

It is illegal to post this copyrighted PDF on any website.

**Bereavement After Traumatic Death:
Helping the Survivors**

edited by Diego De Leo, Alberta Cimitan, Kari Dyregrov, Onja Grad, and Karl Andriessen. Hogrefe Publishing, Boston, MA, 2014, 208 pages, \$39.80 (paper).

“In the world, every year, more than 1.2 million people die on the streets”—so begins the introduction of this multiauthored volume on traumatic death and its consequences on survivors. The chapter authors are truly international, which brings a sense of universality to the volume: Australia (Andriessen, Barker, De Leo, Kolves, O’Gorman), Belgium (Andriessen), Italy (Cimitan, Ratkowska), Norway (Dyregrov), and Slovenia (Grad) are represented.

The first chapter deals with theories of adaption, beginning with Freud’s “Mourning and Melancholia” and Erich Lindemann’s work on pathological delayed and distorted grief, as well as Bowlby’s notion of grief as forced separation. Family systemic and relational symbolic approach and the concept of family constellation are discussed. The chapter also deals with stages of normal mourning and pathological mourning. The second chapter, “Reactions to Traumatic Death,” delves into the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses to traumatic death and complicated grief reactions and their risk and protective factors. It concludes with recent research showing that “it is more useful and positive for the bereaved person to be able to maintain a connection with the deceased in the form of an ‘inner representation’” (p 35).

Although the title of the book refers to “traumatic death” in general, most of the chapters deal with suicide and bereavement associated with suicide—this is no wonder, since the authors seem to be associated with the International Association for Suicide Prevention (De Leo Fund). Chapters include “Surviving Suicide,” “Suicide After a Loss or Around Anniversary Times,” and “The Aftermath of a Patient Suicide,” among others. The book also has a chapter on postvention and related chapters including “Helping With Complicated Bereavement” and “Peer Support and Self-Help Groups.”

Overall, this is a useful collection of information and essays concerning bereavement and its management following sudden death, especially suicide. To paraphrase the editors from the introduction (p 3): For each traumatic death, at least 6 people who survive the event will be deeply affected by it. It is therefore important that we give careful consideration to all those people who live this type of painful experience, and especially to those individuals who do not seem to have enough resources to be able to cope.

Hoyle Leigh, MD
hoyle.leigh@ucsf.edu

Author affiliation: University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine, San Francisco.

Potential conflicts of interest: None reported.

J Clin Psychiatry 2015;76(10):e1327
[dx.doi.org/10.4088/JCP.15bk10079](https://doi.org/10.4088/JCP.15bk10079)

© Copyright 2015 Physicians Postgraduate Press, Inc.

It is illegal to post this copyrighted PDF on any website.