

CONTENTS

- 46 **Editorial**
Marilyn Relf
- 47 **Chronic sorrow and bereavement care**
Ted Bowman
- 51 **Supporting people bereaved through homicide**
Developing Victim Support's response
Lesley Malone
- 54 **Coping with the intensity of child bereavement work**
A qualitative study exploring volunteers' support needs
Jemma Hogwood
- 57 **Webwatch**
Work-related bereavement
Amanda Aitken
- 58 **Broader Horizons**
Family therapy
Barbara Gale
- 60 **News and views**
- 50, 59 **Book reviews**
- 61-66
- 67-68 **Abstracts**
Denise Brady
- 67 **Index**

Cover: *Mourners on the Shore* (1914). Woodcut by Karl Schmidt-Rottluff

© The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, The University of Birmingham

EDITORIAL

Marilyn Relf

IT IS OFTEN ASSUMED that grieving has an end point or 'closure' (see 'Dangerous words' [Parkes, 2007]). This concept often seems to be more useful to professionals than to bereaved people and in this edition of *Bereavement Care* it is challenged from a number of perspectives. Ted Bowman describes how some people, after a period of acute grief, can function and experience happiness but against a background of continuing sorrow and a feeling that life is 'wrong'. He argues that this does not always indicate that grief has become 'complicated' and is particularly likely when loss is unacknowledged on a personal or a societal level. He suggests that support workers should ask about the past in order to understand present reactions.

Lesley Malone, reporting on a review of the work of UK charity Victim Support, describes how the demands of the criminal justice process, lack of information, and the mismatch between societal expectations and lived experience, combine to prolong grief among those bereaved by homicide. The study showed that general bereavement services often underestimate the duration of grief following homicide and that services for children are frequently lacking.

Victim Support, along with many support services, relies heavily on volunteers. Jemma Hogwood describes a small study of supporters working at a children's bereavement service where volunteers are encouraged to be open about their own loss experiences to model bereavement behaviour. The work can trigger memories, and volunteers experience tension between regulating their own emotional reactions and providing a professional service – a key challenge for all bereavement workers and one that should not be ignored when recruiting and training bereavement personnel.

Danai Papadatou's heart-rending report from the Peloponnese provides us with a real time description of how fire has interrupted, and possibly destroyed, a way of life that depends on healthy soil. Parents have lost olive trees that provide not only their current livelihood but their children's future. Danai and her team may help to prevent the enormity of the loss from remaining unspoken but it is likely to be intense and prolonged. Elsewhere, in our Broader Horizons series, Barbara Gale's description of key principles of family therapy reminds us that individuals live within social groups and that grief experiences are influenced by family culture, expectations and beliefs.

While much bereavement work is with individuals, adopting a wider focus will help us to gain a richer understanding of the contexts that shape individual vulnerability and resilience. People may learn to live with loss but this does not mean that grief and sorrow will cease to be part of their lives. ●

PARKES CM (2007). Dangerous words. *Bereavement Care*; 26(2): 25.

Editors

Colin Murray Parkes

OBE MD DPM FRCPsych

Martin Newman

MB ChB MRCPsych

Marilyn Relf

BSc PhD

Anne Viney

BA CQSW MBA

David Trickey

BSc MA CPsychol DipFamTh

Advisory editors

Dr Ofra Ayalon PhD, Israel

Dr Tom Lundin MD PhD, Sweden

Prof Robert Pynoos MD MPH, USA

Prof Henk Schut PhD, The Netherlands

Prof Lars Welsaeth MD PhD FNPA, Norway

Prof Robert Weiss PhD, USA

Managing editor

Rosie Dazell BSc CertEd

Published by

Cruse Bereavement Care

PO Box 800

Richmond, Surrey TW9 1RG, UK

Telephone: +44 [0] 20 8939 9530

Fax: +44 [0] 20 8940 1671

Email: info@cruse.org.uk

Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Subscription rates

2007 prices listed on the back cover.

Online subscriptions now accepted.

Bereavement Care is published three times a year in spring, summer and winter. It is sold subject to the condition it is not lent, resold, reproduced, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's consent.

Payment may be made on line at www.cruse.org.uk or by phone with a debit/credit card – Maestro/MasterCard/Visa/Delta – or by posting a cheque/money order. Prices include airmail postage.

The editors welcome advertisements and inserts, but do not necessarily associate themselves with the views of advertisers or books advertised.

Most back numbers are available at £4.00 plus postage (UK postage: 35p).

Best of Bereavement Care

Packs of selected articles from past issues grouped in themes are available from the publishers at prices from £4.25 to £6.80.



COPYRIGHT © Cruse Bereavement Care 2007
ISSN 0268-2621
Designed by Creation Design, Bristol BS9 4PQ
Printed by Doppler Press, Brentwood, Essex CM15 9TB