



Australian Death Studies Society

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 24th February, 10am AEDT

Via zoom

Please note that, per s 29(2) of the Constitution of the Australian Death Studies Society, the 2020/21 AGM was held within 18 months after the incorporation of the ADSS, rather than within five months of the end of the 2020/21 financial year as will be required for all future AGMs.

Present: Hannah Gould, Kate Falconer, Tamara Kohn, Sharon Greenfield, Michael Arnold, Bjørn Nansen, Romain Fathi, Marc Trabsky, Susan Hemer, Qikai Zhou, Lena Rowe, Teya Griff

1. Acknowledgement of Country

2. **Apologies:** Racheal Harris, Stephen Muller, Pia Interlandi

3. Annual Report on the Activities of the Society

Hannah Gould (President) spoke to the key points coming out of the Society's Annual Report. Since its formation in 2020 and incorporation in early 2021, the ADSS has established a quarterly seminar series, three annual student prizes (for best student paper, best dissertation, and best creative work), and an annual lecture.

There were no questions or comments.

4. ADSS Financial Statements for 2020-21

Kate Falconer (Secretary, acting Treasurer) spoke to the ADSS Financial Statement. The Society is small and has very few overheads. Its most significant expenditure relates to the hosting and administration of the ADSS website.

There were no questions or comments.

5. Membership Fees

Members confirmed the ADSS annual membership fees (\$50/year waged, and \$20/year unwaged).

6. Presentation of the ADSS Student Prizes

Hannah Gould presented the annual ADSS Student Prizes.

Dissertation Prize: awarded to Dr Stephen Muller for their dissertation titled "OH, EARLY VANISHED FROM A PARENTS EYE': 'Childness' and child memorialisation in the South Australian cemetery, 1836-2018 CE", submitted to Flinders University.

This submission should be awarded to Stephen Muller. He has clearly done a very interesting PhD thesis on child death and material representations of this relationship of loss in a cemetery context. The thesis develops the original innovative concept of childness to nuance and go beyond the limitations of concepts of child or childhood in Western culture. The snapshot of the thesis was a great read and will make an excellent contribution to cemetery research in archaeology as well as transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary cemetery research.

Paper Prize: awarded to: Yanru Chen for their paper 'Fashion Design Responses to the Increasing Digitalisation of Human Interactions and Objects'

The paper explores the digitization of fashion in a wider analysis of our digital existential condition. It considers the life worlds of avatars and the fashioning of identities through virtual clothing to broaden this into the question of mortality. The paper draws connections between terror management theory and the desire to transcend mortal flesh through digital solutions and fantasies.

Creative Work Prize: awarded to Carys Norwood, Christine Georgopoulos, Lena Rowe, Yanru Chen, and Teya Griff for their project 'Preserves'

[This prize] Definitely should be awarded to the team of Carys, Christine, Lena, Teya and Yanru from RMIT who came up with the concept of preserving through 3D digitization special objects of memory and grief. The documentation of the project including the video presentation really shows the capability of the team and their potential to provide a meaningful service in community by enabling people to access significant objects of deceased loved ones digitally rendered for access via computers and particularly important, the tactile intimacy of phones. This project of digital preservation is a lovely innovation – conceived and clearly conceived and developed in each stage and process of design realisation. It is powerful design concept which explores the example of a grand-daughter's selection of special physical memory objects of her grand-father transformed into 3D replicas that are placed in a virtual jar for access anytime, anywhere. It just a beautiful, evocative design project that shows the capacity for digital intimacy for the bereaved.

The ADSS thanks Dr John Troyer (CDAS, Bath) and Dr Margaret Gibson (Griffith) for assessing the 2021 ADSS Student Prizes.

7. Election of Committee Members

In accordance with 49 of the ADSS Constitution, Hannah Gould declared all positions on the Committee vacant. Nominations were called for each position (being President, Secretary, Treasurer, ECA Representative, and General Committee Members).

Following the receipt of nominations, the ADSS Committee was reconstituted with the following members:

President: Hannah Gould

Secretary: Kate Falconer

Treasurer: Bjørn Nansen

ECA Representative: vacant

General Committee Members: Tamara Kohn, Romain Fathi, Pia Interlandi

8. Other Business

The DeathTech team at the University of Melbourne is hosting the *Redesigning Death Care* Conference in September 2022. The ADSS will be providing institutional support in the form of a bank account to facilitate the collection of registration fees and sponsorship funds for this conference. This bank account will be in the ADSS name, but will be entirely distinct from the ADSS operating account. The *Redesigning Death Care* funds and ADSS's own funds will be entirely segregated. The ADSS assumes no liability for *Redesigning Death Care*.

There being no other business, the AGM was called to a close at 10:25am.