

# The Dad Project

Briony Campbell, November 2011



*At our family dinner table Dad had always been called, 'the dustbin'. As his appetite disappeared, Mum couldn't bring herself to finish his food. But I could. By this point, up-holding the waste-not-want-not values he'd instilled in me felt more worthwhile than hoping he might eventually force down enough food to regain strength.*

Three months after my Dad died, I found myself hanging photos on a gallery wall that revealed the story of our relationship and of his death. We had recorded it together through photography and film during his last six months, and it became 'The Dad Project'. He was 65, I was 29, and two years have passed since.

While I was stumbling through the process of recording our experience, I had fleeting moments of speculation that if this eventually manifested as something coherent, perhaps it would help me cope with Dad's absence. During my most optimistic periods I daydreamed that others might even see it, and maybe it could help them too. I never imagined that in the end it would feel so right to share it, or that it would provoke such overwhelming responses. Today The Dad Project has been seen by tens of thousands of people around the world.

In approaching this essay I'm reminded of something that the artist Lasse Johansson said. He was talking about his project 'I am here' which was a response to the fact that his home was to be demolished, and he said 'the context of the work was a dragon to slay not a piece of clay to mold'. Slaying the dragon is a reactive process rather than a proactive one. A project approached as 'clay molding' can be well reported within an academic structure, but my project took form as it occurred. So this essay will simply be an account of the journey that my responses to dad's immanent death, took me on, both as a daughter and a photographer.

## **Cancer came along**

My dad got sick in December 2007 and had a major operation the next February. In the run up to it I assumed, as I always do, that everything would be fine. The highly specialized, and somewhat risky, 8 hour ‘Whipple procedure’ actually took 12. And while we waited the extra hours I began to feel that perhaps, just maybe, there was a chance things wouldn’t go our way. But eventually he came out, came round, began the fight to recover, and my naïve optimism returned; how did I ever doubt my instincts – nothing bad could happen to *my* dad.

I had a conversation about optimism with dad in the Royal Marsden Hospital. He chose to go there for drugs trials after the doctors found, in October 2009 that the Whipple had not, in fact, whipped out the cancer and there was no further treatment for his very rare, and terminal, type of bile duct cancer. Dad seemed to feel the need to justify why he had continued to paint a rosy picture for us all. In his own words;

“Some people will always assume the pessimistic position: that the glass is half empty, and some will take the optimistic one: that it’s half full. I like to take the half full position because I think it’s a waste of energy and goodwill to assume the negative... unless it’s actually proven. Some might consider that naive, but I’d guess those people prefer pessimism, which is fine, but that’s not my position”.

He described it as a glow inside him that had always been there, and that reassured him everything would be ok. (When I thought back on his description I realized how much it sounded like a spiritual reference. Many people draw the equivalent inner-strength from their faith in God’s presence within them, but he didn’t mean it that way).



*Rose-tinted glasses*

## **To photograph, or not?**

Hearing Dad's description of 'the glow' was very affirming for me because I have it too (though I'd never really articulated the feeling), and this was a huge influence on my desire to photograph Dad's journey towards death. Firstly, because he gave it to me. I don't think there are many greater gifts you can give your child, and I wanted to thank him somehow. And secondly, with the glow inside me, I knew that by doing The Dad Project we could look at the half-full-glass together. That seemed to me the best we could do with our little time.

I had just begun a Masters in documentary photography at the London College of Communication, and my tutor John Easterby gently encouraged me to try to photograph. He was sensitive to the complexity of the decision and I knew that I'd have great support from him if I went ahead. My desire to undertake this challenge was not followed easily by the decision to go ahead... far from it. I've never deliberated so heavily over anything. For a while this decision became the most agonizing aspect of my grief. My initial plan was that this would be a collaboration, so dad's encouragement was crucial. This was his response when I suggested the project:

"When you first asked me about doing this project, I thought about what it would mean for me to share my feelings with you, and whether it was going to make you feel sad or upset, or whether it was going to make me feel sad or upset. And then I thought more about what it would mean to you, and I thought, this is an opportunity for me to learn a little bit more about you as my daughter, and more about what it will mean for you to be without a dad someday, sooner or later. And the upper-most thing in my mind is to try to be a good dad to you for as long as possible, and to understand what it means to be a good dad to you".

