien Klaufus

This paper addresses the politics of transnational deathcare, particularly in terms of community solidarity, by unraveling how digital platforms and social media are utilized for grassroots support in situations of remote death of transnational migrants, based on Ecuadorian case-studies.

The everyday politics of chatting with the dead

Eva Nieto McAvoy & Bethan Jones

We present findings from our research on deathbots - conversational bots or avatars programmed from digital data of a dead person. We interrogate the everyday politics of grieving via algorithmic systems and the ethics of the digital afterlife industries and platforms offering these services.

The (future) politics of immortality: Societal tensions in the futures of the postmortal society

Joshua Hurtado Hurtado

This paper explores the politics of different futures of immortality, from transhumanism to ecological immortality. Methodologically, it uses concept art to elicit ideas from experts in the social and political sciences. It finds that inequalities and polarisation are important concerns for experts.

The Governance of Migrant Deaths at Europe's Borders, the Case of Afghan Refugees

Lel Khalesimoghaddam Ghaen

This research investigates the mechanisms behind the invisibility of Afghan refugee deaths and how they navigate erasure and memory through public mourning, art, and digital memorials. It explores the politicization of death in displacement, reclaiming dignity amid systemic marginalization.d

The Illusion of Immortality and its political consequences

Kate Woodthorpe

Advances in healthcare have meant that in affluent countries around the world people are living longer than ever before. A lack of proximity to death has arguably enabled political disengagement. This paper asks what the consequences of this are, for both people and the planet.

The Impact of Political Change in 1989 on Dealing with Death in Emergency Medical Services in the Czech Republic

Olga Nesporova

The paper reveals the main changes in terms of dealing with death that have emerged in line with the transformation of emergency medical services based on the political change from socialism to democracy (1989) in the Czech Republic.

The Impact of the Concession of Cemeteries in São Paulo, Brazil, to the Private Sector: Reflections from an Ethnographic Study at São Pedro Cemetery

Aline Silva Santos & Vitor Augusto de Moraes Murro

Drawing on ethnographic research conducted in a cemetery in 2024, this study aims to examine the process of transferring the management of public cemeteries in the metropolis of São Paulo, Brazil, to the private sector.

The Interactive Personality Constructs of the Dead and Their Ethical Hazards

Adam J Buben

New technologies rarely announce the ways they threaten the established values and practices. This philosophical paper explores ethical and regulatory worries about existing and possible future applications of emerging technology referred to as "Interactive Personality Constructs of the Dead".

The Necropolitical Landscape of COVID Misinformation: The Shifting Landscape of Public Health Authority in the United States
Avery Nennmann
In the United States, due to medical misinformation and mistrust, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted significant changes to public health. What are the results when the state determines–or diminishes–death's causes and consequences and what communities are left to mourn?

The Politics of Affective Witnessing of Instagram's grief influencer
Larissa Hjorth & Katrin Gerber
This paper explores how Instagram influencers navigate mourning politics, creating affective witnessing that blurs the line between mourner and observer. Through hashtags, online etiquette, and parasocial grief, it examines how grief literacy is shaped by platform affordances and cultural practices.

The Politics of Death Doulas: The Rise of the Alternative Death Movement in the US and Its Impact on the Death Industry
Patricia A Jauchler
This paper examines the challenges faced by US End-of-Life (Death) Doulas and other alternative deathcare workers from the funeral industry and the modern medical establishment, with special focus on current Issues, attitudes, and legislation impacting the quality of death in the United States.

The Politics of Death in Romanian Civic Protests: Navigating Collective Grief amidst Ongoing Crises
Adela Toplean
This paper analyzes the impact of death on Romanian civic protests. It discusses the role of collective grief, the frustrations stemming from recent crises, and how these factors intertwine to shape public demands for accountability, change and moral solidarity.

The Politics of Deathbots: Ethical and Social Implications of AI in Digital Legacy-Making

Katrin Gerber & Larissa Hjorth

This paper investigates the ethical and political dimensions of AI-powered chatbots that respond like a deceased loved one. Addressing data ownership, consent, commercialisation, and socio-economic inequities, it examines how these tools reshape grief, memory, and power in contemporary society.

The politics of embodied expression at funerals

Rosalie Kuyvenhoven

UK funeral practices, rooted in religious traditions, often exclude dance due to historical associations with impropriety and potential challenges to political order. Yet, as illustrated by a Pilates teacher's funeral, expressive movement could deepen grief expression, renewal and community bonding.

