

As macabre as it sounds, death is inevitable, so why are we so afraid to talk about it, even when we know that our silence can be harmful? The Order of the Good Death is an organization comprised of funeral industry professionals, artists and academics who aim to shatter the taboos surrounding mortality. Its philosophy has inspired work from jewelry to shadow puppet theatre and, most recently, a creation by Laundry Bear Games.

Due for release in early 2017, *A Mortician's Tale* is a game driven by this burgeoning 'death positivity' movement. The game faces players with the challenges of running a funeral home, from preparing cadavers to consoling relatives and everything in between. It aims to normalize the idea of death and destigmatize the industry that surrounds it, shedding light on a very normal practice that just happens to take place behind closed doors.

Although the majority of videogames revolve around death in one way or another, few actually explore it in a productive way. Games simultaneously normalize death to the point of meaninglessness while also treating it as a punishment or trauma, giving gamers a complicated relationship with something that's already difficult enough in the real world. Whilst story-based games are doing an increasingly good job of dealing with death realistically, *A Mortician's Tale* is unique in its focus on both the emotional and practical aspects of biting the dust.

If you're interested in commissioning a feature about this, I can get in touch with academics from The Order of the Good Death to discuss death positivity in general and Laundry Bear Games to talk about *AMT* in more detail. I'm interested in the psychological and social implications of the way death is presented in games, and think this could be a thought-provoking piece for your readers.