I was most worried about upsetting my mum, and found it much harder to open conversations about the idea with her. This inhibited me significantly in the early stages. In retrospect, I think I could have involved her much more, but that's how it occurred. (I am trying my hardest to avoid dwelling on regret. When you live beyond someone you love, there is always room for regretting what you didn't share. Just as when you under take the documentation of a story, there is always room for regretting what you didn't capture. Regret, which is to the past what pessimism is to the future, seems a waste of goodwill and energy). However, as we walked out of the room, having said our final goodbyes to Dad's dead body, Mum asked me 'Have you got all the photos you want? Do you want us to take one of you with Dad?' I was quite amazed.

I became aware that by undertaking this project I would be obliged to experience my dad's last days from the self-critical position of a creator, and this made me doubt it was a good idea. So I found myself seeking confirmation of this doubt, and it wasn't hard to find:

Did I really want be thinking about the rigors of creating a cohesive visual product while my dad was dying? It's a taxing enough task at the best of times.

I had never had any desire to tell my own story through my work. Indeed, I'd often regarded self-referential photography as embodying a level of narcissism that I'm not comfortable with.

We're not a photo family. None of us like having our pictures taken. This was pretty weird way to try changing that.

My photography takes me away from grief to a happy place; it's a positive and productive distraction. If Dad was my work how would I escape?

More importantly, my work gave me things to tell Dad about. He was lifted by knowing that we were proceeding with our usual lives, and not wallowing in sadness. The only thing I could do to make his

end happier was to show him that I was going to be fine, and to be fine I needed to pursue my ambitions.

Then I always came back to how it would be for Mum. She was already struggling against so much. Doing anything that might make things harder for her wasn't an option.

For a short time all these considerations put me off the idea entirely. I felt resolved that I wouldn't proceed.

Of course, I talked at length with many people - friends, family and near strangers. I wasn't shy about it. Nobody knew what to advise:

'You should definitely do it if you think you can, but I can't tell you to.'

'I know I couldn't do that, you'd need to be so brave.'

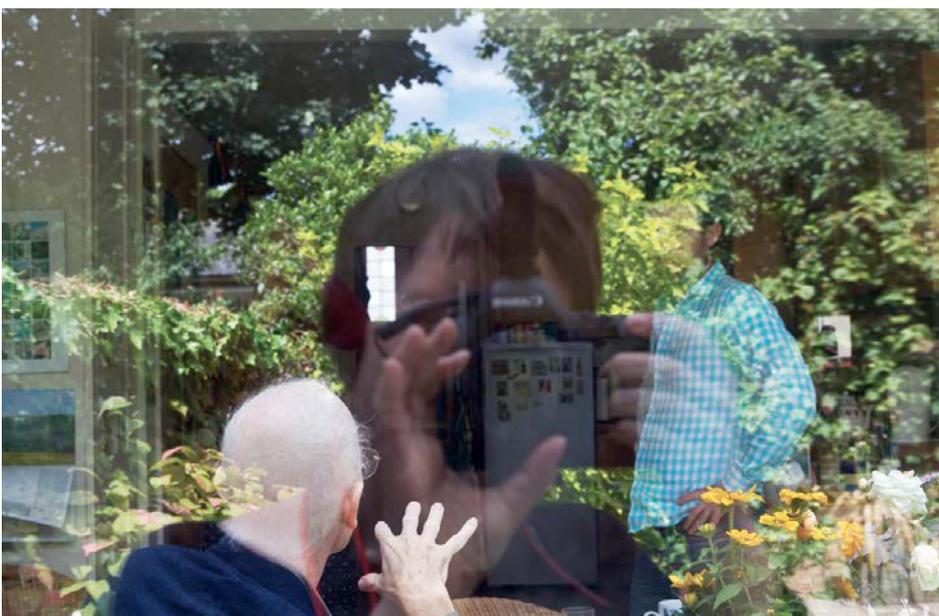
'It could be amazing, but only if it's right for all of you'.

These ambiguous responses made my head spin, but just through trying to make the decision, conversations opened that enriched me hugely. Discussions about the ethics of creative documentary practices became more relevant and purposeful than they'd been before. But more significantly, people would always share their own closest experience of death, or sickness, or family struggles, and often said that they rarely talked about it. I realized that I'd joined the majority of humanity who knew the feeling of great loss. This wasn't something to keep quiet about. If just the possibility of The Dad Project could open all these dialogues, how many more people would be reached if I were actually to do it? The project could be as universal as it was personal.