The Politics of Law and Death: Contested Funerals as Sites of Struggle

Heather Conway & Cheryl Lawther

Contested funerals are riven by ingrained family politics, partly because funerals speak to larger social issues beyond dealing with the dead. This paper bridges the gap between private law and transitional justice in resolving these disputes and dealing with contested pasts.

The politics of law and death: purpose, reform and medico-legal death investigation

Imogen Jones

Evaluation of the investigation of contentious death in the UK has been dominated by the themes of inconsistency, limited resources and ineffective leadership at judicial and political levels. This offers a reform agenda based on a critical appraisal of the purpose of death investigation.

The politics of lonely funerals
N. Sally Raudon
When someone dies alone, who looks after them? This comparative UK-US study examines what social gap might exist between next of kin and the state at the end of life, to illuminate new aspects of what the social looks like if we start from death.

The politics of non-human animal death in Poland: Between the utilization of dead bodies and pet care
Lucja Lange
I emphasize in the paper the importance of allowing caregivers to be buried with their pets. Therefore, we need a new kind of legislation that grants us the right to bury non-human animals in regular cemeteries, so that, in time, we can be united with them.

The Politics of Sound and the Funeral of an American President
Deborah L Jaramillo
Bringing together death studies and radio studies, this paper examines U.S. radio stations' responses to President Harding's death in 1923. In covering their first presidential death and funeral, broadcasters reconciled sound's potential collision course with respect for authority and good taste.

The politics of the law of death, burial and inheritance for Indigenous people in Australia
Prue Vines
Australian common law completely ignored the 'other' law of Indigenous people in relation to non-criminal matters for 200 years. Only now have we begun to recognise and use customary law in relation to death, burial and succession., but significant problems still remain.

The Posthuman Politics of Death in Videogames
Poppy Wilde
This paper suggests that critical posthumanism offers an alternative politics of death by situating the human in more rhizomatic relations. It utilises videogames about death, dying, and grief to demonstrate these wider ethical stances that move beyond anthropocentrism and individualism.

The Room Next Door: Pedro Almodóvar and the Cinematic Reimagining of Non-Normative Death: Queerness, Gender, Privilege, and Representation of Death in a Post-Pandemic Landscape
Mateo Sancho Cardiel
This paper explores Pedro Almodóvar's *The Room Next Door* (2024) as a portrayal of non-normative death through cinematic influences and social science theories. It examines how Almodóvar reimagines dying as a vital experience, engaging with themes of queerness, gender, privilege, and social taboos.

The socio-political life of dead bodies in war: How international law engages with the social and political existence of human corpses
Welmoet Wels
The bodies of the dead of war are of individual importance to families and societal cohesion. Yet as visible products of warfare, bodies are part of a politization process. International law protects the bodies of the dead, while also creating space for this socio-political existence of the dead.

The Work of The Living: a care-ethical rereading of The Work of The Dead
Katrien Schaubroeck
Critically engaging with Thomas Lacqueur and invoking insights on care by Val Plumwood and Yuriko Saito I will interpret Diogenes' request to throw his dead body over the city walls for the animals to devour, as an expression of care rather than carelessness.

"This pandemic takes away from us the right to grief": political neglect incidence on covid-19 bereaved families
Gislaine Leoncio Motti
In Brazil, COVID-19 bereaved families experience disenfranchised grief due to denialist attitudes of political authorities regarding the pandemic. Political dimensions of grief must be considered, particularly in the context of disasters and large-scale epidemics, to develop more effective policies.

Thresholds of perinatal personhood and their effects on families' disposal choices after pregnancy loss and ending in England

Aimee Middlemiss

Choices around the disposal of foetal or babies' bodies after pregnancy loss and ending in England are limited by the reproductive governance of perinatal personhood enacted through biomedical and legal institutions.

Timing the Useful and Meaningful Death: New Technologies for Heart Transplantation

Joel Ferrall

This paper examines the ethical, political, and social dimensions of a novel technique in heart transplantation to increase the supply of hearts. Through anthropological analysis, I investigate this technology as it contests the timing of death and creates meaning in a tragedy for donor families.

