

ABSTRACTS

Corina Caduff

THOUGHTS OF DEATH IN OLD AGE: THE CONVERSATION MUST HAPPEN

The fact that aging and sick people not infrequently have a wish to die is not only evidenced by personal encounters and experiences, but confirmed by sociological research. In the public sphere, however, the theme has been largely ignored, and suicide among the elderly is barely spoken of either. Given demographic trends, this is going to change: a discursive space open to all in society must be created—but (wherever possible) outside the bounds of the debates surrounding assisted suicide and EXIT.

Keywords: Elder Suicide, EXIT, Thoughts of Death, Suicide, Assisted Suicide, Death Wish

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Matthias Meitzler

TRANSCENDENCE AND ANIMALITY: ON THE CURRENT AND FUTURE STATE OF THE DEATH OF PETS

The relationship between humans and animals is subject to change as well. Dogs and cats have by now become for many people personal companions to whom they have an extremely close emotional connection. The death of a pet can affect its owner just as deeply as that of a beloved person. Pet cemeteries reflect this development and give the grief over the loss of an animal a place, which warrants some conclusions about changes in society.

Keywords: Pets, Pet Cemeteries, Sepulchral Culture, Human-Animal Interaction, Pet Cremation, Pet Loss

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Bitten Stetter

DEATH STYLE – A PLEA FOR DESIGN IN THE LAST PHASE OF LIFE

While death is becoming increasingly more individualized and more prominently positioned in the media, not much has changed when it comes to dying itself: desolation and coldness continue to predominate in hospitals, nursing homes, and palliative care centers—functional, minimal places that seem to already anticipate sick people's end. It is high time we do something about this dispiriting absence of design.

Keywords: Design, Consumer Culture, Palliative Care, Illness, Dying, Death

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Carl Öhman

DIE GROSSEN HERAUSFORDERUNGEN DES ONLINE-TODES IM 21. JAHRHUNDERT

Internet-Nutzer und Nutzerinnen hinterlassen grosse Datenmengen, wenn sie sterben. Dies führte zu einer neuen Form der Ökonomisierung des Todes, zu einer «digitalen postmortalen Industrie». Der Autor präsentiert in seinem Artikel einige der Erkenntnisse seiner Recherchen in diesem Feld – und er identifiziert eine Reihe von makroskopischen, mikroskopischen und konzeptionellen Herausforderungen, die das mit sich bringt.

Keywords: Digitale postmortale Industrie, Ethik, Herausforderungen, Online-Tod, Politische Ökonomie

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Anna-Brigitte Schlittler

IN MOURNING

Initially limited to the aristocracy, the custom of expressing one's grief over the death of a loved one by wearing black was adopted first by the bourgeoisie and eventually by the working classes. Women in particular were required to comply with a complicated code of dress and behavior. These rigid (clothing) requirements began to loosen up in the early 20th century—thus ushering in the individualisation of mourning (fashion).

Keywords: Dress Code, Body Language, Mourning Clothes, Widow's Veil, Women's Magazines, Gothic Rock, Youth Culture

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Martin Steinmann

OVERCOMING BIOLOGICAL DEATH

Science is pursuing various pathways in search of how to outsmart and completely eliminate death, or at least put it off as long as possible. A life expectancy of 150 years is for many researchers no longer a utopian dream and seems just another step to aim for along the way to longed-for immortality. But what ramifications would this have for the individual and society? The author examines the possible consequences and pleads for allowing death its natural place in life.

Keywords: Aging Process, Evolution, Immortality, Cryonics, Cyborg, End of Life

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