This realization re-opened the possibility again. And there were two more clinching factors:

Every documentary photographer is seeking to reveal truths, but telling another's story truthfully is essentially impossible. If I chose to tell the story of losing my dad I would be telling *our* story; my dad and me - therefore it would be true. Maybe I would be liberated of the eternal and integral problem of the documentary photographer...

Purely as a daughter, this was my first and last chance to work with my dad. I had to take it.



*Sitting in the garden became an event, then a day's activity, and eventually a strain that he endured only to comfort us. Or was it to comfort himself? I wondered endlessly, but really there was no difference.*

## Beginning to shoot

During these months of indecision, I'd only been taking photos that I thought my family would like. Mum wanted a nice photo of the two of them before Dad began to look too ill. The more meaningful photos occurred slowly around springtime. At the beginning I made it easy on myself. I took photos that made me happy on sad days. I found myself making photos reminiscent of those I used to make in my 'honeymoon period' with the camera, when I was learning through playing. They were free from the constraints of purpose, and they pleased me. Whenever I was consumed by the bleakness of the cancer, I took photos. If I couldn't sleep, I took photos. If the morning light hit my bed in a way that erased the gloom, I took photos – and it made me happy. I was seeing a narration of my moods occur.

But I knew that these photos would only speak back to me, and not beyond, and that was the impetus for me to take another step forward. How could I show explicitly what I was feeling? Turn the camera around? So I photographed my face when I was sad. It seemed a ridiculously obvious idea. I wouldn't have even called it an idea. It was the only thing I could think of to move myself on. I assumed the images looked clichéd and I felt strange about doing it. This was another sort of self-indulgence that I never thought I'd embrace. It felt dangerously close to narcissism. I didn't show the photos to anyone for a while.



*Me, Tears*

Then, I began to shoot the details of Mum and Dad's house. These images felt sadder. I still wasn't quite brave enough to turn the camera on my dad, but my photos were beginning, very cautiously, to hint at the real story. A crucial moment for me was the first time I witnessed a startling manifestation of Dad's deteriorating health.

He walked into the kitchen carrying a glass of the energy-milkshake that was intended to fatten him up. He lost his balance and it smashed on the floor. Although my camera was around my neck I couldn't bring myself to photograph the moment as it occurred. It would have felt like a cruel and detached response. The duality of my role was suddenly explicit; is it actually possible to be a daughter and a photographer at once? After I'd cleared up the broken glass (all the time thinking 'that was a photo - I'm missing the story') I managed to take a picture. Although I was slightly disappointed by my initial hesitation, on reflection I realized that what I hadn't captured was as relevant to our story as what I had. This photograph felt like a turning point. The fact that I couldn't shoot everything was the story. And so I became more comfortable with telling it.



*Milkshake moment*

### **Grappling for a plan**

The more I felt the project was underway, the more aware I became that I didn't really have a plan. I thought some good photos were occurring, but wasn't sure if they were enough. Would I just end up with a pile of gentle images about a dad dying a little too early of an all-too-common death; images too sad for my family and too ordinary for an audience? Maybe I needed words to reveal the weight of the story outside the frames. I tried writing but my thoughts never flowed on the page. Should I impose a conceptual methodology on my picture taking? I thought of many plans, but never stuck to them. How could any one approach be the right way to document my dad's ending? I was always waiting for the 'right time' to work it all out with dad. I wanted to impress him with my plan and to find one that brought clarity to both of our positions. I'd never felt Dad completely understood my photographic motivations, and I hoped perhaps The Dad Project could change that. But I was fumbling. The moment where everything fell into place never happened.

### **Understanding the illness**

It wasn't until May when I spent a weekend caring for Dad that the magnitude of his situation hit me. Until then I had always been the 'cheer-er up-er', bringing light into the gloom with stories of normal life. I'd help out while I was there, always cook a meal, try to give mum a moment of rest. But it was only a moment. I didn't really lift the burden. And I was aware that they didn't really want me to know the burden. On this particular weekend I offered to stay with Dad so Mum could go to the country with friends. I thought it'd be nice; I'd cook his meals, fetch his pills, we'd have lots of time to talk together, and all while making pictures. But it didn't go that way. Dad wasn't capable of more than short conversations between sleeps, meager mouthfuls of food and confused negotiations over pill schedules. I was surprised by my reaction. It wasn't as if I didn't know what stage he was at, but being solely responsible for his wellbeing shook me. So I decided to make more time for him. Neither he nor Mum had ever actually asked me to, and I was just realizing how generous that was of them. But I wanted to be part of the struggle now. I couldn't continue to pretend there wasn't one. We wanted to record more conversations and the project motivated us to explore subjects that would've been easier to leave alone.