To Dress the Corpse Like a Body: Controlling and Perfecting the Dead Body. A Brief Colombian Perspective

Lucia Hernández

In reinstating their identity, embalmers impede the marginalization and de-socialization of the corpse by meeting the expectations of capital production in accumulating value through investing time, money, and attention in actions like postmortem surgery, dressing, styling, and grooming.

Traditional Death Vs McDeath: Towards an Understanding of transformation of death rituals in Varanasi

Bhavya Singh

This paper examines the transformation of death rituals in Varanasi, India, focusing on the contrast between traditional practices and the commercialization of death in the 21st century. It explores the impact and politics of globalization, tourism, and market forces on the present society in India.

Tribal-Centered Deathcare: Overcoming a Western Death System towards a Land-Informed Future

Rye Purvis

Tribal-Centered Deathcare explores from the ground up what it would take for Tribal communities in the US to build, foster, and maintain frameworks in the care of our loved ones at the end of the life cycle. This includes centering land-informed practices and frameworks.

Understanding Tiredness of Life (ToL): Healthcare Practitioners' Insights into Supporting Nursing Home Residents struggling with ToL

Hannah Thys

This study explores healthcare practitioners' (HCPs) experiences with tiredness of life (ToL) in nursing home residents. Interviews with 32 HCPs reveal varied interpretations and care approaches, with physicians often linking ToL to a death wish, reflecting the complexity of this phenomenon.

'Unknown woman': the (in)visibility of Victorian women in Southern Cemetery, Manchester

Emma Liggins

This paper explores the (in)visibility of dead Victorian women in Southern Cemetery, Manchester, UK (a multi-denominational burial-ground opened in 1879). Through an analysis of headstones and burial records, it examines the ways in which women's lives were memorialised and often half-erased.

Unnoticed dying: intersection of political will, social norms and individual choice

Glenys Caswell

People regularly die unnoticed. People living solitary lives, people experiencing homelessness, people moving between countries. The way in which they die is impacted by political decisions. This paper uses a case study approach to explore some of the issues involved when someone dies unnoticed.

UNTOLD: Unraveling cultural historical Dimensions of contemporary experiences of Tiredness Of Life
Stefanie Meul
The historical component of the interdisciplinary UNTOLD project zooms in on the contemporary experiences of nursing home residents suffering from tiredness of life and their caregivers, and aims to provide cultural-historical understandings of these experiences.

UNTOLD: Unraveling the experience of tiredness of life in nursing home residents
Elisa Van Wiele & Jessie Dezutter
The experience of tiredness of life in nursing home residents can be described as deep suffering characterized by a disconnection from life, a threatened sense of self and several loss experiences, such as a loss of mattering and a loss of hope for the future.

UNTIL UNTOLD: What is tiredness of life?
Jessie Dezutter
The presentation provides an introduction to the field of tiredness of life and aims to discuss how completed life, tiredness of life, and death wishes might be positioned relative to each other in a field where empirical data is still limited.

Using a Critical Lens to Examine Social Inequities in Current Research on Families' Child Bereavement Experiences
Meridith C. Burles
Social inequities have gone unexplored in the context of families' child bereavement experiences due to serious illness. We critically examine existing research to understand the state of knowledge and gaps that can be addressed through intersectional approaches in practice and future research.

Victims and victories: sculpture as carrier of ideology

David Lillington

A critical look at Modern and especially Contemporary sculpture and the ideas and arguments around it, in their relation to, and embeddedness in, the worlds of politics and of social ideas about mortality. In particular – monuments and memorials, and the work of the dead in their domain.

Virtual Simulation for Emotional Safety: Navigating End-of-Life Care in the ICU

Louise Chartrand

A virtual simulation designed to teach emotional safety in ICU end-of-life care, emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration among healthcare professionals. This tool helps build emotional resilience, improve communication, and navigate ethical challenges in a safe learning environment.

When is a river dead? Legal personhood for natural entities

Frans-Willem Korsten

The question I pose is when such natural legal persons, who were granted rights to protect them, can declared to be dead. Yet since natural entities have been granted legal rights and personhood, death appears to be of the essence. I argue a river, a region, a mountain can never declare to be dead.

Where Do Animal Bodies Go? Cultural and Legal Perspectives on the Death of Companion Animals

Camilla Tumidei

Through ethnographic research, this presentation examines current norms regulating the treatment of animal bodies and how these regulations create a cultural space that fosters diverse funerary practices and acknowledges animals as meaningful beings.

