

Continuing Bonds



To evaluate the value in promoting discussion through archaeology in aiding participants to reflect on death, grief, legacy and memory and impact on their confidence and ability in caring for the dying and their families

Project Newsletter

January 2018

A big thank you to all our participants

We have so enjoyed working with you and learning from your thoughts and the experiences that you have shared. So far 111 people have come to one of the 24 workshops held in Bradford and Leicester. The participants had a wide range of professions: – medicine, nursing, counseling, psychotherapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, social worker, research, speech and language therapy, general practice, chaplaincy.



Emerging Findings

Everyone who has participated in a workshop has found them interesting or thought provoking. Many have also told us that they found the workshops worthwhile, enjoyable and relevant. As part of the project we needed to test out whether seeing and talking about human remains caused a level of distress that would prevent learning. We have found the opposite: that where the case studies promote some discomfort this can be where the greatest learning can happen. 89% of participants, including 100% of students, said that the workshop made them think about death, dying and bereavement in different ways. 57% said that they believed the workshops would have an impact on how they approach

We are finding that the archaeological case studies prompt people to examine and discuss the culture of death. Participants talk about how what they see in the exhibits may differ from their own personal and family culture and the groups have shared many thoughts and experiences. The workshops have provided a safe space to discuss death in a way that is sometimes felt inappropriate either in life or in work and this is very valued by the participants. Some say that exploring different cultures has motivated them to find out how other people may want to prepare and plan for death and the care of their remains after they have died.

Blogs and articles

A number of blogs about our work and its findings can be viewed by clicking the links.

Independent online

[What we can learn from death rites of the past will help us treat the dead and grieve better today.](#)

Funeral zone

[Continuing Bonds: What the past can teach us about death and grief.](#)

[Past and Present: 10 funeral rituals remembering the dead](#)

Word press

[Does our purpose in life bring about a new beginning in death?](#)

[Continuing Bonds... or why David Bowie and archaeology have more in common than we think](#)

Publications:

[Continuing Bonds: Archaeology Meets End of Life Care](#)



Emerging Findings etc

One of our participants, who is a writer of poetry, was inspired to write a poem as part of the impact the workshop had on him. With his permission we share this with you.

Funeral Plan

As for me, I do not plan to attend –
You may do as you please, do as you need.
I had many thoughts about the music,
Too many notes it turned out in the end –
Could not prune it to a desert-island eight
Let alone a quartet to celebrate
The life I led, the man I used to be.
Wesley or Dylan? Up to you, not me.

Food is usual but I'll not cook today –
A massive spread or just the tea and scones
With which we said farewell to Lesley?
I shall have no appetite either way.
Free to drink like the proverbial fish
Untrammelled by my poorly-hidden wish
That you might take it easy with the gin;
“Pissed at a wake” hardly counts as sin.

Is God invited or is She out of luck?
My mixed feelings will be settled now
But I'm glad it's not my call to make;
Everyone else is in the address book.
Have what fun you can, the room will be full
With stories, laughter, tears, someone on the pull
For life goes on at funerals too
But now I must leave all of that to you.
Peter Wakefield



Dates for the Diary

Workshops:

- 9th January: Wakefield Hospice 12:00-13:30 & 2:30-4:00
- 11th January: University of Bradford 3:30-5:00
- 6th February: LOROS Hospice, Leicester 12:00-13:30 & 4-5:30
- 7th February: University of Bradford 12:00-13:30

Conference Presentations:

- 4th-7th April: Remember Me, Hull
- 15th-17th March: APM Supportive and Palliative Care, Bournemouth

Don't miss the last workshops
Email Continuingbonds@bradford.ac.uk