## Space to focus

When the summer came and term ended, I felt at once glad that my schedule would clear, and anxious that I wouldn't have my tutor's encouraging voice pushing me onwards. Of course my schedule didn't clear, and life was as pressured as usual. I'd been postponing jobs so now had to juggle them with 'dad-time'. When you're consumed by a poignant situation, it's strange how everything else you encounter seems to relate to it. I found myself viewing my client jobs through 'Dad Project spectacles'. The youthful energy of music festivals captured in the 'aspirational' style required by my client felt more hedonistic than ever. While fathers reading to their under-5s for the government's SureStart scheme felt more important. Although I never really managed to clear the decks as I'd have liked to, I began to treat everything else as secondary. The Dad Project became my priority, my normal life worked around it, and it felt right.

Now I began to reflect on the tone of my images, something I hadn't found the objectivity to do until this point. I knew I wanted to make gentle, quiet photographs, and for their message to be open and unself-conscious. I knew I not want to make gloomy pictures that highlighted suffering. When I tried to view my images objectively I thought, though they looked rather 'safe', they were at least honest.

I asked the Photographer Leonie Hampton if she would give me some feedback on the work at this point. Leonie's long-term work is on her mother's mental illness, and if found it raw, elegant and honest, so her opinion was very valuable to me. She told me my photos were strong and touching, and this felt to me like a great validation. I realized how integral external validation would be to willingness to share the story.

When I asked, what others pictures shall I look for (as I felt I was beginning to repeat myself) she said "try to photograph love".



*Sleeping again*

## The end came into view

I was only just 'finding my feet' in the project, when dad's death came into view. I still don't know, and probably never will, whether this was the natural progression of my creative process or whether my 'feet finding' was a response to the immanent ending. I think both must've played a part. Throughout the year I'd been trying to draw a map for the project, but as my emotions became more fragile it *became*

my map. The more involved I became with dad, the more involved I became with the camera. As The Dad Project got stronger, I got stronger.

It wasn't even two weeks before Dad's death when I realized it was coming. It wasn't a thunderbolt - it just became apparent. I wondered how long he had known it was around the corner. At this time we tried to talk about his funeral. We wanted to know what he'd like to happen, but we also knew he didn't want to have the conversation. Dad maintained his optimism until the end. When friends came to visit they seemed to know they were saying goodbye, despite being met by Dad's brave and generous spirit. Now I started to wonder: at what point did optimism become denial?



*Looking at the end*

One of the hardest moments for me came a few days before he died. It was his first day with the hospital bed in the living room. We'd managed to get him to the kitchen for dinner with the help of the wheelchair, especially as my aunt was here from America. She knew she was coming to help him die, but Dad wanted to celebrate her visit as normal. When he sat down, he cried and told us he was frightened. He was frightened of not knowing what was happening around him. He was frightened about how mum would cope without him. We talked about 'letting go', something he'd been struggling with, quite openly, since the diagnosis. When we got him up to go back to bed, he fell. He lay flat on his back in his family kitchen for minutes before he could stand. The camera was part of this heart-breaking evening and nobody seemed to mind.

## **Death**

At the instant of dad's death my dual role felt absolutely concrete. There was no longer a separation. From deep inside in the cloud of tears provoked by his last breath, I wished everything could be captured; the sad and beautiful things my mum was saying; the stilted breathing of the people beside him, and the faces of the others aching in their separate spaces, the colour of his skin as it changed from my dad's to a corpse's. I wanted all the details recorded and revealed. This was the big unknown moment, one we will all have - one that nobody can envisage, but everybody wonders about. Ours was now, and it would be gone, but here was a chance share it in future. As we came out of our clouds, I felt resigned to the fact that documenting dad's death was as instinctive to me as experiencing it. I was at once ashamed that I was thinking so objectively during the rawest moment of my life, and somehow proud that I was able to - that being the photographer had become innate.