Where we live is how we die: regional differences in the incidence of euthanasia in the Netherlands

Theo Boer

This paper aims to gain insights in regional differences in the incidence of euthanasia in the Netherlands

Wildlife Among the Remains – Death Positivity and the Environment in Burial Grounds

Anna Wilde

This paper examines environmental work and activism in burial grounds and asks how death positivity has contributed to changes in caring both for how we bury our dead, and the places in which they are interred.

Roundtables

Care for unclaimed, unexpected, and abandoned dead in cities and border zones
Kristien Krause & Maria Hagan
Unclaimed, unexpected, and abandoned dead in cities and border zones mobilize support from the living. In two roundtables, we invite researchers and practitioners who concern themselves with those who die alone and/or out of place to exchange insights about how we may care for the dying, and unclaimed and abandoned dead. The first round will address practices relating to unclaimed dead in cities: aging populations, increases in single person households, social isolation and the increase of contactless socialities, mean that more people are dying alone in their homes. The second round will zoom in on cases of death in border zones: reinforced policing has exacerbated the lethality of borders, as emphasized by rising numbers of people who attempt to cross borders losing their lives in opaque border landscapes including forests, mountains, rivers and seas.

Enacting and encouraging respect for the dead in work with human remains: a conversation for cross-sectoral learning
Vikki A Entwistle, Caroline Phelan & Abi Pattenden
This roundtable brings together practitioners who work with the bodies of the dead in different professional contexts to discuss how they enact and encourage respect for the dead. It invites reflection on the challenges of ensuring respect given a plurality of beliefs and cultural norms relating to death and the various social purposes of their work. Short opener presentations will be followed by a facilitated discussion of common themes and scope to learn across differences.

Legal Frameworks for Death Practices: Roundtable discussion in response to the new Dutch 'Law on Disposal of Bodies of Deceased Persons'

Martin Hoondert & Brenda Mathijssen

Legal frameworks are available for the dying process, death and disposal of the corpse. In the Netherlands, disposal is regulated in the *Wet op de Lijkbezorging* from 1991. Right now, a new law is being drafted. There are many issues that have emerged in the process of drafting a new law. In this roundtable, we will discuss several of these issues with experts in the funerary industry, health care providers, legal experts, philosophers, policymakers , and death studies scholars.

Politics of Ecological Loss and Grief

Hans Alma, Evanne Nowak & Stephan Huijboom

We will engage with the audience giving input in four short presentations. We will start with a project on the Veluwe as a case study, in which ecological losses are highly politicized within a polarized political landscape. Furthermore, we will reflect on the politics of waste and on the role of love and consolation in coming to transformative change. We will integrate these elements in a reflection on cultural imaginaries that influence our politics of ecological loss and grief.

Politics of necrowaste

Mark Shtanov, Philip Olson, Daniel Robins, Georgina Robinson

Necrowaste has gained sufficient scholarly attention to merit its own intellectual forum. The roundtable will offer attendees an opportunity to discuss necrowaste as a lens for examining the political actors, practices, matters, and methods that shape final dispositions and their effect. The discussion will revolve around political actors (e.g., institutions, laws, regulations, technologies, humans, more-than-humans, and cultural norms) that shape how people define and live with necrowaste.

Silenced Losses: Interdisciplinary perspectives on the politics of Disenfranchised Grief
Korie Leigh & Linde van Schuppen
Political instability, systemic violence, and marginalization leads to disenfranchised grief that has no space in mainstream society, resulting in silent and often stigmatized experiences of loss. Drawing from global insights, topics of abortion specifically termination for medical reasons, the dismantling of indigenous languages and cultures, and biosocial losses entangled in ecological crisis will be examined from a holistic thanatological perspective.

The changing faces of immortality
Marlene Schäfers, Hanan De Sain, Sally Raudon, Ida Hansen & Els Van Wijngaarden
This roundtable invites discussion on evolving aspirations for immortality amid ecological crises and technological advances. It explores diverse desires for post-mortem endurance, ranging from subaltern struggles for collective survival to a commercialized afterlife industry. How can we make sense of such novel imaginations of immortality, where mastery over death is both desired and elusive?

