




the future is  
 uncertain  
but the end   
is  always  
near

## Call for Papers: Death Futures

Image courtesy of the death positive libraries

### The 6<sup>th</sup> International Symposium of the Death Online / Research Network

Newcastle Upon Tyne, United Kingdom, May 31<sup>st</sup>– June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

Digital media are integral to death, grief and memory, from personal illness blogs and live-streamed funerals to virtual memorials, cultural and artistic representations of death online and explorations of digital afterlives. Studying 'death online' involves attention to cultural change, identity performances, social bonding, legal matters, cross-media explorations, design innovations, artistic practices, business opportunities and more.

DORS#6 will take place at Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom. The symposium will provide opportunities for the discussion of ongoing and new orientations in the academic and interdisciplinary field of death online. The meeting will explore **Death Futures** in relation to Death Online research and practice. We warmly welcome new members to the network as well as old friends.

The future of death is entangled in uncertainty with technologies and human nature shifting in ways that are only just becoming apparent to us. Our legacies are now blended sites of on- and offline identities that come with questions of privacy, ownership and control, continuously being redefined both socially and legally. Fields of medical and genetic research offer us dreams of immortality while ecological concerns and cultural shifts are driving us towards new forms of dispersing human bodies at the end of life. Design and emerging technologies are at the forefront of these futures, driving forward developments and supporting rich imaginations and media representations of what the future of death might hold for societies.

### Keynotes

Dr Carla Sofka is a Professor of Social Work and thanatechnologist at Siena College in Loudonville (New York)

Dr Xavier Aldana Reyes is a Reader in English Literature and Film at Manchester Metropolitan University

Professor Larissa Hjorth is a digital ethnographer and socially-engaged artist in the School of Media & Communication, RMIT University, Melbourne.

### Themes and perspectives

We invite abstracts for oral presentations and practice research submissions of new, recently completed, or ongoing research, and/or new ideas relating to Death Futures.

We welcome presentations that explore how traditional and innovative research practices expand our understanding of the current and future trends in death online, from a variety of disciplines and perspectives. The abstracts can expand on the symposium theme in relation to any of the following:

- Narratives on/of digitally-mediated dying
- Digitally mediated grieving and memorialising

- Digital resistance to memorialisation
- Digital afterlife, post-mortem identity and digital legacy
- Death and technology in genre fiction, including science fiction
- Cultural explorations of digital afterlives
- Digital mediation of war and conflict
- Feminist and queer methods for death online
- Marginalised representations of death online
- Technological communications of race and death
- Technological developments in the death care industry
- Digital immortality, transhuman and the posthuman
- Theorising online life and death
- Ethical challenges for studying death online
- Artistic practices responding to death online

The symposium will host a special workshop for participating postgraduate students and early career researchers. We particularly welcome submissions from these groups. All submissions will be peer-reviewed, and we envisage publication of selected full papers in a special issue of an academic journal as well as a collection of writing from the symposium in an open-access online platform.

### **Important information**

Submission format:

300 word abstract (incl. title, excl. biography) for oral presentations\*

200 word artist/ designer/ film maker statement + technical requirements (incl. up to five images of the work or link to website/ film, excl. biography) for practice research submissions

3 – 4 abstracts 200 words each (incl. title, excl. biography) for Panel presentations\*\*

\*Video presentations with live Q&A will be accepted for participants who are unable to attend physically.

\*\*Please note we are unlikely to accept more than two presentation submissions per delegate.

**Submission deadline: November 30th, 2022**

**Submission feedback: January 20th, 2023**

Fees are expected to be between £120 - £150 depending on general price developments in Europe. A lower PGR rate will also be announced.

All submissions and enquiries should be submitted to Dr Stacey Pitsillides: [stacey.pitsillides@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:stacey.pitsillides@northumbria.ac.uk) marked "DORS#6" in the subject field.

Abstracts and Statements should be in Word format. Please include a separate attachment with full contact info (author name, institutional affiliation and position, email address) in the submission. Submissions will be anonymised by the organisers before review.