*When we said goodnight on his last lucid day, he said; 'Think about what we should shoot tomorrow for the project'. By tomorrow his shine was gone and just his shape remained - His unconscious contribution.*

### **Productive grief**

Dad died on August 25<sup>th</sup> 2009. According to the course schedule I would need to present my finished 'major project' in late November. Given my situation there was no pressure on me to comply with this schedule, but since the project had become something of a crutch to me, I felt that the process of editing the work might be a sustaining way to embrace my immediate grief. After a few weeks of taking comfort in the company of friends and family I returned to my studio and begun a phase of intense focus, unlike any I've known before.

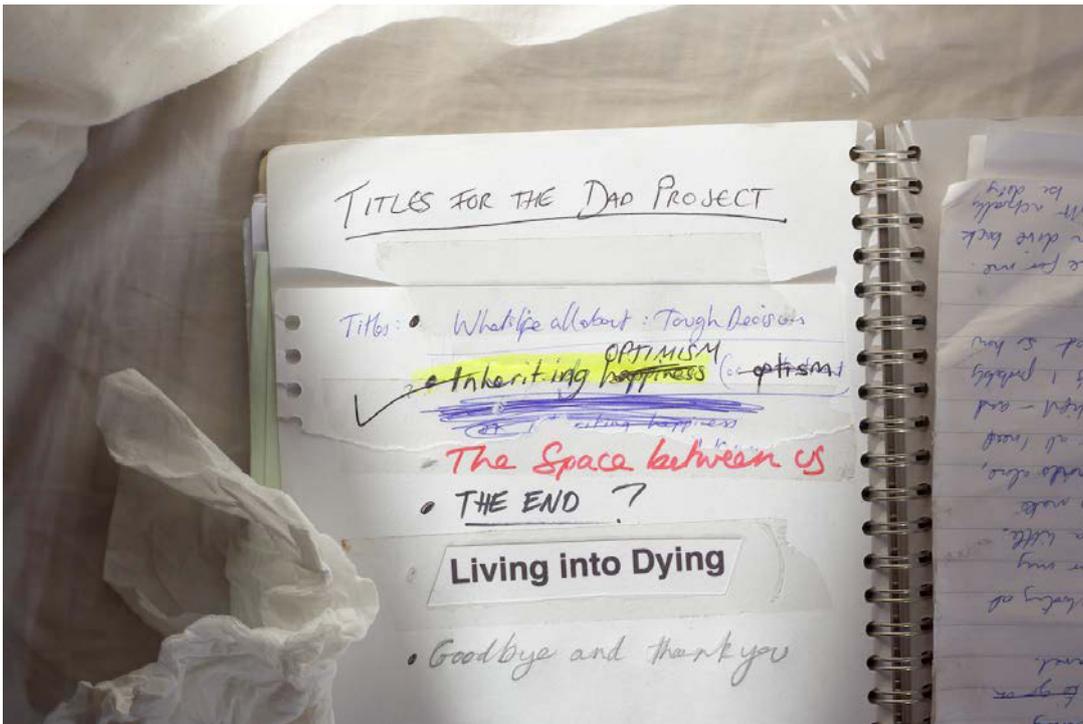
I spent countless hours rating photos of my dying Dad on a scale of 1 to 5, sometimes through tears and sometimes with the efficiency of an editor. It was a simultaneously horrible and wonderful task. When I described the process to a friend he told me I should let the joy and the pain be so intertwined that I can't tell the difference... and that is how it was.

### **An outcome**

The pressure to commit to an outcome provoked doubt, indecision and procrastination.

'What's life all about? Tough decisions.' Whenever I sought Dad's advice on a problem this simplistic phrase would precede the slow and thorough discussion that followed; an exploration of the relevant factors, each one considered from all possible perspectives. In realizing The Dad Project I made a lot of tough decisions. Without my dad, but very much with him.

I found the most difficult aspect was that I couldn't represent our story from every possible perspective. It's my inherited instinct to understand any situation this way. So I took comfort in another of Dad's ideas here: the idea that we need to 'take positions' ourselves, in order to understand other positions. We hesitate from doing so for fear of being tied to that position. This was an idea he had developed professionally as a family therapist, but when he explained it to me in layman's terms, he used the analogy of shoes: we shouldn't feel tied to one pair of shoes just because we have stepped into them. We shouldn't worry that we'll become know as someone who wears only that type of shoe, and have to wear them forever to maintain our identity. But we should choose a pair and walk around in them for a while. Once we've gained an understanding of what the world looks like with these shoes on, we'll be better equipped to try on another pair, and to understand that what we see wearing the second pair is richer for having worn the first pair. Unfortunately, we can't wear all the shoes at once, but if we chose one pair to start with, we can begin to see.



