

Thom Davies

Doctoral Researcher

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About

Title of PhD: Half Lives and Bare Life: an Informal Geography of Chernobyl

Supervisors: [Dr Dominique Moran \(/staff/profiles/gees/moran-dominique.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/gees/moran-dominique.aspx), [Dr John Round \(/staff/profiles/gees/round-john.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/gees/round-john.aspx), and [Dr Rosie Day \(/staff/profiles/gees/day-rosie.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/gees/day-rosie.aspx)

Website: [www.thomdavies.com \(http://www.thomdavies.com\)](http://www.thomdavies.com)

Thom Davies is a human geographer interested in how people experience and informally negotiate nuclear disaster. His CEELBAS funded doctoral research investigates the ongoing social and economic fallout of the 1986 nuclear accident in Ukraine. While conducting long-term qualitative fieldwork with communities in the Chernobyl border region, he adopted a range of ethnographic and visual methods to explore the lived experience of nuclear space.

In 2014 Thom was awarded a JSPS Summer Programme Scholarship and became a Visiting Fellow at the Department of Urban Engineering, University of Tokyo. Building on his experiences in Chernobyl, he undertook qualitative research with communities impacted by the 2011 Fukushima Nuclear accident.

He continues to publish his research in academic and media publications.

Qualifications

(MSc) in Enterprise, Environment and Place, Geography Department, University of Birmingham

(BA) First Class honours in Geography, University of Birmingham

Biography

Thom completed his BA in Geography in 2008 and was awarded a first class honours. He achieved an MSc in 'Enterprise, Environment, and Place' in 2009 writing a dissertation titled 'A Warm Glow: Chernobyl Children and their Charities'. He will be completing his PhD at the University of Birmingham in 2015.

In 2013 he took a break from his research to work as a Teaching Fellow at the University of Birmingham, where on top of tutorials, dissertation supervision and marking, he wrote and delivered a third year 20 credit module 'Environment Risk and Society', which received excellent feedback from the students.

In 2014 Thom conducted comparative Chernobyl-Fukushima research in Japan with a scholarship from JSPS.

Research

Research interests

Chernobyl, Visual Methods, Informal Economies, Risk Perception, Nuclear Spaces, Post-Socialist 'transition', everyday life, Fukushima, Ethnography

Research group

Society, Economy and Environment

Other activities

Thom's **photographic work** (<http://thomdavies.com/portfolio/disposable/>) has been exhibited in various galleries including **Portrait Salon** (<http://www.portraitsalon.co.uk/>), and he has been published in several British Newspapers. He often uses visual methods such as photography and participatory photographic techniques as part of his research methodology and research output.

In addition to lecturing on Risk, Thom demonstrates on field courses in Malta and Moscow. He has also successfully taught undergraduate field-courses on Visual Geography and Geographies of Memorialization in Berlin for four consecutive years.

Thom was recently part of the organizing committee for the Royal Geographic Society Mid-term conference 2013 held at the University of Birmingham. Entitled 'Geographic Transitions', over 100 delegates attended – making it the largest ever RGS Mid-term to date. He has presented his research at several field-leading conferences including RGS-IBG, and after securing funding from 'Universitas 21' he presented his research at an international multi-disciplinary conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Thom is a member of the Royal Geographic Society (RGS) and the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES).

Publications

Reviewed Academic Publications:

Davies T. (2015 in-press) 'Nuclear Borders: informally negotiating the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone' in Morris J. and Polese A. [eds] *Rethinking Informality: the embedded nature of post-socialist informal economic practices*. Palgrave: London

Davies T. and Polese A. (2015) '**Informality and Survival in Ukraine's nuclear landscape: living with the risks of Chernobyl** (https://www.academia.edu/9950719/Informality_and_survival_in_Ukraines_nuclear_landscape_Living_with_the_risks_of_Chernobyl)'. *Journal of Eurasian Studies* Vol. 6 No. 1 pp34-45

Davies T. (2013) '**A Visual Geography of Chernobyl: Double Exposure**' (https://www.academia.edu/5632843/A_Visual_Geography_of_Chernobyl_Double_Exposure). *International Labor and Working-Class History* Vol. 84 pp116-139

Davies T. et al (2012) '**Panic on the streets of Birmingham? Struggles over space and belonging in the Revanchist City** (<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09627251.2012.670998#.UtbBVdJdWxc>)'. *Criminal Justice matters* Vol. 87

Davies T. (2012) '**Eyewitness, Birmingham** (<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09627251.2012.670999#.VMEFmFdkSv8F>)'. *Criminal Justice matters* Vol. 87

Davies T. (2011) '**Nuclear mushrooms: attitudes to risk and the state through food consumption in the Chernobyl border region** (<http://www.gp.pegasus.nhs.uk/graduateschool/documents/events/u21/u21grcproceedings20112ndeditionfinal.pdf#page=102>)'. Universitas 21 Graduate Research Conference on Food Proceedings, Malaysia: University of Nottingham Press

Media Publications:

Davies T. (2014) '**Ukraine's other crisis: Living in the shadow of Chernobyl – where victims receive just 9p a month and are left to fend for themselves** (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/ukraines-other-crisis-living-in-the-shadow-of-chernobyl--where-victims-receive-just-9p-a-month-and-are-left-to-fend-for-themselves-9293832.html>)'. *The Independent Newspaper* (lead cover story)

Davies T. (2012) '**The Real Chernobyl Diaries: Notes from Ukraine** (<http://blogs.independent.co.uk/2012/07/11/the-real-chernobyl-diaries-notes-from-ukraine/>)'. *The Independent Newspaper* (2012)

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