



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

'DeathTech: Redesigning death for the 21st century and beyond'

School of Social and Political Sciences
'Critical Issues' Seminar

Public webinar

Based on more than a decade of interdisciplinary research in the international death care sector, this webinar will challenge us to rethink our expectations about what a 'good death' is or could be.

2020 has thrown up a unique set of challenges that has not only disrupted our lives, but has also transformed experiences of dying, death, disposal, and commemoration. COVID-19, for example, has forced people to be creative in how they harness technology to 'be present' for others and make mourning meaningful. However, online funerals are only one possibility in an ever-expanding imaginative field of socio-technical innovations provoked by human death and disposal in a changing world.

From human composting and vertical cemeteries to funerary robots and ash scattering via drones, Professor Tamara Kohn and Dr Hannah Gould will provide a tour of possibilities – some established, some creative, and some, at first glance, even outrageous. Ultimately, they hope to destabilise our taken-for-granted ideas and desires about how we mark the end of life.

When: Thursday 5 November from 5.00pm - 6.15pm AEDT

Register: Through [Eventbrite](#). The Zoom link will be sent to you beforehand

via email. **Enquiries:** Lauren Sanders lsanders@unimelb.edu.au 03 8344 0472



Tamara Kohn is a Professor of Anthropology whose research interests include the body and senses, death studies, humanistic anthropology, and ethics. She is part of the ARC-funded [DeathTech Research Team](#) which studies death, commemoration, and new technologies of disposal and interment. Professor Kohn has conducted fieldwork in Scotland, Nepal, US, and Japan and has recently co-authored the following books: [Death and Digital Media](#), [Residues of Death: disposal refigured](#), and [Sounding out Japan: a sensory ethnographic tour](#).

Dr Hannah Gould is ARC Research Fellow with the [DeathTech Research Team](#). She is a cultural anthropologist interested in questions of death and discarding, material culture, and religion, with experience conducting ethnography in Australia and Japan. Her PhD research examined how cultural traditions around death can themselves 'die', be replaced, or transformed through an ethnography of the production, consumption, and disposal of domestic Buddhist altars in Japan. Dr Gould's work has been published in *Death Studies*, *Journal of Material Culture*, *Anthropology Quarterly*, and *Mortality*.