So with his voice in my head, I decided this initial manifestation would be called ‘The First Edit’, and that felt like a comforting resolution. I designed a book of images with captions. I wasn’t ready to deal with editing the interviews we had recorded, for emotional reasons but also for technical ones. I’m not (yet) a filmmaker, and I didn’t want to rush this highly skilled process. Just watching all my footage was exhausting, so I resolved to return to this at a later point. The book was 7” x 9”, printed on a soft matt paper, and beautifully hand-bound with a grey velvet cover. It was, and still is, to my mind, the most perfect work I have done. I didn’t imagine that I would get to that stage so soon with The Dad Project, if ever.

The masters course also required that we hang an exhibition, so shortly after completing the book I designed an exhibition of the photos. I built a small white booth and hung the photos that reflected my story on one side and dad’s on the facing side. The photos were in simple white frames ranging from 6” x 4” to 8” x 10”, and the layout was broadly chronological but also tonal. I wrote the previous paragraph titled ‘Death’ by hand on the central wall, and I showed 6 video clips in their raw state on a screen below it. Again, I was very satisfied with this presentation of the story.

### Initial reflections

At the time of first exhibiting The Dad Project, I wrote the following:

The Dad Project has put my heartache to such positive use. Though this small furry book isn’t much of a substitute for Dad’s presence, the journey I’ve been on to make it has been my most inspiring yet. Most significantly because I’ve been on it with my dad – every day since he died.

There is of course a small but incredulous voice in the back of my head saying ‘don’t think you’re going to get away with it that lightly’. Occasionally I worry whether I’m postponing my grieving. But I’ve been so thoroughly ensconced in grief during this productive phase, that I can’t possibly be in denial. I feel sure that if everyone had an equivalent way to unravel their own bereavement, loss wouldn’t weigh so heavily on so many.

The emotive responses the project has provoked already have given me glimpses of the bigger dialogues I was hoping to create. My dad was very concerned, both personally and professionally, with

understanding relationships, so if The Dad Project helps that occur on some level, I'll feel I've done him proud.

So to answer the first question I posed here to my future self; 'am I postponing my grief?', I don't think I did, but rather the life of the project enabled me to spread it, so that it has become a continuous presence, but never a heavy one. The life of the project is defined by its audience now, and as they continue to send me wonderfully heartfelt messages of appreciation, this continuous presence is very affirming for me. So, with regards the second question of opening dialogues that help people understand their relationships, Dad would certainly be proud of the extent to which that has happened. I only wish he could read some of the emails I have received from people who have been touched by the work.

### **Publishing The Dad Project**

I now see the project as having 2 distinct chapters. During the first it belonged to dad and me. Once it had been exhibited and published the second chapter began, and The Dad Project belonged to whoever saw it.

Having the opportunity to exhibit our story within the supportive environment of the MA course provided a reassuring way to begin sharing it. The responses that came back gave me the confidence to take it further. The next publication was dramatically wider: in The Guardian Weekend Magazine. When I showed my book to the Photo Editor she cried, and said immediately that she would like to publish it. I felt I was in safe hands. It's not usual for a photographer to be consulted on the layout of their work, but they agreed that in this case it would be a collaborative process, and article was very sensitively done. So when they suggested their film department could edit my footage into a short film I was glad to collaborate again. However this was a more stressful experience. While the editors tried to be sensitive to my preferences, I didn't feel I was firmly in the driving seat. The time frame we had to work with was so pressured that I couldn't take the time to consider every choice in the slow and thorough way that I am inclined to. In the end I was satisfied with the ten minute film we produced, but it was such an all-consuming experience that after walking out of the edit suite I didn't watch the film for some months.

Following these two publications I received over a hundred emails from readers (and when the work was published in Spain's El Mundo, my website received 8,000 visits to The Dad Project pages). They were incredibly intimate and detailed. Many people recounted similar experiences of their own, and often described visual details that they kept stored in their mind's-eyes. Others talked about how it had made them think about their relationships with their parents, or their children. Some said what a wonderful man my dad seemed to be, and they always thanked me for sharing our story.

