

# Centre for Public Culture and Ideas

## Gold Coast Public Culture Colloquium

### Death, Technology and Media Culture

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Griffith University



This paper examines the expansion of death and grief from private experience and spaces, into wider public spheres via a range of media events and communication technologies. This shift is increasingly acknowledged and documented in death studies, and to some extent media research. The modern experience of 'sequestered death' has passed. Death images and events are now thoroughly mediated by the visual and communication technologies used and accessed by a vast number of people across the globe. At the same time, the proliferation and accessibility of death imagery and narratives does not necessarily equate to a familiar, and especially an existential, acceptance of death, as it is faced and experienced in everyday life and relationships. Indeed, what we may be facing and witnessing is a widening gap and experiential differential between media/technological death culture and 'real life' contexts and temporalities of death and bereavement.

Margaret Gibson has a PhD in Sociology and has published widely in the areas of public mourning; grief rituals and memorial practices; and representations of death in film, media and popular culture. Her recent book, *Objects of the Dead: mourning and memory in everyday life*, explores the process of living with, sorting through and discarding the objects of the dead. Margaret is a member of the Centre of Public Culture and Ideas at Griffith University, and a member of the Association for the Study of Death and Society (University of Bath). She teaches sociology in the School of Humanities at Griffith University.

**Thursday 12 November 2009**

**G23 3.01 Multimedia Building, Gold Coast**  
(Morning tea provided)

**10:00am - 12:00pm**

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**RSVP is essential by Monday 9 November.**