

What difference does a year make? Looking back and ahead in *Bereavement* – Volume 2

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Welcome to Volume 2 of *Bereavement*. A year on from the relaunch of *Bereavement: Journal of grief and responses to death*, it feels timely to reflect on our first year of open access publishing and our aspirations for the year ahead. In January 2022, then editor Caroline Pearce noted the vital role of the journal in providing a space for critical research, discussion and debate on grief and bereavement, as the world navigated the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (Pearce, 2022). As societies and systems continue to struggle with the effects of the pandemic amidst global financial and economic crises it is clear that this imperative remains. Death rates remain high and people continue to face difficult end-of-life and bereavement experiences as a result of these pressures. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and the continuing war and displacement of Ukrainian people has tragically added to this landscape of grief, trauma and loss, alongside other global mass-bereavement events. The death of Queen Elizabeth in September 2022 affected many people in different ways, but also brought death, grief and bereavement into the fore of public and media attention, providing space for greater openness and engagement on these matters (Harrop & Pearce, 2022). Continuing this conversation, in October the high-profile launch of the report of the UK Commission on Bereavement outlined eight principles for improving the support available to people bereaved in the UK, setting out an ambitious agenda for cross-sector and societal change (UKCB, 2022).

In short, this journal's aim and potential to improve understandings of grief, bereavement and responses to death and to enhance the quality of support provided to bereaved people continues to be more relevant than ever. Looking back on our recent publications I am pleased to reflect on how their quality and eclecticism supports this goal, and our commitment to critical debate and increasing the diversity of perspectives in the journal. In its mix of research and viewpoint articles the 2022 collection includes views on grief experiences, support needs, bereavement care practices and provision during and beyond the pandemic (Harrop & Selman, 2022; Samuel, 2022; Scott *et al*, 2022; Walker *et al*, 2022). Methodological innovations and reflections are another welcome feature (Lytje & Holliday, 2022; Qasim & Carson, 2022), while research with people less heard and served, including diverse international contributions, make up a substantial and much valued proportion of last year's publications (Creed, 2022; Dyregov *et al*, 2022; Eaton-Stull *et al*, 2022; Hamiduzzaman *et al*, 2022; Hamilton *et al*, 2022; Popoola *et al*, 2021; Qasim & Carson, 2022; Smidova, 2022).

The first four publications of this 2023 volume continue these themes, highlighting new considerations, tools and approaches for better understanding grief and improving bereavement care. Poxon (2023) uses in-depth qualitative analysis to explore what it means to be 'stuck in grief', offering a critical perspective on, and practical recommendations for the management of complex/prolonged grief. Bowman's personal account as a widower and grief educator considers the potential role and contribution of bibliotherapy

in bereavement care practices (Bowman, 2023). Following the recent growth in live-streaming of funerals, the possibility of revisiting funeral recordings and the potential implications of this practice for grief processes is considered by Riley *et al* (2023). Reporting another pandemic and cross-cultural methodological initiative, Nasri *et al* (2023) evaluate the psychometric properties of the Persian version of the pandemic grief scale.

Looking to the year ahead we remain committed to effectively engaging with practitioner, policy and academic audiences, offering the same mix of empirical and reflective accounts. As we grow and diversify our communities of authors, readers and reviewers we seek to optimise this journal's role in bridging theory, research, policy and practice, in doing so helping to improve the lives of people experiencing death and bereavement, at these critical times in the UK and around the globe.

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