A month later the work was exhibited in The Photographer's Gallery as part of a group show of recent graduates. I hung it in a similar way to my original design and again received heart-warming responses. Some of them were from photographers considering doing something similar. It felt good to be able to encourage others to record their own stories of love and loss.

I learnt a difficult lesson about the editorial process through working with Germany's Die Zeit. They proposed to publish the story over 8 pages with a detailed interview, so I was pleased when writer wanted to discuss my journey very thoroughly and seemingly sensitively. However in this case they declined my request to see the text before it was published, that being their editorial policy. Because my previous experiences of sharing the work had been so positive I was feeling quite relaxed about letting others interpret the work, so I didn't argue. When the published piece was translated for me by a German friend I was quite distressed by a number of significant additions that the writer had drawn from his own imagination. The most glaring being that he wrote, "Briony calls it The Dad Project, as in Dad, but also Dead". Whether this was a poor attempt at word play in his second language, or a chance to add some drama to the title, I was amazed that he had made such a clumsy statement. It felt

to me that he couldn't have understood my intentions to tell a gentle story emphasizing life rather than death, as I trusted he had done.

### **Considering my audience**

For each of these, and subsequent manifestations of the project I have made different edits. Sometimes they have been influenced by the space available, or by the potential audience, but always defined by my own feelings at the time. I don't feel my relationship to the photos has changed dramatically over these two years, but the on-going reassurance of audience appreciation has coaxed me to feel more comfortable with sharing the most painful imagery. In 'The First Edit' I chose not to include photos of Dad after he died, but earlier this year, when Odee, a new photo book publisher published 'The Dad Project - one year on', I decided to include these images.

In reflection on her own work, Sally Mann (another photographer who has documented her own family) referenced an Emily Dickinson poem. It seemed to express so beautifully something another filmmaker had advised me. Before I got involved with the Guardian film department, I showed this filmmaker the footage from the moment after Dad died and he told me that if we were editing it for broadcast we would have to cut it half way through. I was surprised that he thought it too raw for a television audience, as I assumed that if I, as the creator were willing to share it, then it would be considered rare and valuable television content. It was an interesting perspective to consider as I returned to edit and re-edit The Dad Project.

*Tell all the Truth but tell it slant  
Success in Circuit lies  
Too bright for our infirm Delight The Truth's superb surprise  
As Lightning to the Children eased with explanation kind  
The Truth must dazzle gradually  
Or every man be blind*  
Emily Dickinson

In the early stages of sharing the story I had some unique encounters with viewers. There were many times I was approached by someone with tears in their eyes. These emotional responses were as unexpected to the viewers as they were to me, and that would be apparent in our exchange. I was deeply affected by each person. However I didn't find it difficult to play the comforting role when I sensed that was what they needed. It offered me a chance to honour Dad's values, and felt like another wonderful validation of the project. While my own grief, and my attempts to cope with it were still so new to me, these mutually enriching encounters were very much a part of my journey.

But as time passed, and I experienced many similar moments, my responses to the intimate thoughts strangers were compelled to share with me became less emotive. I felt I might be disappointing them. I have occasionally had to remind myself that people are still seeing the work for the first time, and that their initial reactions will continue to be charged, even if my own have been diluted by familiarity. I worry that I may come across as flippant because I am so comfortable talking about the whole experience now.

### **Moving on**

I did an interview for BBC world service a few months after Dad died and as I was leaving the interviewer asked me "Is it hard to talk about the experience and then just get on with a normal day? Do you feel the project is stopping you from moving on?" Her question stuck in my mind. I didn't find it hard to get on with my normal day at all, as my dad and the project were very much a part of my normal day. I had no desire to 'move on' as I felt no disadvantage to staying with the memories. I have the process of The Dad Project to thank for this.

When we are weighed down by our memories we have to be careful not to access them at inappropriate moments, for fear of exposing our fragility. I consider myself fortunate that the memories of my wonderful dad's death enrich me rather than depress me, and fortunate for feeling comfortable talking about it. It means I can do it as often as it may be relevant, thus keeping his memory ever present. I am so grateful to my dad and for giving me a way to keep moving forward with him, and to photography for making it possible.



*25<sup>th</sup> August 2009*

### **Endnotes**

All that remains to say is how grateful I am that I was on the London College of Communication MA course during dad's last year. Without John Easterby's support, I probably wouldn't have managed to do The Dad Project - and that's an awful thought.