The Decolonisation of Death Studies
Panagiotis Pentaris & Hajar Ghorbati
Death studies/thanatology tends to be shaped by Western views, conforming identities, specific disciplines, and the English language. These are limitations that pose concerns in the applicability of knowledge in death studies. This roundtable will facilitate a debate/discussion about the colonization of death studies and the need for a decolonized approach to research and knowledge, drawing on the forthcoming volume "The Decolonisation of Death Studies" by Routledge.

The Politics of Contemporary Death Rituals in Europe

Brenda Mathijssen, Ida Høeg, Martin Hoondert & Yvon Van der Pijl

This roundtable introduces the forthcoming *Handbook on Contemporary Death Rituals in Europe*, a project featuring contributions from over 40 scholars across the humanities and social sciences. Through 35 ethnographic case studies, the handbook examines how death rituals in 21st-century Europe are transformed in response to social, cultural, and political changes. It explores their creative reconfiguration, individualization, adaptation in migration contexts, and intersections with traditions.

Workshops

Art-Research Collaborations: Fostering Public Engagement with Death and Dying

Yvon van der Pijl & Janieke Bruin-Mollenhorst

This workshop examines how art-research collaborations, including interactive theater and performance art, can engage the public with critical issues in death and dying—from ethical end-of-life dilemmas like euthanasia in dementia to the complexities of ecological grief and mass extinction. Using the World Café method, participants will explore how these collaborations can deepen public understanding and foster new dialogues around these complex, often politicized topics.

Climate change as the work of mourning: How does loss of ecosystem health relate to existential health?

Hans Alma & Evanne Nowak

In the workshop, it will be explored how ecological mourning holds potential for expanding climate change discourse in politically and ethically productive ways, through a recognition of shared vulnerability. Using the methodology of contemplative dialogue it will be explored how the loss of ecosystem health impacts our existential and spiritual health. This will offer the participants an experience of contemplation and collective mourning with potentially transformative power.

Do You See What You/I See? Collective 'Slow Looking' at the Politics of Death in Art

Tanya Walker

We will use 'slow looking' observation strategies (Tishman, 2018) to examine artworks created in response to losses precipitated or exacerbated by the actions of those with political power. Collectively, we will uncover the insights that diverse disciplinary, experiential, and cultural perspectives bring to our own. Both scholars and practitioners are encouraged to participate; no prior knowledge of art is required, just an openness to exploring your presuppositions in conversation with others.

Exploring death and dying through a community of philosophical enquiry: thinking with Shaun Tan's The Singing Bones
Joanna E Haynes & Karin S Murris
In this workshop, participants will be introduced to the practice of community of philosophical enquiry, as a democratic way to investigate notions of death and dying, through questioning. Artist Shaun Tan's The Singing Bones (2015) provides a starting point for enquiry. During the workshop, participants will think together and create questions that are provoked through engagement with images and text selected from Tan's collection. The review will discuss the political nature of the process.

Pet or Pest? Exploring death and frames of non-humans
Maite van Gerwen & Mariske Westendorp
To reveal the complex ethical distinctions in how we judge which animals deserve to live or die, this workshop examines attitudes toward rats – as either pests or pets. Together we experience how framing influences perceptions of rats' "killability," exposing broader hierarchies that determine whose lives are valued or dismissed.

The Researcher's Role in the Politics of Death: A Workshop on Methodology, Self-Reflexivity, and Epistemic (In-)Justice
Gaudenz Metzer & Eva Soom Ammann
This workshop fosters a self-reflexive dialogue on how researchers and their methods shape knowledge about dying and death, influencing not only what is known about the subject but also who contributes to this knowledge. We examine how research traditions and agendas create both knowledge and exclusions, inviting participants to critically assess their own research approaches and to collaboratively envision more inclusive, equitable methodologies and approaches in end-of-life and death research.

What is the meaning of ambivalence and hesitation in end-of-life choices?

Marte Fleur Antonides, Carolien van Leussen, Thessa Thölking & Els van Wijngaarden

Currently, (healthcare) policy has a strong push towards (anticipated) decision-making regarding the end-of-life, originating from ideals of controllability and autonomy. The complexity of existential end-of-life choices is easily overlooked in these decision-making processes, neglecting the presence of ambivalence and hesitation. In this workshop, we want to explore the meaning of ambivalence and hesitation in end-of-life choices based on four cases from different end-of-life contexts.