

Justice for All of Us

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Project Brief

With a decade of experience in social justice and media work, I was in an unusually privileged position to make my [voice heard](#) when my worst nightmare came true and someone I never thought I'd have to live without was killed by state neglect.

The coroner ruled her cause of death as hypothermia. I call it a death by indifference. I have written about what happened to her for [the Guardian](#), [Independent](#) and [the Wellcome Trust](#), and have appeared on [BBC South](#), [ITV News](#), BBC Radio 4 and [Good Morning Britain](#).

I'm lucky to have been granted a scholarship to study for a Creative Writing MA at Birkbeck University and want to use this as an opportunity to begin work on this project, with a view to publishing the book in 2022.

I am tired of the way state-related deaths are reported as part of a mainstream news cycle geared towards selling papers and boost ratings, not finding the truth. Our struggle is reduced to a soundbite. The wider issues are ignored and stories individualised as though our loved ones' death was the end, when the devastation caused - and the state's continued attempts to evade accountability - continue to shape our lives long after. These stories, our stories are underreported but have enormous potential power because they reveal so much about the system we're up against, that lets the state get away with murder.

This book will give contributors - including myself - the chance to tell our story in our own words. It will raise awareness about contributor's campaigns and shine a light on the

barriers to justice that face bereaved families, especially those from marginalised communities.

- **What this book is about**

In the vein of [Another Day in the Death of America](#) by Gary Younge, *Justice For All Of Us* will amplify contributor's voices as they call for the changes we need to save lives. In particular, I will focus on the the role of:

1. **Cuts:** government austerity cuts to public and frontline support services, which have been [linked to over 130,000 preventable deaths in the UK since 2010](#)
2. **Culture:** social inequalities such as structural racism and misogyny, which leave migrants, women, BAME, queer, differently abled and neurodiverse people dying in disproportionate numbers, and also shape our experience of the inquest system following the death of a loved one.
3. **Resistance and resilience:** celebrating our hard won knowledge and lived experience leadership, honouring our own stories as well as the stories of those we have lost.

As inspiring as they are devastating, these deeply personal accounts will paint the stark portrait of a British state which has been getting away with murder for far too long. As bereaved relatives trying to navigate the system, we serve long sentences in a dark and difficult world that can leave us feeling very alone and unheard. If we can communicate what it's really like to walk in that world it will be a powerful call for change. This is what 'preventing future harm' is all about: this link between our private grief and the public interest. It's about justice for everyone.

Justice for All of Us will be written with support and tutelage from the Birkbeck College Creative Writing faculty as well as [INQUEST](#). The book will be authored by me but taking a collaborative approach depending on how involved contributors would like to be in the editorial process. Further details can be agreed in advance.

- **Who can contribute?**

Anyone from a bereaved family who is searching for truth and justice and willing to really open up about their experiences. I will be working with ten individuals based across the UK who lost their loved ones across a range of settings and are at a range of different stages in the process. Everyone will be considered regardless of circumstance and whether or not their inquest has already taken place. Women, non-binary and BAME individuals are especially encouraged to apply, to properly reflect the demographics of this community of resistance.

- **What would I need to do?**

Work with contributors will be carried out on a flexible basis according to their needs and availability. As a bereaved relative myself I am keenly aware of how our mental and emotional capacity to engage with this work can fluctuate and want the wellbeing of each contributor to be at the centre of the process. So, we will be working together at a sustainable pace over the next 18-24 months.

Each contributor should be able to commit to up to two hours of their time per month during this period for interviews and discussion. Content can also be via other means, for example by keeping a written or audio diary or sharing photographs and really anything they feel helps them tell their story in the way that's right for them. They or their case worker must also keep me updated on key developments in their case or campaign. I should also be given the opportunity to attend any hearings or similar either in person or remotely depending on Covid-19 restrictions. I will liaise with solicitors or caseworkers where appropriate to ensure the legal position of contributors is protected. However this project is entirely self-funded and unfortunately I am not in a financial position to pay contributors for their time.

To express your interest in taking part, please [fill out this form](#).

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