



Death of a Parent: Transition to a New Adult Identity

By Debra Umberson

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In the midst of the busiest years of our lives and careers, just as many of us are beginning to confront our own aging, we are likely to lose a parent--and as commonplace, even expected, as any such event may be, the repercussions can be dramatic. This book sets out in clear and comprehensive terms what the death of a parent means to most adults--how it in fact functions as a turning point in our emotional, social, and personal lives. Drawing on her own groundbreaking research, in-depth interviews, and data collected nationwide, Debra Umberson explores the social and psychological factors that determine how this important loss will affect us--as a personal crisis or an opportunity for healthy change. Her book shows how adults, far from the "finished" beings we are often assumed to be, can be profoundly transformed by the death of a parent--in beliefs, behavior, goals, sense of self--transformed in ways that will continue to affect us, for better or worse, for the rest of our lives. Debra Umberson is Professor and Chair of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. She is the only scholar to have published on the topic of parental death in adulthood using national data, and her resume includes 36 published articles and chapters in leading academic journals and books on family and health topics. Dr. Umberson has received many awards. She won an award for her research for Death of a Parent from FIRST Award from the National Institute on Aging. Umberson's newest research, which is also sponsored by the National Institute of Aging, focuses on how marital quality changes over the life course. Umberson is currently serving as an elected officer of both the Mental Health Section and the Medical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association (the national professional association of sociologists in the United States). She has served as deputy editor of the Journal of Health and Social Behavior and associate editor of the Journal of Family Issues. She is currently associate editor of Journal of Marriage and the Family.

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- Rank: #912407 in Books
- Published on: 2006-10-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x .59" w x 5.98" l, .73 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 264 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Umberson has mined a rich and largely untapped vein of universal human experience. She deftly presents these engaging voices in a context that will continue to inspire research and practice in this area."

Nancy Hall, Yale University

"Umberson comes to some truly illuminating conclusions.... This clear insightful study provides a unique combination of research-based self-help and scholarly enterprise. Highly recommended...."

--Library Journal

"Provides a welcome benchmark for future research on the impact of a parent's death on an adult child. It covers a wide range of topics, and thoughtfully considers implications of the findings....Should be of considerable interest to those who are doing research or are involved in clinical practice concerning dying, death, and bereavement."

--Death Studies

"A book to be taken seriously. With so much richness of ideas, such diversity of issues addressed, and based on so much data, this book is essential reading for anyone who researches or teaches about bereavement following the death of a parent. Furthermore, this will be a useful, perhaps even cherished book for many who struggle personally with the death of a parent."

--Journal of Social and Personal Relationships

"A very comprehensive review....Umberson has provided an interesting work which spans various concerns that adults, from varying backgrounds and ages, have experienced with the loss of a parent....impressive.... well organized....Umberson's research makes powerful statements that resonate with one's own experiences."

Journal of Marriage and Family

"This is an excellent, insightful volume that can be highly recommended. It is a much-needed addition to the literature, not least because everyone has to face the possibility of parental loss sooner or later; an eloquent account and some sound scientifically-derived knowledge may help readers through the maze of emotions associated with this distinctive type of loss."

--Contemporary Sociology

"In the 1980s researchers collected data in a US study that looked at adults' thoughts, feelings and behaviours to do with the death of their parent. Author Debra Umberson was among the researchers on the team. Years later, she has crafted this solid book about transition to a new identity after the loss of a parent. It is a book that transcends gender and cultural borders. It is useful to clients, counsellors, researchers and educators dealing with death, dying, bereavement and adult development."

-- Robin Raniero Norris, Psychotherapist and counselor, MA, MFT

About the Author

Debra Umberson is Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. She is an expert on intimate relationships and health. Using in-depth interviews and national surveys, she explains why the death of a parent has strong effects on adults, often for the worse, but sometimes for the better. She has written numerous articles on marriage and divorce, parent/child relationships, and how gender roles impact men's and women's health. She is currently writing a book about couples in long term relationships, highlighting the challenges of maintaining sexual and emotional intimacy over the life course.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Angelita Estes:

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also get a life style. This reading practice give you lot of advantages. The huge benefits you got of course the knowledge even the information inside the book this improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of reserve you read, if you want attract knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want experience happy read one using theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. The actual Death of a Parent: Transition to a New Adult Identity is kind of book which is giving the reader erratic experience.

Phillip Ruiz:

The book untitled Death of a Parent: Transition to a New Adult Identity contain a lot of information on this. The writer explains her idea with easy method. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read the idea. The book was published by famous author. The author will bring you in the new era of literary works. You can read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open up their official web-site and also order it. Have a nice go through.

Stacey Smith:

Is it an individual who having spare time in that case spend it whole day by watching television programs or just laying on the bed? Do you need something new? This Death of a Parent: Transition to a New Adult Identity can be the solution, oh how comes? A fresh book you know. You are thus out of date, spending your extra time by reading in this new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these ebooks have than the others?

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